



CARITAS NIGERIA

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

ABOUT US

Caritas Nigeria is the specialized agency of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) that coordinates and implement humanitarian and development interventions on behalf of the Catholic Church in Nigeria. A member of Caritas International is (the confederation of 162-member organisations providing humanitarian aid and overall integral human development around the globe) and the Caritas Africa network comprising 46-member countries. Caritas Nigeria was formally registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission on the 22nd September, 2010, as Catholic Caritas Foundation of Nigeria (CCFN) to improve the well-being of vulnerable persons based on rights and needs, and not based on faith, ethnicity or political affiliations. We achieve our mandate through six (6) core thematic areas of focus:

- Agriculture and Livelihoods
- Emergency Response and Humanitarian Services
- Good Governance
- Health and HIV/AIDS
- Institutional Capacity Strengthening
- Protection and Migration

For more information, kindly visit : www.caritasnigeria.org and follow our social media platforms:

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VISION

A harmonious society where everyone enjoys fullness of life.

MISSION

To advance the well-being of all through participatory measures in line with Catholic Social Teaching.

CORE VALUES





As we reflect on the accomplishments and impact of Caritas Nigeria over the past year, it is my distinct pleasure to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our stakeholders, partners, volunteers, and beneficiaries. It is with joy that and a feeling of satisfaction that I present this annual report, as Chairman of the Board. In the face of unprecedented global challenges, Caritas Nigeria has continued to stand as a beacon of hope and resilience, unwavering in her commitment towards creating positive change. Our vision of a harmonious society where everyone enjoys the fullness of life, remains at the forefront of our efforts, guiding us through the ever-evolving landscape of social and environmental issues.

The year 2023 brought forth unique challenges that have tested the mettle of organizations worldwide. However, through the prayers of our founding fathers, the dedication of our passionate team, the unwavering support of our donors, and the collaborative spirit of our partners, Caritas Nigeria has not only weathered the storm but emerged stronger and more agile than ever before. In this report, you will find a comprehensive overview of the impactful projects, initiatives, and campaigns undertaken by Caritas Nigeria. From the hundreds of thousands of persons being provided with life-saving antiretroviral therapy for HIV treatment, to

optimizing AI technology in TB diagnosis and treatment; and supporting thousands of farmers with climate-smart agricultural inputs, to providing thousands of Cameroonian refugees with diverse services for the improvement of their livelihoods among other notable achievements, each page is a testament to the collective determination and passion that drives Caritas Nigeria. We have thus made significant strides in healthcare, humanitarian services, agriculture & livelihoods, community development, institutional capacity strengthening, and environmental sustainability, and our impact has reached far and wide. We also played a crucial role in the 2023 Nigeria General Elections, training 3,416 accredited election observers and over 10,000 citizen observers from JDPCs, community leaders, CSOs, women's groups, and faith groups.

However, we recognise that the journey towards positive change is ongoing, and there is much more work to be done. As we celebrate our successes, we also acknowledge the challenges ahead and commit to approaching them with the same vigour and determination that has brought us this far.

I extend my sincere thanks to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), our donors, Caritas Nigeria Board of Directors, our dedicated staff and the countless individuals who have contributed to Caritas Nigeria's success. Your commitment, expertise, and passion have been instrumental in making a difference in the lives of those we serve. As we look towards the future, let this annual report be a source of inspiration and a reminder that, together, we have the power to effect lasting change. I am confident that with the continued support of our stakeholders, Caritas Nigeria will remain a driving force for positive transformation in the years to come. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to our shared vision and for being an integral part of the Caritas Nigeria family.

Most Rev. Alfred Adewale Martins,
Board Chairman, Caritas Nigeria





In 2023, the Catholic Caritas Foundation of Nigeria, otherwise known as Caritas Nigeria, experienced a remarkable journey. Caritas Nigeria extended its humanitarian arm, providing aid through its six thematic areas: Agriculture & Livelihoods, Emergency Response & Humanitarian Services, Good Governance, Health & HIV/AIDS, Migration & Protection, and Institutional Capacity Strengthening. Throughout the year, Caritas Nigeria demonstrated an unwavering commitment to serving vulnerable communities facing challenges, conflict situations, and public health threats by providing agricultural support to address several households' food insecurity and facilitating livelihood interventions, medical assistance, and psychosocial support to those most in need.

In the preceding year, Caritas Nigeria effectively implemented interventions through the generous support of her esteemed funders, like the Conrad Hilton

Foundation. Our interventions in agriculture and livelihoods focused on promoting sustainable farming practices, enhancing food security for indigent and conflict-affected households, and empowering women, men, and youths with vocational skills in Ekiti, Lagos, and the BAY states of Northeast Nigeria. Cognizant of the impact of climate change on the environment, economy, and society, our team deployed innovative climate-smart approaches to mitigate the alterations in the earth's climate system and increase productivity.

Some of the eco-friendly practices we introduced across our project communities include; training smallholder farmers in the production of climate-smart agricultural inputs like fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides, distributing solar lanterns to vulnerable populations, training project participants in the use and production of energy-saving cookstoves, distributing energy-saving cookstoves to reduce deforestation, and installing solar-powered boreholes in some project communities. Beyond our climate-smart initiatives, we also supported the productivity and income levels of subsistence farmers by providing them with farm inputs, livestock, and market linkages.

Caritas Nigeria remains steadfast in our commitment to advancing the health and well-being of communities affected by HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, leveraging strategic partnerships, and innovative approaches to drive positive change and create a brighter, healthier future for all. In our Health and HIV/AIDS & Tuberculosis thematic area, Caritas Nigeria implemented the first year of its



Accelerated Control of HIV Epidemic and Sustainability Solutions (ACCESS) project, a five-year comprehensive HIV prevention, care, and treatment program, funded by PEPFAR through the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Caritas Nigeria successfully partnered with the Government of Nigeria, community health actors, and religious leaders in Abia, Enugu, and Imo states to remove barriers to quality HIV treatment services while also conducting awareness campaigns, increasing demand for testing services, strengthening healthcare systems for improved service delivery in supported facilities.

Currently, about 125,563 persons living with HIV (PLHIV) benefit from our life-saving antiretroviral therapy and other care and support services. Similarly, in line with our public health measures designed to curb the spread of tuberculosis, we leveraged our partnership with Global Fund, the Institute of Human Virology Nigeria, and the Stop TB Partnership to improve tuberculosis case-finding and treatment among adults and children. An innovation worth mentioning in our tuberculosis intervention is the introduction of an artificial intelligence-enabled X-ray machine, which intensified the detection and treatment of new tuberculosis cases in our project communities across Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo states.

Our interventions did not stop at health. Caritas Nigeria also embarked on humanitarian interventions, addressing the vital needs of the most vulnerable demographics in the aspect of food security, protection, economic

recovery, and sustainable livelihoods. In response to conflicts and other emergencies, we mobilized rapid humanitarian assistance to affected communities. Our humanitarian relief and emergency efforts focused on delivering lifesaving aid, including food, shelter, clean water, cash grants, and medical care to people in need. From offering Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) assistance and nutritional support to children, pregnant and lactating women in crisis-affected communities to promoting the well-being of and providing safe spaces for internally displaced persons, refugees, and returnee migrants, Caritas Nigeria empowered several households and uplifted rural communities in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe States. Likewise, our migration and protection interventions ensured the socioeconomic reintegration and safety of returnee migrants, at-risk migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons, survivors of human trafficking, and host communities. Thanks to the generosity of our benefactors, including Caritas Germany, the German Federal Foreign Office, Caritas Norway, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), UNICEF, the Nigeria Humanitarian Fund, and GIZ.

Continuing our good governance efforts, Caritas Nigeria, seeking to ensure that the Catholic Church in Nigeria, a key stakeholder in the pursuit of good governance, organized several activities that promoted transparency, accountability, and peaceful coexistence in communities. Working with government agencies, civil society



organizations, and other stakeholders, we remained committed to fostering inclusive practices that strengthened our efforts in fostering social justice, addressing governance challenges, and empowering citizens to exercise their rights and hold duty-bearers accountable. Worth mentioning is our pivotal role in the 2023 Nigeria General Elections. Partnering with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC), we engaged in advocacy, civic education, and community mobilization initiatives that promoted citizen partnership in the elections, which we actively monitored and observed.

To ensure they had the requisite capacity in election observation skills and the use of the Caritas Nigeria & JDPC customized Election Monitoring App, we organized a training for 3,416 accredited election observers and over 10,000 citizen observers drawn from the JDPCs, Community Leaders, CSOs, women groups, and faith groups. The Catholic Legislative Liaison Office (CCLO) also promoted accountability and sustainable development in line with Catholic Social Teaching. On the other hand, through our institutional capacity strengthening programs, we trained and supported over 1,000 persons across the dioceses.

The achievements of 2023 were the dedication and expertise of staff members. Through their efforts, staff implemented programs tailored to the needs of beneficiaries, providing training in climate-smart agriculture, vocational skills, and governance principles. Advocacy initiatives were amplified by staff members

who engaged in strategic networking and policy debates, while their monitoring and evaluation efforts ensured accountability and transparency. In the face of challenges, staff demonstrated resilience and adaptability, finding solutions to problems. Overall, their commitment to service and empowerment made a difference in improving the lives of individuals and communities across Nigeria.

The success of our intervention programs owes a debt of gratitude to our invaluable funders and partners. Their unending support, generosity, and collaborative efforts have been instrumental in enabling us to implement effective strategies and initiatives that address pressing issues and make a tangible difference in the lives of those we serve. Through their financial contributions, strategic guidance, and shared vision, our funders and partners have helped us to amplify our impact, expand our reach, and achieve meaningful outcomes.

Finally, we recognize the love of God for granting us the spirit to serve humanity in every possible way. In our journey of compassion and service, we recognize his divine guidance, inspiration, and blessings that sustain us.

Yours in the Service of Caritas,



Rev. Fr. Uchechukwu Obodoechina, Ph. D.
Executive Secretary/CEO, Caritas Nigeria & JDPC





AGRICULTURE & LIVELIHOODS

BUILDING SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS FOR VIBRANT COMMUNITIES (B-SLIC) PROJECT

The two-year project, which began in October 2022, aimed to build the capacity to empower women, men, and youths in climate-smart agricultural production and vocational skills, facilitating increased access to markets and financial inclusion. The Conrad Hilton Foundation-funded intervention sought to diversify farm productivity through sound land and water management practices and adapting to the local agroecology to reduce risk and vulnerability to climate change. Also, the project trained farmers on climate-smart agriculture for increased productivity, sustainability, and resilience. It also trained beneficiaries in using energy-saving cook stoves to reduce deforestation and protect women and girls from exposure to harm in their search for firewood.

Caritas Nigeria partnered with four religious congregations namely the Sisters of St. Michael the Archangel (SSMA), Sisters of St. Louis (SSL); Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul (DC), and the Institute of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus (EHJ) to implement the agriculture and livelihoods project in Ado-Ekiti and Ikere local government areas (LGAs) of Ekiti State and Epe and Ikorodu LGAs of Lagos State. Some of the activities conducted in the year under review include:

- * The assessment of project partners' needs and identification of gaps.
- * Capacity strengthening of project partners (revision of policy documents and the

development of security, fundraising, risk management, and disclosure policies).

- * Improved stakeholder engagement through targeted advocacy visits, strengthened feedback mechanisms, and formation and training of Community Project Implementation Committees (CPICs).

Key Achievements

- * The program reached a total of 4,799 households (23,995 Persons Living with Disabilities (PLWD)) and 10% survivors of gender-based violence.
- * 1,265 rural farmers were trained in best agronomic practices namely; climate-smart agriculture, production of organic fertilisers and pesticides, and post-harvest processing. The 105% achievement surpassed the proposed 1,200 target for the project's first year.
- * A total of 147 persons were enrolled as CPIC members, with at least six individuals from each community across the project states.
- * 200 vulnerable female-headed households (HH) (1,000 persons) were trained and provided with seedlings for homestead gardening, to improve their family nutritional status and promote household dietary diversity.
- * 1,504 HHs (10,151 direct beneficiaries) received agricultural inputs for farming, such as improved



The Executive Secretary of Caritas Nigeria, Fr. Uchechukwu Obodochina presenting a certificate and start-up tools to a B-SLiC Project beneficiary.

seeds (tomatoes, pepper, jute, okra, and maize), cassava stems, organic fertilizers, organic pesticides, and knapsack sprayers.

- * 1,500 HHs (7,500 persons) were targeted to receive environmentally friendly energy-saving stoves.
- * 395 HH heads were trained on animal husbandry, treatment, and feed formulation using locally available materials and livestock.
- * 49 Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) were formed, comprising 852 members. In the year under review, the groups saved Six Million Seven Hundred and Forty-Four Thousand, Five Hundred and Fifty Naira (₦6,744,550) only.
- * 800 beneficiaries, including PLWD, were enrolled for vocational skills training.

- * 1500 female-headed households were provided with energy-saving cook stoves to reduce deforestation and the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Innovations/Best Practices

- * The introduction of training in the production of homemade organic Urea and NPK bio-fertilizers using plant and animal wastes, as well as training on diseases and pest management contributed to the success of the project.
- * The distribution of agricultural farm inputs, such as maize, tomatoes, pepper, okra, and orange seedlings, flesh sweet potato veins, cassava stems, organic fertilizers, and knapsack sprayers yielded positive outcomes.
- * The training of 800 youth, women, men, and PLWD in the vocational skills of their choice using local master trainers that were resident in the trainees' communities, fostered continuity and mentorship.

Lessons Learnt

- * The intervention was warmly received by the project communities in the Western region as it enhanced the quality of life and revealed the need for more poverty reduction schemes in the region.



Distribution of Energy-saving cookstove to beneficiaries



Distribution of Energy-saving cookstove to beneficiaries

- * Adequate planning, organization, and judicious use of available resources are necessary for substantial project results.
- * The involvement of all project stakeholders secures their commitment and ownership, thereby ensuring project effectiveness, efficiency, and long-term sustainability.
- * Owing to the low risks, high liquidity, and low cost, the SILC component of the project built trust, social cohesion, and resilience within the communities where those most in need had limited access to capital or loans for investments.
- * Adequate training and incentives can significantly increase and sustain the livelihoods of small farming households post-project interventions. Having been trained in the production of homemade organic fertilizers and herbicides, and livestock management, over 150 smallholder farmers pooled funds to procure goats following the livestock management training.
- * The establishment of an accountability mechanism improved trust and transparency in the project and also encouraged beneficiaries and community stakeholders to provide feedback freely.

Challenges

- * The project and its newly established team encountered difficulties in identifying suitable vendors in the project locations given the uncommon nature of such interventions in the area. The available vendors faced challenges in meeting the stipulated terms and conditions, which negatively impacted the overall progress of the project.
- * Due to the remoteness of the project locations and the poor condition of the roads, the project incurred significant expenses on car hires and vehicle leases.
- * The project had difficulties navigating the LGAs in Lagos due to bad roads and the far distances between the LGAs.

Recommendations

- * For ease of movement, there is a need for a dedicated project vehicle in each project LGA.
- * Special considerations should be given to new project locations to enable them to have a soft landing.

Next Step

- * The B-SLiC project will continue its second year of implementation in newly identified locations, namely: Badagry and Ikorodu LGAs of Lagos State and Ise-Orun and Gbonyin LGAs of Ekiti State.



The Director the Humanitarian Service, Nkese Udongwo presenting a certificate and start-up tools to a B-SLiC Project beneficiary.



Advisor of the Humanitarian Services Department, Friday Alhassan, presenting a certificate to a trained beneficiary.



EMERGENCY RESPONSE & HUMANITARIAN SERVICES

As one of the core thematic areas of Caritas Nigeria, our Emergency Response and Humanitarian Services are oriented towards providing essential relief and support to those facing dire circumstances, particularly in the aftermath of conflicts, food insecurity, and both man-made and natural disasters. Through its dedicated efforts, Caritas Nigeria strives to alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable populations, embodying the organization's unwavering commitment to humanitarian causes.

The Emergency Response and Humanitarian Services portfolio has played a pivotal role in fostering the growth of Caritas Nigeria as a prominent development organization within the country.

By actively engaging in relief efforts and responding swiftly to crises, it has solidified its reputation as a compassionate and effective entity, contributing significantly to the advancement of its mission to create positive and lasting impacts on the lives of those facing adversity.

Through this strategic focus, Caritas Nigeria continues to demonstrate its dedication to humanitarian values, reinforcing its position as a beacon of hope and support for communities in need. Some of the intervention approaches are centred on food security, nutrition, household economic strengthening, and disaster management.

Project 1:
Food Security and Humanitarian Protection for Victims of the Lake Chad Crisis in Northeast Nigeria, Northern Cameroon, and Chad

Funded by the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) through Caritas Germany, Caritas Nigeria aimed at contributing to reducing the impact of conflict-related food insecurity and improving the protection of the most vulnerable groups (internally displaced persons, host communities, and returnees) of the population affected by armed conflict in the Lake Chad region, with a focus on Borno state.

The vulnerable population's food security was supported through a mix of cash transfers and in-kind assistance to the households. On the other hand, the supplementary feeding program focused on the Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) strategy on maternal, infant, and young child nutrition (MIYCN), food hygiene, and engaging the caregivers in preparing and packaging *Tom Brown* (a highly nutritious supplementary food) for distribution.

The project reached 3,375 households in was implemented in Gwoza Wakane, Gavizga, Angwan Ndaware, Balangele, Transit Camp and Camp D communities located in Gwoza local government area (LGA) of Borno State.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

<p>3,375</p> <p>HH received efficient energy stoves, agricultural livelihood support and cash for food.</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Farmer support groups were formed in 6 communities (5 groups per community).</p>	<p>271</p> <p>HH were trained on Best Agricultural Practices (BAP) and climate-smart agriculture.</p>	<p>280</p> <p>HH received agricultural inputs.</p>
<p>425</p> <p>HH were trained on greening aid methodologies through a training-of-trainers module.</p>	<p>1,000</p> <p>HH received energy-efficient stoves.</p>	<p>2,095</p> <p>Beneficiaries received barcodes.</p>	<p>2,095</p> <p>HH received e-wallet cards and cash grants.</p>
<p>280</p> <p>Beneficiaries received Purdue Improved Crop (PIC) storage bags.</p>	<p>599</p> <p>Beneficiaries with moderate accurate malnutrition (MAM) were enrolled in the supplementary feeding program.</p>	<p>58</p> <p>Tom Brown cooking demonstrations were held across the 6 target locations.</p>	

INNOVATIONS/BEST PRACTICES

The intervention captured the entire project location by targeting the most vulnerable households by applying the household categorization ranking.

Holistic programming approach through integrating protection, food security, and nutrition components ensured that beneficiaries received a multi-sectoral intervention.

Community dialogues were introduced to ensure beneficiary satisfaction and accountability mechanisms were mainstreamed.

To prevent a spike in malnourishment in children, caregivers were sensitized to adopt AFATVAH (Average, Frequency, Amount, Texture, Variety, and Hygiene) good feeding practices during the harvest periods.



A beneficiary picking up an energysaving cookstove - 1st Distribution of Energy Efficient Stoves

Lessons Learnt

The project prioritized a cash based model (e-wallet cards) that gave more flexibility and security in managing resources.

Supporting field workers and community project implementation committees fostered more understanding, effectiveness, and acceptability of the project.

Agricultural/livelihood activities strengthened household economic stability and community resilience.

Challenges

- ✱ Distribution of e-wallet cards was stalled in certain locations due to rainfall and insecurity.
- ✱ Security unrest in the Gwoza axis posed a major threat to staff carrying out their duties, thereby causing delays in the implementation of field activities.
- ✱ Beneficiaries had difficulties accessing cash grants with their e-wallet cards due to network failure.

Recommendations

- ✱ The picture-enabled verification exercise and the per capita targeting approach should be maintained as they have proven effective in promoting program quality.
- ✱ To foster a sense of project ownership among community members, it is crucial to prioritize communication strengthening, mobilization, and continuous sensitization efforts.
- ✱ Emphasize the significance of project visibility not only at the field level but also within humanitarian coordination spheres.
- ✱ Adhere to robust security procedures and protocols should be encouraged.
- ✱ There is a need for an integrated approach and a clear linkage pathway for the enhancement.

Next Steps

- ✧ Continuation of the second phase of the supplementary feeding program.
- ✧ Continuation of cash disbursement in financial year 24 (Fy24).
- ✧ Expansion of the project to Magumeri and Kaga LGAs of Borno State.
- ✧ To deepen impact and ensure the sustainability of project outcomes, in FY24, inter-program linkages will be created by ensuring that some of Caritas Nigeria's previous beneficiaries are either transited to a livelihoods program or food support.



A Staff of Caritas Nigeria holding a post - cash distribution dialogue session with beneficiaries - Post Cash Distribution Dialogue Session



A Caritas Nigeria staff measures the mid-upper arm circumference of a child during a malnutrition screening

Project 2: Emergency Food Assistance and Protection Project

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA)-funded project, which was implemented in Northeast Nigeria with the support of Caritas Norway, reduced the impact of conflict-related food insecurity and improved the protection of the most vulnerable groups (IDPs, host communities, and returnees). This was achieved through empowering community structures and creating opportunities, adopting climate-sensitive programming, and green response adaptation.

These methodologies produced more quality food and improved households' nutrition, thereby reducing malnutrition and averting negative coping strategies. The project was implemented in 6 communities namely, Yawi, Hzigwaram, Shiki, Ngadarma, Mutukum and Garin Gala Askira Uba, spread across Biu and Chibok LGAs of Borno State, reaching 2,900 HHs and 14,500 individuals host communities, IDPs, and vulnerable populations.



Caritas Nigeria's Joseph Ngala demonstrating organic fertilizer production in a community



Key Achievements

839 households received food aid through cash transfers.

200 adolescent girls were provided with solar lanterns.

1,300 households received seedlings and farm implements for nutrition sensitive

1,300 households were trained on best agronomic practices.

200 households received eco friendly stoves.

9,611 children under the age of 5 were screened for malnutrition.

80 children and pregnant/lactating women were identified with SAM and treated.

16 children and pregnant/lactating women were identified with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) complications and referred to therapeutic feeding and stabilization centres.

783 children and pregnant/lactating women were identified with MAM and referred to therapeutic feeding and/or medical assistance.

15 healthcare workers were trained in community management of acute malnutrition to provide counselling services on infant and young child feed (IYCF) to patients and caregivers.

22 nutritious food demonstrations were conducted.

106 caregiver support groups were formed.

Safe water was provided for 5,500 persons.

878 households were part of Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) while 876 SILC group members were trained in income generating activities.

412 survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and vulnerable women were trained in soap

312 females were trained in the production of reusable sanitary pads for young schools school girls.

Innovations/Best Practices

- ✱ The Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) aspect of the project provided solar boreholes by upgrading a hand pump, with reticulations in Garin Ngalang of Askira Uba LGA, thereby easing and reducing vulnerabilities to SGBV.
- ✱ Farmers were trained in preparing pesticides and organic manure utilizing plant and animal materials.
- ✱ Leveraging past beneficiaries as soap-making facilitators added authenticity to the recent beneficiaries' experiences, as they shared practical advice and successes.
- ✱ Staff have maintained good visibility in program implementation.

Lessons Learnt



Upgraded solar power borehole in Garin Ngalan community, Askira Uba LGA, Borno state.

- ✱ Needs assessments and community entry meetings with clear communication help in the smooth implementation of projects.
- ✱ Supporting field workers and community stakeholders (CPIC members) at the grassroots to foster more understanding, effectiveness, and acceptability of the project.

Challenges

- ✱ The 2023 Nigeria general elections schedule disrupted the planned activities of the project in Adamawa State.
- ✱ The CBN's modifications to the naira note created a cash crisis and significantly disrupted planned project activities. Notably, vital services such as fuel stations and grain traders, which heavily rely on cash transactions, were unable to operate as usual, adversely affecting the project's smooth functioning.

Recommendations

- ✱ Procurement and approvals should be swifter.
- ✱ There is a need to overhaul the existing fleet for ease of movement.
- ✱ The project was able to utilize digital transactions and electronic payments were necessary

Next Step

- ✱ Documentation of success stories.

Project 3:

Comprehensive Humanitarian Emergency Response and Economic Recovery for Sustainable Livelihoods in Nigeria (CHEERS-Flex)

CHEERS-flex project is a Norwegian government-funded project that was designed to respond to the pressure on global supply chains resulting from the war in Ukraine, which has driven up the price of food commodities, agricultural inputs, and energy. The project aimed to bring assistance and relief to persons whose food security was affected by the war in Ukraine, insurgency,

and conflicts in impoverished and ravaged communities across Northeast Nigeria. In the year under review, the project was implemented in Madagali and Michika LGAs of Adamawa State in the following communities: Gra Kopa, Tsitsil and Gada Uku, and Tsukuma, as well as Alajiri, Custom, Kaigamari, and Damara communities in Bama and Gwoza LGAs of Borno State.



Upgraded solar power borehole in Garin Ngalan community, Askira Uba LGA, Borno state.

Key Achievements

1,110 HHs received farm inputs (seeds and farm implements) for nutrition sensitive farming and were trained on best agronomic practices.

45 shallow boreholes were drilled in project communities across Borno and Adamawa States.

3,331 pregnant/lactating women and children under 5 were screened for malnutrition.

5 children with SAM were identified with complications and referred to therapeutic feeding and stabilization centres.

132 children were identified with SAM and treated at the OTP.

565 children and pregnant/lactating women were identified with MAM and referred for therapeutic feeding and/or medical assistance.

17 healthcare workers were trained in community management of acute malnutrition.

33 caregiver support groups were formed.

1,183 people were reached with information, education and communication materials (IEC) materials on Gender Based Violence (GBV) mitigation.

8 Protection Mentors were trained on Humanitarian Principles, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), and Referral pathways to facilitate protection activities in their communities.

5,500 were provided with access to safe water through the conversion of 1 yielding handpump and the rehabilitation of 4 handpumps that were further equipped with toolboxes.

40 SILC groups were formed.

408 SGBV survivors/vulnerable women were trained in life skills.

250 SGBV/vulnerable persons were supported with start up kits for soap making business.

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Innovations/Best Practices

- ✱ The installation of a solar borehole through the upgrading of a hand pump and equipping it with solar lights enabled women and girls to access water at any hour of the day without fear of molestation or abuse.
- ✱ Training of lead mothers on mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) reading and screening helped in the continuity of malnutrition identification beyond the project life cycle.



A Staff of Caritas Nigeria interacting with a SILC group

Lessons Learnt

- ✧ Needs assessment and community entry meetings with clear communication helped in the smooth implementation of the project.
- ✧ Support from field workers and community stakeholders (CPIC members) at the grassroots fostered more understanding, effectiveness, and acceptability of the project.

Challenges

- ✧ Certain bottlenecks were encountered with protracted procurement processes.
- ✧ The Caritas Nigeria field office in Bama LGA is not functional.
- ✧ Management executive directive to fast-track the furnishing of the Bama office.

Recommendations

- ✧ Full administrative subsidiarity should be established for the Northeast Humanitarian projects, especially for the raising of procurement request forms (PRF) once the requisition of funds has been approved by the budget holder.
- ✧ There is a need to expedite the furnishing of the Bama field office.

Next Steps

- ✧ The project team will continue to implement activities using the detailed implementation plan which serves as a living document.
- ✧ The project outcomes will continue to be monitored to ensure sustainability.



A beneficiary demonstrates best agronomic practices on her farm

Project 4: Food Security and Livelihoods Project

With the overarching goal of saving lives by providing timely and integrated food security to the most vulnerable population, Caritas Nigeria, with the aid of the Nigerian Humanitarian Fund (NHF), provided life-saving food security and livelihood support to vulnerable households in targeted communities and camps in Borno and Adamawa states. This was achieved through providing livelihood inputs and community-based productive asset-creation activities. In addition to providing cash-based transfers to vulnerable households, especially Persons

Living with Disabilities (PLWD) and their caregivers, the intervention integrated sustainable innovations by empowering local/community structures with income-generating opportunities, adopting climate-sensitive programming, and Green Response Adaptation. These initiatives led to the production of quality, sufficient food, which further improved household nutrition and reduced malnutrition and negative coping mechanisms significantly.



The Caritas Nigeria team distributing farm inputs to farmers.

Key Achievements

Formation of 8 CPIC groups, with 68 persons to support project implementation.

Recruitment and training of 10 community mobilizers for awareness creation in the communities.

1,650 beneficiaries were targeted and registered.

1,163 host community members from 8 communities were sensitised on GBV mitigation, PSEA, hygiene promotion, and community complaint and response mechanisms.

337 beneficiaries were trained in the production of homemade climate smart organic fertilizer and insecticide.

309 beneficiaries were trained in livestock management.

500 small ruminants were distributed to 250 beneficiaries, with each person receiving 2 ruminants.

250 beneficiaries received improved agricultural seedlings to increase food consumption scores at the household level.

160 farmers were registered to participate in comparative learning in 5 established farmer field

Funded electronic wallet cards were produced and distributed to beneficiaries to support their food needs.

100 persons received eco friendly stoves for efficient cooking, while 180 persons were trained in the technology of producing eco friendly stoves for sale.

350 beneficiaries were trained in post harvesting methods (storage, preservation, and packaging).

Innovations/Best Practices

- ⌘ The training of community members in the production of eco-friendly stoves increased household incomes and self-reliance.
- ⌘ The inclusion and participation of community stakeholders in project activities gave the project maximum acceptance and support.
- ⌘ Identifying and building trust with the right key stakeholders made project implementation more orderly.
- ⌘ The inclusion of PLWD brought exceptional outcomes to the project.

Lessons Learnt

- ⌘ The picture-enabled beneficiary targeting (PECT) method ensured the inclusivity of the project community members.

Challenges

- ⌘ Inflation affected food prices in the local markets and led to poor food consumption. Resultantly, the project worked with the financial institution to fast-track the production and pre-financing of e-

wallet cards for beneficiaries' use.

- * Frequent attacks by bandits and government-mandated halts impeded the smooth implementation of planned activities.
- * Limited network coverage experienced by deep field staff due to network shutdowns during military operations was an obstacle to effective communication between project team members and the beneficiaries.

Recommendations

- * Recruitment of project implementation field staff should be timely.
- * There is a need to equip personnel in remote areas with satellite phones.

Next Step

- * Write and submit proposals for food security and livelihood projects in the coming year.



Trained farmers who benefitted from a capacity-strengthening session on post-harvest management and organic fertilizer production

Project 5:

Provision of Lifesaving WASH Assistance to Flood Victims in Adamawa State

The funding for this initiative was sourced from the Nigerian Humanitarian Fund (NHF) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA). The primary objective was to deliver safe and clean water to 15,234 individuals who fell victim to the 2022 flooding in Fufore Local

Government Area (LGA) of Adamawa State, to alleviate the challenges posed by the flood-affected circumstances. Additionally, the project extended hygiene promotion and sanitation services to 10,000 individuals who were adversely impacted by the 2022 flooding in the LGA.



A man drinks from the tap rehabilitated by Caritas Nigeria in his community

Key Achievements

Rehabilitation of 14 handpumps and 4 solar units, conversion of water pump to 5 solar units, and addition of 1 new solar borehole.

Distribution of 3,500 Aquatabs (water purification tablets) to 3,500 households.

Disinfection of 132 households/VIP latrines.

Rehabilitation of 81 VIP latrine units.

De-sludging of 81 VIP latrines.

Promotion of good hygiene practices among 77,280 beneficiaries.

Innovations/Best Practices

- ✱ Training and equipping 6 WASH committees in project locations for facility monitoring and maintenance.
- ✱ Hygiene promotion capacity building for 12 schools and equipping them with hand-washing kits.
- ✱ Erection of solar-powered boreholes in project communities.
- ✱ Advocacy visits to traditional leaders and government agencies.
- ✱ Formation of Community Project Implementation Committees (CPICs) in project locations to get their buy-in.
- ✱ Compliance with government directives and laws, including the complete halting of project activities during the general elections.

- ✱ Empowerment of project communities with a certain level of project implementation capacity to reduce dependence.

Challenges

- ✱ The suspension of the operations of INGOs and NGOs in Adamawa State due to the general elections impacted project deliverables and resulted in a two-month extension of the project timeline.
- ✱ The allocation of one day for WASHCOMMs training was inadequate.
- ✱ The project made no provisions for review meetings.
- ✱ Certain communities were difficult to access due to poor road networks, especially during the rainy season.

Recommendations

- ✱ Review meetings should be factored into programs/project implementation since they are key to achieving quality outcomes.
- ✱ Adequate safe storage facilities are necessary for interventions that include the distribution of items.
- ✱ Provision of security during the distribution of items to beneficiaries should be highly considered in future programming.

Next Step

- ✱ Continuation of project proposal development for submission to the NHF/UNOCHA.



Wash rooms constructed by Caritas Nigeria

Project 6:

Bridging the Gaps in Nutritional Services and Strengthening Communities to Build Resilience for Positive Nutritional Outcomes

To contribute to the achievement of nutrition sector strategic priorities, Caritas Nigeria, with funding support from UNICEF, reduced the cases of acute malnutrition among pregnant women, lactating mothers, and children under the age of 5 in Shani LGA of Borno State. The

project achieved this by was achieved by enhancing the target groups' access to effective malnutrition prevention, treatment of SAM cases at the stabilization centres and outpatient treatment programs (OTP), and care and support services.



The Caritas Nigeria team conducting a cooking demonstration

Key Achievements

820 infants and young children aged 6 – 59 months were screened for acute malnutrition.

585 pregnant and lactating women were screened for acute malnutrition.

149 children with SAM and medical complications were admitted and treated at the stabilization centres.

1,131 caregivers of 6 old children were counselled on early initiation of breast milk, exclusive breastfeeding, complementary feeding practice, and combination of breastfeeding and complementary feeding for children aged 2 years and above.

Through 6 food demonstration sessions, 486 caregivers were trained in proper food handling and preparation of complementary foods for 6 – 59 old infants.

25 government and healthcare workers were trained in the inpatient management of acute malnutrition.

31 healthcare workers were trained in PSEA.

486 beneficiaries were reached with PSEA awareness creation activities and further supported with communication materials at the health facilities.

1 stabilization centre was supported to deliver quality care to children with SAM and medical complications, while 1 infant and young child feeding (IYCF) corner was established.

Innovations/Best Practices

- ✱ Training of caregivers on *Tom Brown* production.
- ✱ Provision of call credit allowances for the project team.
- ✱ Organization of impactful cooking food demonstrations.
- ✱ Availability of efficient logistical support.
- ✱ To promote coverage of preventive measures, improve positive health-seeking behaviour, and effect positive social behavioural change, the program staff began to target fathers and adult males (prospective fathers) presenting in the

health facilities for counselling/sensitization because they play a key role in the nutritional outcomes of their households.

Lessons Learnt

- ✱ Advocacy to key community stakeholders fostered cordial relationships, sustained community interest, and promoted cooperation.
- ✱ Training in inpatient care enhanced the capacity of program staff and healthcare workers in Shani LGA in standard case management of severe acute malnutrition and fostered proper implementation of best practices.

- * In addition to the availability of essential medical resources, patient treatment outcomes were dependent on the quality of care, staff knowledge, skills and competence.
- * Despite the diverse nutrition prevention programs in the community, there is still a huge gap in the knowledge attitude and practice of caregivers and community members towards malnutrition prevention activities.
- * There is a need to continue to work with the hospital PMO and staff in strengthening the already established strategies for full integration of activities.
- * There is a need to intensify efforts on continuous counselling and sensitization on maternal infant and young child nutrition to bridge nutrition gaps.

Next Steps

Challenge

- * Poor financial state and illiteracy levels of the community members led to late case presentations and increased mortality for children with SAM and medical complications.

Recommendations

- * The need for continuity given the program's impact cannot be overemphasized. It is worth noting that the project team already commenced advocacy to other humanitarian actors in Shani LGA for synergy and integration of interventions to facilitate additional support and sustainability measures for infants < 6 months with no prospect of breastfeeding.
- * Prompt response and adequate provision of essential drugs are strongly recommended to enhance patient treatment outcomes and impact the quality of care.
- * Request the Nutrition sector (or UNICEF) to provide clearer guidance and procedures for infants under six months who have lost their mothers and lack a wet nurse.
- * Maintain the teams' proactive visits to key community stakeholders and OTP sites to enhance program awareness, reinforce referral systems, and closely monitor and track referrals from stabilization centres to OTPs and vice versa.
- * Prioritize the repair and maintenance of the solar power systems installed in the facilities by following up with UNICEF and hospital management.
- * Follow up on UNICEF to undertake the renovation of the stabilization centres, repair the toilet facilities, and establish a functional kitchen setup for improved operations.

Project 7: Scaling up Assistance in Hard-to-Reach Areas (SAHaRA)

With the support of the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Caritas Nigeria implemented the Scaling up Assistance in Hard to Reach Areas (SAHaRA) project, which provided inclusive, safe, and dignified access to immediate humanitarian food and WASH assistance to the most vulnerable IDPs and host communities. The intervention, which was accessed through Caritas Germany, also strengthened community

resilience in hard-to-reach areas of Kaga and Magumeri LGAs in Borno State, Northeast Nigeria. Focusing on providing direct access to integrated multi-sectoral (Food Security, WASH, and Protection), context-adapted assistance, the SAHaRA project covered the most urgent humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable people and communities in the target locations.



A staff member sensitizes community mobilizers on Caritas Nigeria's feedback and complaints mechanism

Key Achievements

2,613 HHs (10,562 persons) received four (4) tranches of cash disbursement.

Cooking demonstrations were conducted in 24 communities.

240 members of CPIC were formed and trained while strengthening the structures in existing communities.

30 community mobilisers were trained to support the registration and accompaniment of beneficiaries, post distribution monitoring, and feedback and complaints mechanisms.

4 market assessments and monthly price monitoring were conducted.
old children were counselled on early initiation of breast

For improved access to cash grants, 16 local points of service (POS) operators were engaged and trained to disburse cash to 2,544 persons.

1,052 beneficiaries were registered electronically with the project's primary financial institution, the United Bank for Africa (UBA).

5 functional low yield boreholes were rehabilitated.

72 VIP latrines are currently under construction.

500 HHs received adaptation kits.

24 communities received chlorine tablets for water treatment to prevent cholera infection.

7,497 persons were sensitized on hygiene promotion.

200 women received menstrual hygiene kits.

Innovations/Best Practices

- ✱ The introduction of a picture-enabled verification strengthened community targeting and the verification of beneficiaries.
- ✱ The development of simplified food security and livelihoods and WASH checklists helped to mainstream protection.

Lessons Learnt

- ✱ Community engagement /dialogues were very instrumental because they gave room

for the protection team to get direct feedback that informed program decisions.

- ✱ The formation of community security committees in two communities was a way to strengthen the community security force.
- ✱ Project information-sharing elicited project acceptance and community members' participation.
- ✱ Regular sensitization aided the beneficiaries' understanding of the intervention and contributed to quality service delivery.
- ✱ The project closure meeting ensured thorough accountability to the target population.

Innovations/Best Practices

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- ✧ The project closure meeting ensured thorough accountability to the target population.

Challenges

- ✧ Security challenges in the BAY (Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe) states, particularly in

hard-to-reach areas, impacted project plans significantly and necessitated the project team's strict adherence to security advisories.

- ✧ Delays in the production of funded cards by the financial institution caused a significant setback to the project.



The Caritas Nigeria and Caritas Germany monitoring visit to Ngamdu community to monitor project activities and engage with stakeholders



A newly constructed borehole in Ka'alti community

Project 8: Empowering Rural Communities for Sustainable Development in Adamawa and Borno States

The overall objective of the project, which was funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) through Caritas Norway, was to promote sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practices in vulnerable households and communities, in line with UN Sustainable Goal 2. This was achieved through:

- * The implementation of climate-smart agricultural practices that addressed the nutritional needs of children under 5, as well as pregnant and lactating women.
- * The construction of a grain storage facility to address food insecurity and help farmers

preserve their food crops during the lean season.

- * Training caregivers in the production and packaging of *Tom Brown* to meet the dietary needs of children with MAM, improve their income generation, and encourage the adoption of optimal IYCF behaviours.

- * The project was implemented in communities spread across Michika and Madagali LGAs of Adamawa State and Askira, Biu, and Chibok LGAs of Borno State.



The Caritas Nigeria team with the NORAD project community stakeholders during the commissioning of a grain facility in Sabon Gari, Adamawa State



A grain storage facility erected in Gulak community, Adamawa State



A water facility provided by the project in Garin Ngalang, Adamawa State

Key Achievements

1,680 persons were trained in the hygienic processing, production, and packaging of Tom Brown.

72 Tom Brown production groups were formed in 26 communities. The groups also received requisite production tools, such as grinding machines, measuring scales, sealing machines, and paper bags.

72 bags of 100kg grains were distributed to the Tom Brown production groups.

3,080 HHs were trained in financial literacy and business management for Tom Brown production.

6 grain storage facilities were constructed in 6 communities.

80 dry season farmers' groups were formed and supported with six (6) different types of vegetables, including garden egg, hot pepper, spinach, sorrel, lettuce, and onion.

80 shallow boreholes were dug in project communities.

50 irrigation water pumping machines were distributed to farmer groups.

1600 beneficiaries were trained on best agronomic practices namely: production, harvesting, processing, and storage).

Innovations/Best Practices

- * Engaging skilled artisans from the project communities in the construction of the storage facility fostered collective efforts toward meeting the community's needs.
- * One of the best practices implemented in the project is the formation of a CPIC to ensure beneficiaries' satisfaction and integrate mechanisms for accountability.
- * Involving lead mothers during *Tom Brown* market surveys granted them access to critical information about their consumers/buyers.
- * The conducted market linkages expanded the market reach, enhanced sales opportunities, and fostered collaboration between groups and retail outlets.

Lessons Learnt

- * Needs assessment, and community entry meetings with clear communication helped in the smooth implementation of the project.
- * Supporting field workers and CPIC fostered more understanding, effectiveness, and acceptability of the project work.
- * The project utilized digital transactions and electronic payments where necessary.

Next Step

- * Facilitation of linkages to ensure that groups accessed larger markets easily.



ENVIRONMENT UNIT

Goal: Contribute to restoring, replenishing and enriching biodiversity on the Nigerian landscape to provide ecosystem functions and mitigate climate change

The Environment Unit of Caritas Nigeria was newly created as one of the thematic areas of focus with the mission of coordinating the interventions of the Catholic Church to address issues around climate change and environmental degradation. Over the years, Caritas Nigeria has successfully implemented several interventions promoting environmental protection through the provision of solar-powered boreholes, cookstoves, and solar lanterns to school children and communities, as well as promoting climate-smart agricultural practices amongst farmers. It is then pertinent that the organization decided to create a Unit which focuses on scaling up its interventions focused on the environment.

In the year 2023, Caritas Nigeria's goal of the Unit was to awaken the consciousness of Nigerians to the menace of plastic pollution which according to the United Nations Environment Program, “is choking our planet” and to promote ecological conversion in line with the Encyclical of Pope Francis' “Laudato Si”. As part of its strategies deployed, the Unit conducted a survey of the Knowledge Attitude and Practices (KAP) on plastic waste management among urban slum dwellers in the FCT to support the design of the intervention.

Key Achievements

- ✱ Launched a national campaign on tree growing and waste management.
- ✱ Conducting outreach campaign on the proper disposal of plastic wastes at Durumi area in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), Abuja.
- ✱ Starting a climate-smart demonstration farm at DRACC.
- ✱ Caritas Nigeria's environmentally friendly initiatives gained national visibility. The Unit was able to obtain baseline data on the nature of plastic waste generated, disposal method and pro-environmental activity of residents within its constituency environment Durumi 1. This would remain a reference point going forward for future research/programmes.
- ✱ About 33 economic trees successfully planted and being grown within the Caritas Secretariat of Nigeria.
- ✱ Participated and delivered goodwill messages on the tree planting flag off of the Archdiocese of Abuja and Diocese of Lafia as a momentum build-up for other dioceses to follow suit.
- ✱ The Caritas Nigeria environmental initiatives gained increased visibility internationally via presentations of their research findings at the

international conference on mainstreaming climate-smart principles and practices in Faith-based communities.

Innovation/Best Practice

- * What worked best during the conduct of the KAP survey was engaging the local youths of the community as research assistants, this made field data collection seamless creating a sense of belonging and ownership of the study.

Lessons Learnt

- * Engaging the local community in projects supports sustainability.
- * Timely and adequate planning ensures sound outputs and outcomes.
- * Proper mapping/consultation with relevant key stakeholders is paramount for effectiveness and efficiency in results (for example, on the type and nature of trees planted in the secretariat)

Challenge

- * Lack of sufficient funding to pursue and facilitate adequate care of target tree planting efforts

Recommendations

- * Strengthen synergy among related units like the humanitarian units where similar/related interventions are visible/evident to foster collaborations and maximization of expertise/

resources.

- * Support for training opportunities where relevant to help increase the capacity of the unit.

Next Steps

- * Procure, plant and maintain 500 economic tree seedlings in 58 dioceses as a demonstration for each subnational jurisdiction.
- * Train diocesan coordinators of health, education, Justice and Development Commission (JDPC) and Family/Human Life on climate action strategies.
- * Produce culture-sensitive social and behavioural change communication materials on climate change prevention and response actions
- * Conduct sensitization and awareness campaigns across Nigeria on the nexus between climate change impacts and the value of trees, the natural environment and the sensitivity of the resource
- * Develop a web-based mobile application (PlanTreeApp) to be hosted on the Caritas Nigeria website to promote, motivate and aggregate data on the number, type and locations of trees planted across the country
- * Conduct a general review of all activities to identify gaps/opportunities and fill/pursue them appropriately.
- * Consolidate efforts and lessons learnt to develop better proposals for funding purposes.



Caritas Nigeria team led by the CSN Health Secretary and the Lead of Caritas Nigeria's Environment Unit, Dr. Emmanuel Okechukwu during a courtesy visit to the Ministry of Environment



GOOD GOVERNANCE

To Promote Church-driven Interventions in Accountability, Transparency and Sustainable Development in line with Catholic Social Teachings

Objectives:

- * Increased policy advocacy both at the national and Diocesan levels
- * Enhanced civic education and knowledge of voter's and citizens' rights
- * Facilitated conflict resolution and peace-building efforts
- * Enhanced gender mainstreaming and youth development.

Key Achievements

- * Citizens participation in Governance: At the end of the project year, more than 13,417 election observers were deployed to observe the just concluded general elections in the country. Four Situation Rooms were established- 1 National SR in Abuja and State SRs in Lagos, Enugu and Benue.
- * An election monitoring software was developed by Caritas Nigeria and deployed to observe the 2023 Nigeria general elections and to conduct other large-scale data collection endeavours needed for advocacy and governance monitoring.
- * Gender mainstreaming in governance: women actively participated in governance through

mobilization to observe the elections (about 39% of the observers deployed were women). In Kogi, for example, 2 women won elections into the State Assembly through the Action for Better Female Inclusion in Politics in Nigeria (ABIPIN) project.

- * Social Cohesion: Communities of different religious identities in Plateau, through the Dialogue, Reconciliation and Peace (DREP) intervention now live together and operate communal micro-savings and thrift. Also, in Benue, women and men of different religious backgrounds have formed committees to effect the Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) mechanism for peace and security through the Strengthening Peacebuilding and Expanding Rural Livelihood for Rural Women project.

Innovations/Best Practices

- * Setting up cluster groups to drive the interventions in the communities. Examples: CLIP Ambassadors in Anambra State and CPC in Benue State
- * The use of cluster groups also ensures the sustainability of the intervention as is seen in communities where projects have closed up.
- * The mobilization of stakeholders for civic engagement also reinforced the sense of

inclusion, cohesion, and resilience in communities.

Lesson Learnt

Working with the local communities through the JDPCs has allowed diffusion of innovation between Caritas Nigeria, the JDPCs and the local communities and this has facilitated the sustainability of projects implemented. For example, the training of observers during the general election achieved so much that Imo and Kogi states observed the off-cycle elections in their states without the supervision of Caritas Nigeria.

Challenge

- ❖ Funds and timeframes are inadequate for impactful program implementation.

Recommendation

- ❖ There is the need to promote the internal generation of funds, to enable the unit to prioritize its areas of intervention.

Next Steps

- ❖ Monitoring of democracy.
- ❖ Review of electronic application for readiness and observation of population census e



Most Rev. Anthony Obinna, Archbishop Emeritus of Owerri, casting his ballot during the 2023 General Elections



Caritas Nigeria Participation in the 2023 General Elections

THE CATHOLIC LEGISLATIVE LIAISON OFFICE (CLLO)

To Promote Dialogue between the Catholic Church and Nigeria's National Parliament

The Catholic Legislative Liaison Office (CLLO) provides an avenue for the Church as a formidable civil society player to contribute to debates on issues of public policy, to exert an influence for the common good in areas of political, economic and social concern, and to help shape legislative and policy developments.

Objectives

- * To promote appropriate and effective legislative advocacy that would foster pro-poor legislation in the National and State Assembly
- * To allow the church to properly engage the legislative arm and use Catholic Social Teaching (CST) to influence the work of the legislators.
- * To give the Church an avenue to support the government when it is initiating good policies.
- * To help strengthen participatory democracy.

Key Achievements

- * Established contact with some legislators and key policy actors to help achieve her objectives. This was made possible during the Induction of New Legislators of the 10th National Assembly.
- * Participated in several webinars eg: Pastoral Statements on Elections, Climate Finance for a Just Transition, and The Value of Waste-Pickers

(scavengers), the last two were organized by the Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office of South Africa.

- * Regular attendance and tracking of National Assembly proceedings and affairs.

Innovation

- * The use of a virtual means to track the proceedings of the National Assembly.

Lesson Learnt

- * The need to remain objective and politically neutral is the key to maintaining relevance in the affairs of the Legislative Houses.

Recommendations

- * The CLLO unit needs modern gadgets to track bills and even collect order papers regardless of the absence of a unit representative on the floor of the National Assembly.
- * To ensure national coverage and synergy, there is the need for offices in the 36 State Houses of Assembly of the federation, for seamless feedback of proceedings to the headquarters. This will help in tracking state bills and in assisting in lobbying for good governance across the country.



HEALTH HIV/AIDS & TUBERCULOSIS

In the year under review, the health programs of Caritas Nigeria focused on the provision of comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care, and support services to individuals and communities in Abia, Enugu, and Imo states, as well as the provision of adequate tuberculosis prevention and treatment services to communities in Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo states, through impactful collaboration with the Government of Nigeria, community-based organizations, and service delivery facilities. This was successfully achieved through an ongoing HIV management program funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention (CDC), and life-saving tuberculosis interventions funded by the Global Fund and the Stop-TB Fund.

The following interventions were implemented under the Health thematic area, in the year 2023:

1. Accelerated Control of HIV Epidemic and Sustainability Solutions (ACCESS) project
2. "INTEGRATE TB" project
3. Public Private Mix TB (PPM-TB) project
4. Faith-based Approach to Increase Identification and Treatment of HIV+ children (FAITH) project.

Project 1:

Accelerated Control of HIV Epidemic and Sustainability Solutions (ACCESS) Project



The ACCESS Project leadership led by our Deputy Executive Secretary, Fr. Peter Audu, and Caritas Nigeria staff (Enugu team) at the launch of the ACCESS Project in Enugu State

Caritas Nigeria commenced the implementation of the Accelerated Control of HIV Epidemic and Sustainability Solutions (ACCESS) project in October 2022. This is a 5-year comprehensive HIV prevention, care and treatment intervention funded by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) project through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) anchored on epidemic control, sustainability and graded and progressive transition to the national government. The goal of the Project is HIV epidemic is epidemic and sustained in Abia, Enugu and Imo states which are the assigned sub-national units.

The strategic objectives are:

1

- 95% of PLHIV in target subnational units (SNU) know their status and are linked to treatment.

2

- Increased uptake of comprehensive HIV care and treatment services for PLHIV and their families.

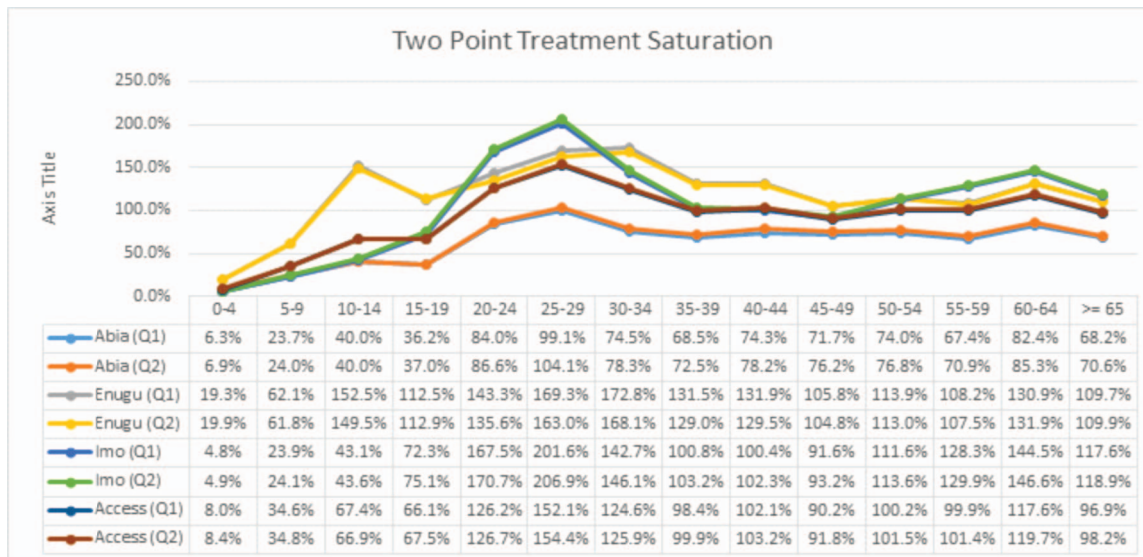
3

- Health System is strengthened to achieve and sustain HIV epidemic control in SNUs.

4

- GoN and CSO have their capacity increased to manage and sustain the HIV program.

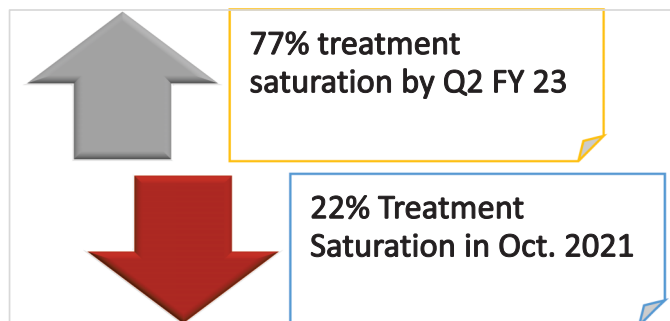
Overall Achievements



Key Achievements

- At the end of Quarter 2 (Q2), the project achieved 30% of its treatment new targets; the program-wide IIT rate stood at 3.7% highest in Abia state at 4% and least in Imo state at 1%. The project has an overall sustained care of 98%. Viral load coverage achievement stood at 91% and 90% in Q1 and Q2 respectively with 96% and 97% viral load suppression over the two quarters.

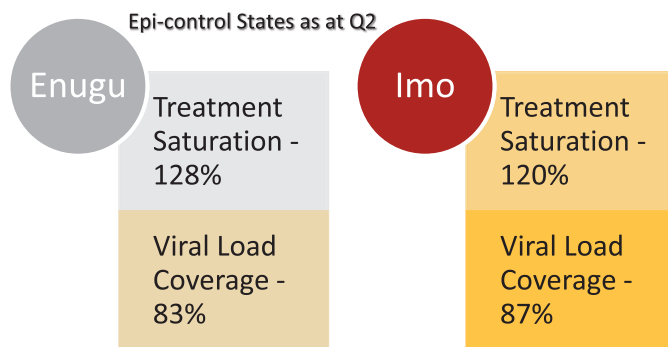
The Abia Surge Program (ASP) is in its second year, recording an outstanding performance with a move from ART coverage of 22% when the program was transited to CCFN in October 2021 to 77% treatment saturation as of Q2 FY 23. Efforts were made to increase the rate of testing across all sub-populations, by optimizing the index and family index testing across the health facilities and community testing streams.



The Caritas Nigeria team providing HIV testing services at St. Michael's Catholic Church, Umuowa in Orlu LGA, Imo State

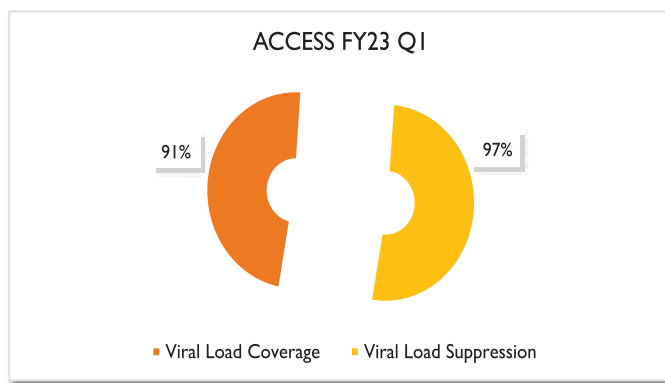
Furthermore, the project will increase the number of KP community-based organizations (CBOs) working in the state, including engagement of female sex worker-focused CBOs, given the relative proportion of this KP sub-type as observed from the KP size estimate for the state. Case-finding strategies were largely driven by hotspot mapping, peer-led adolescent outreaches, integrated HIV testing & and STI screening, as well as sexual network testing and HIVST. The community ART program is one of the bedrocks of the program, given the high proportion of clients receiving treatment in the community. This community structure was backed by a mobile clinic team, which ensured clients were retained in treatment in collaboration with the CBO.

- Enugu and Imo states were among the Epi-control states with treatment saturation of 128% and 120% respectively. As of Q2, Imo and Enugu states recorded 87% and 83% viral load coverage (VLC) with 98% VLS for both states. As in Abia state, the program implemented the facility case management and community ART models to ensure the retention of clients on ART and follow-up with viral load testing in both states.



- The project provided intensive COVID-19 awareness messages during counselling efforts and explored the use of bulk SMS to debunk prevailing COVID-19 myths. HTS and retention assistants elicited clients' vaccination status during tracking efforts for Refill and Clinic Appointments (target-driven elicitation efforts were reported and monitored daily).

- The team leveraged the ongoing implementation of Non-communicable Diseases (NCD) service integration to strengthen linkage to COVID-19 vaccination services.
- Primary Health Centres (PHC) were also mapped out to offer COVID-19 vaccination services in the communities and link community platforms to these sites.
- The project recorded 91% and 97% achievements for viral load coverage and viral load suppression at FY 23 Q1 respectively, as of the end of FY23 Q1 ACCESS recorded 90% and 97% for VLC and VLS respectively. Abia, Imo, and Enugu states achieved 77%, 93% and 96% VLC respectively during Q1, while in Q2 Abia, Enugu and Imo states achieved 69%, 90% and 85% VLC respectively.



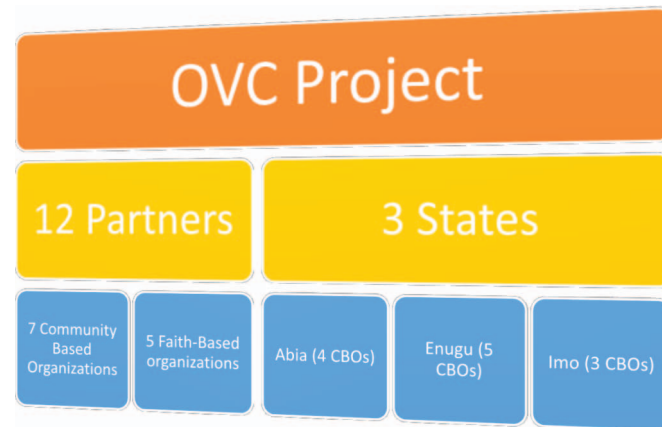
Abia, Enugu, and Imo states recorded 94%, 98% and 98% viral suppression respectively, while Q2 VLS achievement stood at 95%, 98% and 98% for Abia, Enugu, and Imo states respectively.



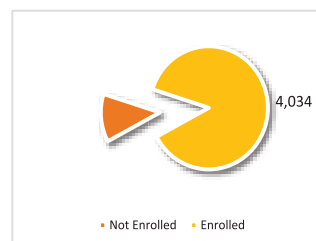
The Bishop of Umuahia Diocese, Most Rev. Michael Ukpang presenting hairdressing tools to a beneficiary.

The Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) Project

Caritas Nigeria currently implements the Orphans and Vulnerable Children's (OVC) project through 12 partners (7 community-based organizations and 5 faith-based organizations) across the 3 states in the Southeastern region of Nigeria (Abia 4 CBOs in 17 LGAs, Enugu 5 CBOs in 17 LGAs and Imo 3 CBOs in 27 LGAs respectively.) The CBOs through the presence of OVC focal persons/desk officers across supported health facilities have been able to work in a bi-directional approach with these facilities to ensure optimum enrolment and provision of services to Children and Adolescents Living with HIV (CALHIV).



Currently, the program serves 87.3 % (4,034 of 4,618) of children enrolled in care within the catchment area, following the synergy between the community and service delivery facilities.



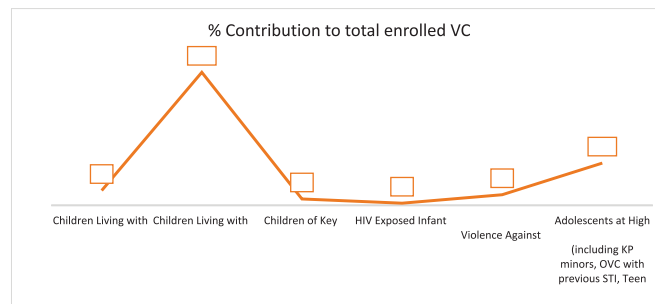
Caritas Nigeria, within the reporting period, ensured continuous capacity strengthening of the CBOs on data confidentiality through the developed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for data confidentiality. Safe cabinets and shelves were provided for all CBOs to ensure that the case files of beneficiaries were secured with restricted access. The importance of clients' confidentiality was continuously reinforced at CBOs/case managers' review meetings.

The CBOs' staff and case managers are being supported with airtime for remote follow-up of enrolled beneficiaries in cases where households cannot be physically visited. This has also been achieved by creating WhatsApp platforms where real-time data updates are being shared and weekly touch-base with CBOs via Zoom calls.

* The OVC project has continuously ensured targeted advocacy visits to the GoN for increased commitment, coordination, ownership, and financing of the OVC programs. A project launch was conducted across all states where the State Ministries of Women Affairs and Social Development (SMWASD) were fully present. Advocacies were also conducted to other Government agencies like the NPoPC (National Population Commission) which led to the provision of 429 VC (152 M, 277 F) birth certificates with 96% of VC enrolled having birth certificates.

* The project has also ensured the involvement of the OVC desk officers in field-level activities like the 16 Days GBV activism, World AIDS Day, Joint Monitoring & Supportive Supervisory visit, and state quarterly review meetings. CBOs have also been supported to make submissions of regular updates through the monthly summary forms to all LGA welfare officers, while Caritas Nigeria also ensured the same at the state level with the OVC desk officers.

	Male	Female	Total	% Contribution to total enrolled VC
Children living with HIV	1,996	2,038	4,034	7%
Children living with PLHIV	17,215	18,098	35,313	63%
Children of key populations	914	838	1,752	3%
HIV exposed infant	355	375	730	1%
Survivors of violence against children	1,297	1,211	2,508	5%
Adolescents at high risk of HIV (including KP minors, OVC with previous STI, teen moms, etc.	5,039	6,236	11,275	20%
Total	26,816	28,796	55,612	100%



* In a bid to ensure that enrolled households attained stability, resilience, and food security, the project prioritized the use of Child Optimized Financial Education (COFE) sessions, where the beneficiaries' knowledge and skills in financial management and planning were improved. Consequently, more case managers' capacity was built on COFE, while monitoring was conducted to all existing community fora. This led to the improvement of the savings culture among enrolled caregivers and adolescents. So far, a total of 83 Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) have been established and are currently saving across the 3 states. These groups have a total of 1,321 members (252 M and 1,069 F) with a combined savings portfolio of N10,389,233 and social fund of N976,989, loan fund of N6,221,366, of which 51 groups conducted a share-out of N8,040,160 within the period under review. The monitoring of beneficiaries on IGA support was done to

assess the level of business growth. Within the period under review, 14 female caregivers received IGA support through private sector engagement, while over 100 others are being profiled for direct project support in quarter 3.



Some adolescents on Caritas Nigeria's OVC program in Aba, Abia state pose with the start up tools given to them

- The project supported 69 households with seedlings for home gardening to boost their food security and encouraged the consumption of highly nutritious diets. 45 Households received emergency food support within the period.
- A total of 32 adolescents (14 males and 18 females) were supported with vocational skills training and are currently being profiled for their readiness to receive starter packs. 39 (19 males and 20 females) older vulnerable children (VC) were profiled for linkage to vocational skill centres in Q3.

14 Males	18 Females	19 Males	20 Females
32 OVC		39 older OVC	
Profiled for linkage to vocational skill centres			

Project 2:

Title: Public Private Mix TB (PPM-TB) Project



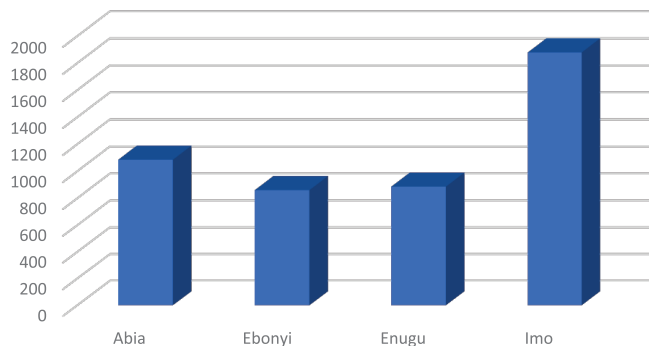
Caritas Nigeria as a Sub Recipient (SR) to the Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN) under the Global Fund TB, HIV and Malaria (GFTAM) Public Private Mix TB (PPM-TB) program in three years has significantly

contributed to TB services in Nigeria. Caritas Nigeria is currently supporting 4,197 private facilities in the 4 states – Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo.

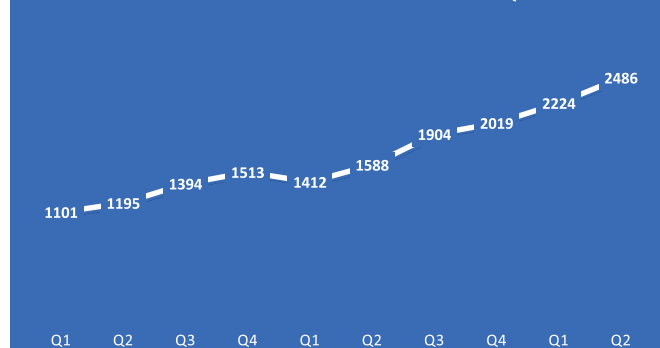
Caritas Nigeria has consistently contributed over 50% of state TB program data. In 2022, Abia, Imo and Ebonyi state PPM cases formed the bulk of TB cases reported in these states. This current project commenced in January 2021 and will end on December 31st 2023. The next grant-making for 2024 to 2027 is at the concluding phase and CCFN has a very expectation of being rolled over to the next grant as a Sub Recipient (SR).

In six months: January – June 2023 (first semester of the grant year) Caritas Nigeria was able to diagnose and notify 4,710 TB cases across the 4 partner states of Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo – 1,085 cases in Abia, 860 cases in Ebonyi, 886 in Enugu and 1,879 in Imo.

Jan - June 2023 Case Finding Tb Cases



TB CASE NOTIFICATION TREND 2021 - Q2 2023



Project 3: “INTEGRATE - TB” Project

The “INTEGRATE TB” project is a community-level integrated healthcare services delivery approach aimed at improving TB case finding among adults and children. The project also expands TB Preventive Therapy (TPT) initiation, devolves treatment of TB and latent TB Infection (LTBI) to the community level, as well as identifies, refers/links people found with Cardio Vascular Diseases (CVDs) & Chronic Respiratory Disease (CRDs) in hardly reached communities & Informal Settings to health services. The project uses a mobile AI-supported integrated radiological solution to detect distinct lung conditions including TB and cardiovascular abnormalities. This is a TB wave 10 project funded by the STOP TB PARTNERSHIP and implemented by Caritas Nigeria and Zankli research centres in two states (Ebonyi and Nasarawa). Project implementation commenced in January 2023.

From January – June 2023, the project engaged and trained community providers and paid advocacy visits to key stakeholders including states' commissioners for health, management of teaching hospitals, states' TB management programs and communities' stakeholders. CCFN has procured Artificial Intelligence (AI) supported mini X-ray and commissioned the same for mobile community X-ray exposures for the diagnosis of TB and other lung and heart conditions.

The project has so far conducted 7 community outreaches with the mobile mini X-ray; 767 people were reached with 601 X-ray exposures were done. 219 chronic lung and heart conditions were identified; identified cases were referred to Specialist Health Facilities.



Screening of a community member with an artificial intelligence-enabled mobile X-ray device

Project 4:

Faith-based Approach to Increase Identification and Treatment of HIV+ Children (FAITH)

Funded by UNAIDS with oversight support from Caritas Internationalis, the FAITH project is implemented in Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Nigeria. Caritas Nigeria implements the FAITH intervention in the Southeast states of Abia, Enugu and Imo, where Caritas Nigeria is also implementing the PEPFAR-funded HIV epidemic control intervention. The overall goal of the project is to strengthen the role of faith leaders, youths, and faith communities in raising awareness and fighting HIV stigma and inequalities. The FAITH project focuses on increasing demand for pediatric and adolescent HIV services, increasing case identification, facilitating prompt linkage to treatment and retention in care, ensuring viral load suppression among children and adolescents, preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV, fighting HIV/AIDS-related



Caritas Nigeria staff Dr. Chidinma Ezeobi during Tuberculosis treatment outreach in Ikwo, Izzi, and Ishielu LGAs of Ebonyi State

stigma through increased awareness campaigns, capacity strengthening initiatives for community-based partners and religious, and enhancing collaboration with partners.



A staff member sensitizes a lactating mother during a baby shower activity by Caritas Nigeria

Key Achievements

1. Advocacy Efforts by the FAITH Project Teams: In Enugu State, the FAITH team paid courtesy visits to the Catholic Bishops of Awgu, Enugu, and Nsukka Dioceses, who imparted their blessings and commissioned the Health Coordinators to mobilize their parishes and congregations to be fully involved in the project. The team also engaged with faith leaders in other Christian denominations and religions (Islamic and traditional religions). A courtesy call was also made to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, as well as lay apostolate groups. The FAITH project team's advocacy efforts in Imo State

included an advocacy visit to the Catholic Bishop of Orlu Diocese, the Orlu Diocesan Health Coordinator, and parish priests, stakeholder engagement meetings, sensitization of healthcare workers, a planning meeting with Parish Action Committees on AIDS (PACA) and the JDPC, and the introduction of the 'Mother Love Party' HIV testing and treatment strategy. Likewise, in Abia State, the project team visited the Bishop and the Diocesan Health Coordinator and Secretary, identification of 10 parishes for the project implementation, and sensitization of various stakeholders, including parish priests.



Documentation of clients during the Baby shower outreach in Abia state.

2. Capacity Strengthening Sessions: Across the three states of implementation, training sessions and workshops were organized to build and strengthen the capacities of religious leaders and healthcare workers as it relates to HIV service delivery and management. The

training topics included basic scientific information on paediatric HIV, pastoral training on paediatric HIV, intersections between the work of the church and public health, monitoring and evaluation of the FAITH project, presentation of data, gaps and challenges on the status of pediatric HIV in Nigeria data, gaps, and challenges basic, and appropriate pastoral messaging to reduce stigma and gaps in pediatric HIV programming.



A mother and her child undergoing HIV testing

3. Mother Love Party: As a more domesticated mechanism toward pediatric HIV case-finding and linkage to treatment, Caritas Nigeria deploys the Congregational Approach to reach HIV-positive children and pregnant women with early diagnosis and treatment through religious leaders, who are equipped with pastoral messaging and basic knowledge of HIV prevention and treatment for cascading to their congregations. Working

with clergymen, Caritas Nigeria mobilized pregnant women and their partners in selected parishes across the states for integrated health talks and free HIV testing. At the gathering, expectant mothers were given delivery packs and routine ante-natal care medications, while identified HIV-positive women and children were linked



Pregnant mothers receiving Mama packs

4. Opening Ceremony of a Regional Planning Meeting and Peer Review Sessions: As part of efforts to improve peer learning on pediatric HIV case identification, the second regional planning meeting was hosted by Caritas Nigeria at the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria from 22nd – 25th August, 2023, with a representative of Caritas Democratic Republic of Congo and the Country Director of UNAIDS in attendance. Key highlights of the event were presentations of the performances and achievements of the FAITH project by Caritas DRC Congo, Caritas Nigeria, and lessons from the GRAIL (Galvanizing Religious Leaders for Accelerated Identification and Linkage to Pediatric ART) project implementation in the

Catholic Diocese of Nasarawa. The visiting partner from DRC Congo along with the Caritas Nigeria project team also paid courtesy calls on the Catholic Bishop of Enugu Diocese and the Enugu State Ministry of Health, interacted with some members of the clergy from Enugu and Nsukka Dioceses, and witnessed the ‘Mother Love Party’ at Holy Cross Catholic Church, Iji Nike, where pregnant women, their partners and their children were reached with HIV testing services.



A mother receiving a Mama pack from a Caritas Nigeria staff.

Challenge

- Some planned project activities, such as advocacy activities, *Mother Love Parties*, and monitoring, were rescheduled and, in some cases, outrightly cancelled due to insecurities experienced in the Southeast region. Also, the

2023 Nigeria General Elections, which were held across the country between 25th February and 18th March, 2023, caused a major delay in meeting project deliverables.

Next Steps

1. Continuous training of religious leaders and healthcare workers.
2. Advocacy visits to dioceses, other religious groups and stakeholders who have not been reached.
3. Roll out of Mother's Love Parties / Baby Shower initiatives.
4. Collaboration with the Parish Action Committee on AIDS (PACA) and the Justice, Development and Peace Commissions (JDPC) for implementation and reporting of the FAITH project and Baby Shower activities.
5. Continuous monitoring and technical assistance visits across the project states.



A staff of Caritas Nigeria sensitizes some women in a community in Abia state.



INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

Catholic Church Institutions in Nigeria Have Improved Capacity to Respond to Emergency and Development Challenges

In its pursuit of enhancing the overall capacity of Catholic Church institutions in Nigeria to respond to emergency and development challenges across dioceses effectively, the Institutional Capacity Strengthening team of Caritas Nigeria strategically focused on two key objectives. The first objective aimed at strengthening the capacity of Caritas Nigeria to support and coordinate the activities of the Justice Development and Peace Commission/Caritas (JDPC) in the dioceses. This multifaceted approach included the establishment of a diocesan-focused coordination and support unit within the organization, the expansion of the Institutional Capacity Strengthening

(ICS) Team, the recruitment of specialized staff, and the creation of a dedicated Resource Mobilization Unit. The second strategic objective was empowering diocesan Caritas agencies with the requisite capacity to initiate and implement emergency and development actions. This involved conducting a thorough organizational assessment for the Archdioceses of Benin and Ibadan, leading to the implementation of targeted capacity-building workshops focusing on resource mobilization, financial sustainability, and project management. The introduction of a resource mobilization plan, coupled with a shift towards comprehensive project management training, and the thoughtful disbursement of small grants enabled the practical application of the skills acquired.



Cross Section of participants during a project management training in the Archdiocese of Ibadan facilitated by Caritas Nigeria staff Moses Abang of the ICS unit.

Key Achievements

1. Strengthening of Caritas Nigeria's Capacity:

Caritas Nigeria's ICS project achieved notable successes in enhancing the overall capacity of Catholic Church institutions in Nigeria to respond effectively to emergency and development challenges across dioceses. The first strategic objective, focused on strengthening the capacity of Caritas Nigeria, resulted in the establishment of a diocesan-focused coordination and support unit within CCFN. This approach facilitated increased coordination and operational efficiency, particularly evident in the successful implementation of collaborative initiatives with diocesan Caritas agencies.

2. Empowerment of the Justice, Development and Peace Commissions:

The second strategic objective, which focused on empowering diocesan Caritas agencies, demonstrated significant achievements with over 1,745 persons trained/supported in different capacity areas. The organizational assessment for the Archdioceses of Benin and Ibadan laid the groundwork for targeted capacity-building workshops in resource mobilization, financial sustainability, and project management. The introduction of a resource mobilization plan, comprehensive project management training, and the thoughtful disbursement of small grants facilitated the practical application of acquired skills, leading to improved project cycle management capacity. Beyond this, the efforts effectively addressed policy gaps, strengthened financial management practices, and underscored the positive impact of collaborative partnerships in advancing sustainable development and adhering to global best

practices. Caritas Nigeria's strategic initiatives showcase a comprehensive and dynamic approach, fostering resilience and effectiveness in responding to the complex challenges faced by Catholic Church institutions across Nigeria.

3. Establishment of Entrepreneurship Centers for the Archdioceses of Benin and Ibadan:

The capacity-building activities of the Benin and Ibadan Archdioceses in Resource Mobilization (RM) culminated in the development of a comprehensive resource mobilization plan. The RM strategy served as a roadmap for dioceses to explore alternative resources beyond relying solely on donor grants. Both dioceses have demonstrated tremendous growth by establishing entrepreneurship centres. Benin Archdiocese has established a café, while Ibadan Archdiocese focused on tailoring, beauty hub services, information and communication technology (ICT), and shoe making.

Innovations/Best Practices

* The project adopted a systematic and holistic capacity-strengthening approach, comprising three interconnected components designed to enhance the overall effectiveness of the initiative. The first component focused on Capacity Building, emphasizing the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes among individuals and teams involved in the project. Through targeted training sessions and skill-building workshops, this component aimed to empower participants with the necessary tools to navigate and address the challenges posed by emergency and development scenarios.

* The second key practice – institutional strengthening – sought to improve the organization's systems and structures. By developing robust and efficient systems, the project aimed to ensure the organization's ability to function effectively, work towards sustainability, and successfully achieve its overarching goals. This involved a comprehensive assessment and enhancement of the organizational infrastructure to create a foundation for long-term success. Within the year under review, the unit deployed an intra-organizational efficiency assessment to baseline systems improvement within the year, as well as underscore gaps to be prioritized. Similarly, a surge, absorptive and adaptive analysis was conducted targeting all 58 diocesan partners to underpin the general response capacity and readiness of each diocesan partner to crisis and humanitarian intervention.

* Continuous Accompaniment introduced a dynamic approach that integrates coaching, mentoring, and supportive supervision into the capacity-strengthening framework. This component focused on continuous improvement, encouraging applied learning, and providing ongoing support to individuals and teams. The accompaniment approach recognized the importance of guiding and nurturing participants throughout their journey, fostering a culture of learning, adaptability, and sustained growth. This worked effectively, especially for the JDPC diocesan partners.

* Finally, the ICS unit developed its strategic document, operational plan and advocacy tools to serve as key frameworks for its action, and even for efficient

partnership building and expansion. Currently, the unit focuses its scope on re-firming itself on more sustainable foundations by diversifying its funding portfolio through the search for more partnership opportunities, capacity-building initiatives – establishment of the online training platform (Caritas Nigeria Training Hub), and re-constitute the ICS unit as a training institute, affiliated to a reputable academic institution. Even more, the ICS team leads the Caritas Nigeria initiative to deepen CBCN agencies' knowledge and understanding of Catholic Social Teachings through a training and sensitization spree, as well as campaigning for the “Formation of the Heart” as a reformative agenda which re-purposes and purifies our core mission of service to the poor.

Lessons Learnt

* Capacity building/strengthening necessarily is in harmony with organizational development.

* There is an intricate link between capacity strengthening and localization; capacity strengthening paves the way for the other.

Challenges

* In the fiscal year (FY)23, the project encountered several challenges that impacted its implementation. One notable challenge was the misunderstanding surrounding the small grant, an issue identified during the mid-term review. Some participating dioceses perceived the small grant as a funding opportunity, leading to requests for additional funding or an increase in the grant amount. This misinterpretation posed a challenge to the project's

financial management and necessitated clarification on the intended use and scope of the small grant.

* Additionally, the project faced challenges related to strained cohesive collaboration between diocesan Church agencies (JDPC, Education, Health, Family & Human Life units). The lack of seamless cooperation among these agencies hindered the smooth execution of project activities and required focused efforts to enhance communication and coordination.

* Furthermore, conflict and power struggles emerged among church agencies during the implementation process. For instance, in Benin, the Family and Human Life Unit expressed concerns about their initial assignment to implement the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) project, asserting that it falls within their thematic area. This led to grievances regarding feeling neglected and overshadowed by the JDPC Peace Benin. Resolving these internal conflicts became essential for the project to maintain focus and effectively address its goals. Overall, these challenges underscored the need for continuous monitoring, communication, and conflict resolution strategies to ensure the successful and harmonious implementation of the project.

* Socio-economic effects on the project and budget presented another set of challenges. External factors impacting the socio-economic landscape directly affected the project's resources and budgetary considerations, necessitating adaptability and strategic adjustments.

Recommendations

* **Diversify Funding Sources:** Explore potential funding sources, including grants, donations, or partnerships with international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), to augment the project's financial resources and ensure sustainability.

* **Community Involvement:** Encourage parishioners and community members to actively participate in the project through volunteer opportunities or financial contributions, fostering a sense of community ownership and support.

* **Communication Plan:** Develop a comprehensive communication plan to keep stakeholders informed about the project's progress and benefits. Utilize various communication channels such as newsletters, social media, and the Archdiocesan website to disseminate information effectively.

* **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish feedback mechanisms to gather suggestions and concerns from users and stakeholders. Demonstrate a willingness to adapt and make improvements based on the feedback received, ensuring continuous improvement and responsiveness to community needs.

Next Steps

* Conduct a comprehensive funding analysis for the JDPCs to identify potential funding sources, including grants, donations, and partnerships with International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs). Evaluate eligibility criteria, application processes, and deadlines for various funding opportunities. This is to improve resource mobilization strategies for the diocesan partners. Develop a strategic approach for securing financial support, ensuring alignment with the project's goals and objectives.

* Launch a campaign to engage parishioners and community members in the project. Promote volunteer opportunities, encouraging active participation in various project-related activities. Facilitate financial contributions through awareness campaigns and targeted fundraising initiatives.

* Implement feedback mechanisms to gather suggestions and concerns from project users, stakeholders, and community members. Ensure accessibility and user-friendliness of feedback channels to encourage participation.



Caritas Nigeria staff Moses Abang and Sr - Linda Bagayang conducting training on Project Management in Ibadan Archdiocese, Oyo State.



PROTECTION & MIGRATION

Guided by its principles of solidarity, rights and responsibility, and sacredness and dignity of the human person, Caritas Nigeria works collaboratively with partners, stakeholders and communities to address the challenges of refugees, displaced persons, and returnees. To meet the needs of vulnerable populations affected by displacement, Caritas Nigeria provides a range of services that promote their dignity and well-being. Some of these services include protection, social cohesion and reintegration, livelihood support, and humanitarian assistance. In the year under review, Caritas Nigeria partnered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to implement 5 projects namely, Protection and Migration Return Monitoring, Child Protection, Child Protection Refugee Response, and Protection and Anti-Human Trafficking Services to Cameroonian Refugees.

Project 1:
Title: Protection and Migration
Return Monitoring Project

In Adamawa and Yobe States, Caritas Nigeria provided protection monitoring services that identified the most vulnerable displacement-affected populations (IDPs, IDP returnees, refugees, and refugee returnees) through monitoring missions for data collection, incident tracking, and referral to appropriate services. At the community level, our teams organized a series of awareness-raising sessions on the main protection concerns and risks identified through protection monitoring.

Key Achievements

- ✱ **Protection Monitoring:** Caritas Nigeria's Protection Monitors and PAG members conducted daily monitoring missions using the harmonized household assessment data collection tool on Kobo Collect and Key Informant Interview for Refugee Protection Monitoring (for refugee response). Protection Monitoring focuses on identifying protection risks, concerns, and incidents which aids in prompt referral to appropriate service providers. Within the reporting period, a total of **35,002** individuals were reached through protection monitoring (**33,371** IDPs, IDP returnees, and refugee returnees, and **1,631** refugees). It is important to note that the refugee response component commenced in July, therefore, the number of refugees reached is from July to November.
- ✱ **Awareness-Raising and Sensitization:** Awareness-raising activities covered a range of critical protection topics/issues. Target audiences included the persons we serve, community leaders, religious leaders, institutions, authorities, and relevant stakeholders. The goal was to bring about positive change in the communities where these activities were conducted. A total of **25,868** individuals were reached through awareness raising and sensitization (**21,150** individuals

IDPS, IDP returnees, refugee returnees, and **4,718** refugees).

Punctual Assistance and Response: This comprised 3 components: referrals of protection cases, cash assistance, and support for protection sector meetings. Timely referrals were made for identified protection cases/incidents, follow-up is conducted on pending cases to ensure appropriate responses and case management. A

cash-based intervention (CBI) was conducted in Mubi North, Adamawa State, and Bama, Jare, and Banki in Borno State targeting a total of **789** beneficiaries. Non-food items have also been distributed in Adamawa and Yobe States targeting **1,110** beneficiaries. Caritas Nigeria has supported **18** protection sector meetings, including taking minutes and sharing them with UNHCR's focal persons.



A Caritas Nigeria staff poses with members of the Anti-Human Trafficking Club (AHT) in Trinity Secondary School, Bashua community in Baki LGA in Cross River State during the AHT quarterly program monitoring visit to Schools in the LGA.

Innovations and Best Practices

- ❖ **Remote Monitoring:** Given the unavailability of vehicles and a limited number of staff, the Protection team resorted to coordinating closely with PAG members in data collection, incident tracking and reporting, referral of cases, and awareness raising. These activities were verified through the MoVs.
- ❖ **Mentorship of PAG Members:** Considerable time and resources were spent to train PAG members to carry out their duties efficiently and without much dependence on Protection Monitors; like identification of cases, incident tracking and reporting, compiling incident reports, and referral of cases among others.
- ❖ **Prioritization of Locations:** As a result of the inability to cover all locations due to distance and a limited number of staff, the Protection team prioritized certain locations based on certain criteria such as; locations with a high number of persons that we serve, locations with high protection concerns, and locations that are easily accessible.

Lesson Learnt

- ❖ Embracing continuous innovation proves essential in effectively managing project outputs

or objectives, especially when faced with diminishing resources.

Challenges

- ❖ The general security situation was fragile and volatile due to the activities of bandits in the Northeast region.
- ❖ Referrals were difficult because humanitarian actors were not readily available in locations in Adamawa and Yobe states.
- ❖ Transporting some of the affected populations from their locations to locations where certain services are available has continued to be a challenge.
- ❖ Service mapping/referral pathways in most locations are outdated. Some actors are no longer operating in the locations they operated previously.

Recommendations

- ❖ There is a need for partners to explore viable ways to make their services available to persons in other areas where there are needs.
- ❖ There is a need to update service mapping in relevant locations to facilitate referrals.

Next Steps

- ❖ To improve referral pathways through coordination and engagement with relevant

actors and service providers.

- ✱ To intensify advocacy to ensure that cases are properly addressed and managed.
- ✱ To reach more persons whom we serve with protection messaging on a range of critical protection topics/issues through awareness-raising and sensitization.



A Caritas Nigeria staff teaching children how to make pastries

Project 2: Enhance Child Protection Measures to Ensure a Safe and Nurturing Environment for Every Child

The intervention is focused on safeguarding children from harm by creating a secure environment free from abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation. The strategic objectives are prevention, early identification, response, sensitization and capacity-building for effective child protection measures, ensuring a safe space for children to thrive.

Key Achievements

- ✱ The project successfully established functional community-based child protection structures that play pivotal roles in safeguarding children at risk with child protection concerns across the 4 project locations in Bama, Banki, Monguno, and MMC LGAs.
- ✱ Community Empowerment and Engagement: Through sensitization and capacity-building, caregivers, volunteers, and community members were equipped with the knowledge and skills to address child protection concerns. This has led to a greater sense of community responsibility and ownership in safeguarding children.
- ✱ Although 1,200 children were targeted, a total of 1,742 identified children at risk received individual case management services so far.

- * A total of 3,089 children and caregivers regularly access the child-friendly spaces which are aimed at providing a safe, nurturing and supportive environment for children, offering opportunities for informal education and learning activities that stimulate cognitive development.
- * Life Skills Empowerment: The project successfully empowered adolescent children and adults with different life skills, such as barbing and knitting, and the production of caps, pasta, *Henna*, soap, and petroleum jelly. These empowerments fostered resilience, boosted self-esteem and significantly contributed to enhancing the beneficiaries' abilities to identify and respond to potential risks, thereby reducing their vulnerability.

Innovations and Best Practices

- * Encouraging child participation and leadership through the kids' club initiative helped the children to express themselves freely, develop leadership skills, and actively participate in decision-making processes affecting their lives. Through arts, skill-building activities, and interactive sessions, the Kids Club enhances children's confidence, creativity, and social interactions, nurturing a supportive environment for their holistic development.

- * Collaborations between child protection, healthcare, education and social service sectors ensured a holistic response, enabling children to access multiple services through strong referral networks.

Lessons Learnt

- * Community Engagement and Ownership: The importance of engaging communities from the outset cannot be overstated. Building trust, involving local leaders, and empowering community members in decision-making processes are crucial for the success and sustainability of interventions.
- * Importance of Capacity Building: Continuous capacity building for local stakeholders, including community members, caregivers, and service providers, is essential. Strengthening their skills and knowledge enables them to better address child protection issues and contribute to sustainable solutions.
- * Data-informed Decision Making: Emphasizing the collection and utilization of accurate and timely data played a pivotal role. Utilising data-driven insights enabled better targeting of interventions, improved resource allocation, and informed decision-making for more impactful outcomes.

- ✱ Child-centered Approaches: The importance of ensuring child participation, and empowerment, and considering their perspectives in designing interventions became evident. Creating child-friendly and safe spaces and a kids' club, where children felt heard and valued greatly influenced the success of the initiatives.
- ✱ Continuous Learning and Adaptation: Embracing a culture of continuous learning, evaluation, and adaptation was critical. Regular monitoring and evaluation helped in identifying successes, challenges, and areas for improvement, leading to more effective programming.

Challenges

- ✱ Securing adequate resources and sustainable funding posed a significant challenge. Insufficient funding often constrained the scope and scale of interventions, hindering the ability to reach more children and communities in need.
- ✱ The insecurity in some areas of Borno state led to the halt of some child protection activities.

Recommendations

- ✱ There is a need to explore and cultivate partnerships with multiple stakeholders, including governmental agencies, international organizations, private donors, and local businesses.

- ✱ Enhancing the team's capacity in grant-writing and resource mobilization techniques is necessary. Developing compelling grant proposals and effectively communicating the impact of interventions can attract more funding opportunities.

Next Steps

- Invest in capacity building for staff members, focusing on grant writing, fundraising, and effective advocacy techniques. By so doing, the team will be empowered to advocate at various levels for increased investment in child protection programs.
- ✱ Develop contingency plans and adaptive strategies to ensure continuity of child protection activities during periods of insecurity. This will be achieved by implementing remote programming options and mobile interventions to reach children and families in insecure areas, leveraging technology for service delivery.
- ✱ Implement robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness and impact of interventions. The project will use feedback and data to continually adapt and improve child protection strategies based on identified needs and challenges.

Project 3: Title: Child Protection Refugee Response Project

The project aimed at enhancing child protection measures to ensure a safe and nurturing environment for every child. By creating a protective environment for them, refugee children benefitted from psychosocial and humanitarian interventions that helped them to thrive, despite the challenging situations they encountered during the crisis in their home country and the challenges they may face while in their host communities. The objectives include preventing and responding to child protection concerns, such as violence, abuse, and exploitation through comprehensive case management; raising awareness among caregivers through sensitization sessions; and restoring the mental health of the children by providing them with mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and recreational activities in child-friendly spaces.



A Caritas Nigeria staff teaching children how to knit

Key Achievements

- ✦ 7,763 children were reached through awareness-raising sessions.
- ✦ 414 children and 21 caregivers benefitted from material support.
- ✦ A total of 427 children were reached with comprehensive case management targeting unaccompanied and separated children, survivors of abuse, exploitation, and violence.
- ✦ 1,273 children were reached with recreational activities while 619 children were reached with MHPSS.

Innovations and Best Practices

- ✦ The provision of an emergency fund to support children greatly improved Caritas Nigeria's visibility as it is not a common practice among child protection partners.
- ✦ The impact of child-friendly spaces' activities was enormous due to the behavioural change noticed in child-friendly spaces' participants.

Lessons Learnt

- ✦ Working with government agencies, like the Ministry of Women Affairs and the Local Emergency Management Council, contributed to the smooth running of the project.
- ✦ Communities were more receptive to interventions with immediate physical support to render.

- ✦ The impact of recreational activities cannot be over-emphasized during child protection intervention.

Challenges

1. The limited number of partners rendering family tracing and reunification, has posed a serious challenge in ensuring durable solutions to unaccompanied and separated children.
2. Delay in procurement processes which resulted in the delay in achieving the project's deliverables.
3. There is no basic curriculum to aid CFS participants in acquiring basic knowledge.

Recommendations

- ✦ The family reunification component should be included as part of the project's intervention.
- ✦ The procurement process should be improved to aid quick response during interventions.
- ✦ There is a need to design a basic curriculum to inculcate into child-friendly spaces' learning.

Next Steps

- ✦ Establish a linkage between the CBCPC members and the government agencies (MoWASD and LEMC) to ensure sustainability.
- ✦ Strengthen the capacity of the CBCPC so that child protection cases can be identified timely and reported promptly.

- ✦ Participate in training to build the capacity of staff.
- ✦ Employ the use of CPIMS to measure up to international standards.

Project 4:

Title: Protection and Anti-Human Trafficking Services to Cameroonian Refugees

With the granting of refugee status, refugees become integral members of society, interacting with community and state institutions, which could lead to friction, harassment lack of services, and sometimes denial of rights, as some of the stakeholders and officers do not fully understand the import of the refugee status. Therefore, the provision of protection services for Cameroonian refugees in Cross River State, Nigeria is one of the main thrusts of the project. This entails activities that are geared towards ensuring that refugees in the state enjoy access to justice, receive Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response services, receive child protection services, and have access to community-based protection services.

In the aspect of access to justice, interventions provided include legal representations in court and out of court and related services to ensure the non-violation of the rights of refugees. GBV prevention activities, like setting up of community structures and community dialogue meetings, are conducted to enlighten refugees, while response services to GBV survivors like referral for specific relevant health care services and mental health

and psychosocial (MHPSS) support services are provided to aid their recovery process and build resilience. The project ensures children's participation in the decisions that affect them and takes note that they live in an environment and condition where they are free from all forms of harm and abuse, including the provision of important documentation and facilitating birth registration in collaboration with relevant government institutions and agencies.

Similarly, Caritas Nigeria is implementing the Facilitating Access to Response and Service for Anti-Human Trafficking (FARSAT) project. The intervention is focused on anti-human trafficking activities, such as community dialogue meetings with community stakeholders, students and various groups as preventive measures against human trafficking, while suspected cases of human trafficking are referred to the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), with whom the project has a collaborative working relation.



Children showing off their drawing and painting skills

Key Achievements

- ✦ Caritas Nigeria conducted 10 advocacy visits to various community stakeholders and government agencies, including the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), several formations of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), and the Nigeria Military. These reduced incidences of detainment and harassment of refugees, as well as improved access to services.
- ✦ Legal representations were presented for 41 (20 males and 21 females) refugees, either in their defence or prosecution in cases brought against or by them. The representations included court appearances in criminal cases, particularly defilement, rape, and sexual assault. Whereas 1 conviction and 1 acquittal were achieved in the reporting period, 188 refugees (128 males and 60 females) benefited from out-of-court legal representations.
- ✦ In the area of facilitating access and anti-human trafficking response services, 2 cases of human trafficking were referred to NAPTIP for follow-up and other statutory services.
- ✦ Caritas Nigeria established anti-human trafficking (AHT) structures, such as 9 Community Watch Groups (CWG) and 6 AHT clubs. These structures were strengthened through various enlightenment and capacity-building activities.

- ✦ Child protection cases managed successfully within the reporting period were 324 (142 males and 182 females). These include cases of sexual abuse, child neglect, child labour and physical abuse among others.
- ✦ Food and non-food items were provided for 41 households.
- ✦ In collaboration with the National Population Commission, Caritas Nigeria facilitated the birth registration and documentation of 1,036 children (468 males and 568 females).
- ✦ 52 mentor-mentee sessions were conducted for onward training of adolescents in crafts such as knitting, bead making, pastries and baking among others.
- ✦ 255 GBV cases (29 males, 226 females) were managed. Survivors of GBV received adequate and appropriate services, which included healthcare services, counselling, and justice.
- ✦ A GBV Safety Audit was conducted in Cross River state, in collaboration with UNHCR and other implementing partners, encompassing 9 LGAs and the three refugee settlements. This audit improved GBV prevention and response services in the refugee operation.
- ✦ 48 men were taken through the “Engaging Men through Accountability Practice” (EMAP) programme, which aimed at preventing violence against women and girls. Likewise, 30 boys and 30 girls were enrolled in the “HeForShe” programme on dismantling social and cultural barriers preventing women and girls from achieving their potential. This programme seeks to build allies for women and young girls at an early age, fostering gender equality as they grow.
- ✦ 310 in-school and out-of-school children across the refugee settlements and host communities were trained in life skills which covered critical topics like adolescence and puberty, gender-based violence, decision-making, communication, assertiveness, negotiation, and goal-setting among others.
- ✦ 6 support groups were established for People Living with Disabilities (PLWD) across the 3 settlements in Ogoja, a male and a female group in each of the settlements. The groups were also strengthened with useful tips and enlightenment.
- ✦ 24 community influencers (12 males and 12 females) were trained in community psychosocial support response to help build resilience and establish durable solutions in MHPSS response.
- ✦ 15 community leaders (8 males and 9 females) comprising refugees and host community leaders were trained to help resolve GBV, child protection, and human trafficking issues for

peaceful co-existence, and help drive the eradication of harmful traditional practices where they exist.

Innovations and Best Practices

- ✓ Caritas shifted the focus of her intervention to host communities, increasing the number of protection activities conducted.
- ✓ Several activities, such as the distribution of food and non-food items, were carried out in host communities, reaching a greater number of refugees in the host communities and giving them a sense of belonging and protection.

Lessons Learnt

- ✓ The recurring withdrawal of GBV cases from law enforcement agencies survivors, particularly from police stations in Obudu and Ajassor communities, was an obstacle to effective support services.
- ✓ A sense of abandonment by refugees could lead to violent tendencies in the host communities as witnessed in Ajassor during the Safety Audit.

Challenges

- ✓ Reduction of funding within the period affected the extent of intervention and the number of beneficiaries.

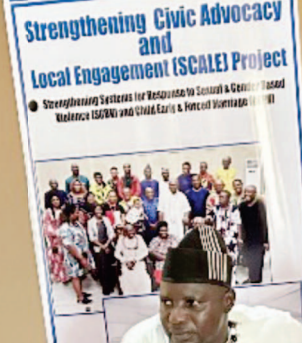
- ✓ The monthly fuel allocation was not adequate due to increased activities in the host communities.
- ✓ The restriction of vehicle fuelling times to specific days in the week also affected the movement to host communities and implementation activities.
- ✓ Some refugees in remote communities had inadequate access to services and interventions because they could not afford the high cost of transportation.

Recommendations

- ✓ The allocation of fuel should be increased and the timing for fuelling of project vehicles made more flexible for effectiveness.
- ✓ The size of the funding envelope should be increased to accommodate more beneficiaries given the increased inflation and general economic hardship.

Next Steps

- ✓ Increase focus on refugees in the host communities and facilitate peace-building between the refugee community and host community members.
- ✓ Provision should be made, however small, for host community members during the inte



STRENGTHENING CIVIC ADVOCACY & LOCAL ENGAGEMENT (SCALE)

The SCALE project is a USAID-funded 5-year project (October 2020 – October 2025) implemented by Palladium through local partners. The project is designed to enhance local civil society organizations' ability to be positive and responsible change agents in Nigeria. The goal of the project is to “improve public accountability, transparency, and sustainable service delivery in Nigeria” by strengthening the managerial, financial, and advocacy capacity of civil society in engaging citizens to influence the Government of Nigeria in key development reforms at national, state, and local levels. As a grant recipient, Caritas Nigeria partners with the Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) of Benin, Maiduguri, and Makurdi Dioceses to train traditional, community, and religious leaders, as well as civil society organizations across Benue, Borno, and Edo States on:

- ✦ Sexual & Gender Based Violence (SGBV) & Child Early & Forced Marriage (CEFM) Prevention, Risk Mitigation & Response.
- ✦ Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Confidentiality, Child protection and safeguarding.
- ✦ Psychosocial Support (PSS), Victim Centered & and Trauma-Informed Case Management Approaches.
- ✦ Referral Pathways & Linkages of SGBV & CEFM.
- ✦ Monitoring, Evaluation, Data Utilization and Documentation and Learning.

Activities Conducted

- ✦ An inception meeting with Caritas Nigeria's SCALE project team in Abuja and JDPC directors from Benin, Makurdi, and Maiduguri dioceses and 3 referral and linkage officers from the 3 dioceses, to prepare the team for a smooth take-off of the project, to help in achieving clarity and alignment on key project issues before the start of project implementation, and bring all the stakeholders to understand the objectives and aims of the project and to align, prioritize, and concretize actionable plans before the implementation of the project.
- ✦ A three-day training course on bylaw development and implementation against SGBV and CEFM for prevention, risk mitigation, and response for community/religious leaders across Benue, Borno, and Edo States. The training sought to enhance the understanding of participants on basic steps and procedures for bylaw development, increase their understanding of bylaw implementation mechanisms within their communities, and identify and review the existing social norms and practices such as taboos, and beliefs that perpetuate SGBV risks and inequality in access and control over resources and humanitarian services for women and girls, men, and boy, as well as increase understanding of the effects of gender-based violence on health, development,

human rights, and education.

- ✦ A three-day training course on key strategies in prevention, risk mitigation, and responding to Sexual & Gender Violence (SGBV) and child Early and forced Marriage (CEFM) for civil society organizations and traditional and religious leaders. This activity provided Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and traditional leaders with an understanding of key strategies for prevention, risk mitigation and responding to SGBV and CEFM. The training will also provide a practical guide to the design and implementation of strategies that promote prevention and service delivery for survivors of SGBV and CEFM. Participants were drawn from each state with 30 participants per state for 3 days in each state.
- ✦ A quarterly three-day mentoring and coaching session for trained CSOs and traditional leaders on bylaws development and implementation. The objective was to improve service delivery for survivors of SGBV and CEFM. The sessions provided technical guidance to beneficiary CSOs in the implementation of activities and application of key learning outcomes.
- ✦ Bi-annual state-level SGBV & CEFM coordination meeting held to enhance shared learning, referrals, and linkages between state-level enlarged stakeholders, and to build a strong

collaboration between civil societies and relevant government ministries, departments, and agencies. The forum also enhanced collaboration between CSOs, community leaders, caregivers, and survivors.

- ✦ A one-day meeting on bylaw development and implementation with traditional rulers in Benue, Borno, and Edo States to galvanize traditional rulers' buy-in for the development and implementation of bylaws against SGBV and CEFM in their communities.
- ✦ Resource mobilization training and monitoring, evaluation and learning sessions for 33 CSOs and community institutions, aimed at building the capacities of CSOs to mobilize resources to sustain the fight against SGBV and CEFM in project communities and strengthen the proposal-writing capacities of CSOs.

Key Achievements

- ✦ Over 70 traditional leaders were trained to understand the menace of SGBV and CEFM and the ways to provide services within their communities. This was aimed at building the capacities of the traditional leaders to enable making bylaws against SGBV and CEFM in the community. Consequently, over 18 communities developed and signed community bylaws against SGBV and CEFM.

- Over 20 religious leaders were trained to understand the menace of SGBV and CEFM on ways they could use their privileged positions to sensitize their followers on the dangers associated with SGBV and CEFM. After the training, the religious leaders pledged to become agents and advocates of SGBV and CEFM-free spaces. Similarly, they committed to exposing

any community members found culpable.

- Over 40 civil society organizations were trained to provide some level of intervention and succour to survivors of SGBV and CEFM. Accordingly, they were trained to collaborate with other relevant government agencies to fight SGBV and CEFM, while traditional leaders were trained in the development of community bylaws against



The Caritas Nigeria team with CSOs, traditional rulers, religious leaders, and representatives of federal and state agencies during the SCALE project first biannual coordination meeting in Makurdi, Benue State.

SGBV and CEFM.

- ✦ Over 40 CSOs were supported to develop safeguarding policies for their organizations.
- ✦ A comprehensive referral directory was developed for actors in Benue, Borno, and Edo States. This enabled all the stakeholders to know the resources available within their localities and the responsible persons to contact in emergency cases.
- ✦ Over 6 survivors of SGBV and CEFM were rescued and rehabilitated across the 3 project states.

Innovations

- ✦ The deployment of a bottom-up approach, which allowed the communities to be co-drivers of the project, encouraged joint decision-making between communities and sectoral agencies.
- ✦ Hosting frequent check-ins through regular group and one-on-one meetings with the project team was instrumental in exploring team members' skills and capacities.
- ✦ Prompt resolution of conflicts among teams helped in managing relationships and improving productivity.
- ✦ Leveraging existing community structures for

the implementation of program activities contributed to the success of the project in the period under review.

Lessons Learnt

- ✦ Involvement of project beneficiaries and communities ensured project ownership.
- ✦ Leveraging existing local structures within the communities of interventions helped to sustain the outcome of the intervention.
- ✦ Sensitizations and advocacy for attitudinal change should be continuous and not a one-off thing.
- ✦ Early planning was effective in managing unintended outcomes in program implementation.

Challenges

- ✦ Paucity of funds and continuous inflation affected the project implementation adversely.
- ✦ In some communities, the leaders focused on the immediate pecuniary gains rather than the desired long-lasting impact of the intervention.
- ✦ Certain traditional practices made it difficult for survivors of SGBV and CEFM to disclose their situations. Likewise, some religious beliefs in some communities greatly opposed the advocacies for equal and fair treatment of the female gender.

- ✦ The insurgency in Borno State was a constraint to the designed project coverage.

Recommendations

- ✦ Continuous awareness creation about the consequences of SGBV and CEFM through campaigns, workshops, and community dialogue.
- ✦ Improved and sustainable collaboration with local communities to challenge harmful social norms and practices that contribute to SGBV and CEFM.
- ✦ Engagement of community leaders, influencers, and parents in discussions to change attitudes and behaviours should equally be systematic and continuous.
- ✦ Advocates for the enforcement and strengthening of laws that protect individuals from SGBV and

CEFM should prioritise survivors while also arresting and prosecuting perpetrators.

- ✦ There is a need to support survivors in accessing medical and legal services.
- ✦ SGBV and CEFM actors should support income-generating activities and vocational skills training for vulnerable groups to reduce the dependence and vulnerability of the potential victims.

Next Steps

- ✦ Proposal writing for the continuation of the project.
- ✦ Implementation of project sustainability initiatives.
- ✦ Follow up on the beneficiaries for the development of community bylaws.



Participants during a group task of the SCALE advocacy training. 2

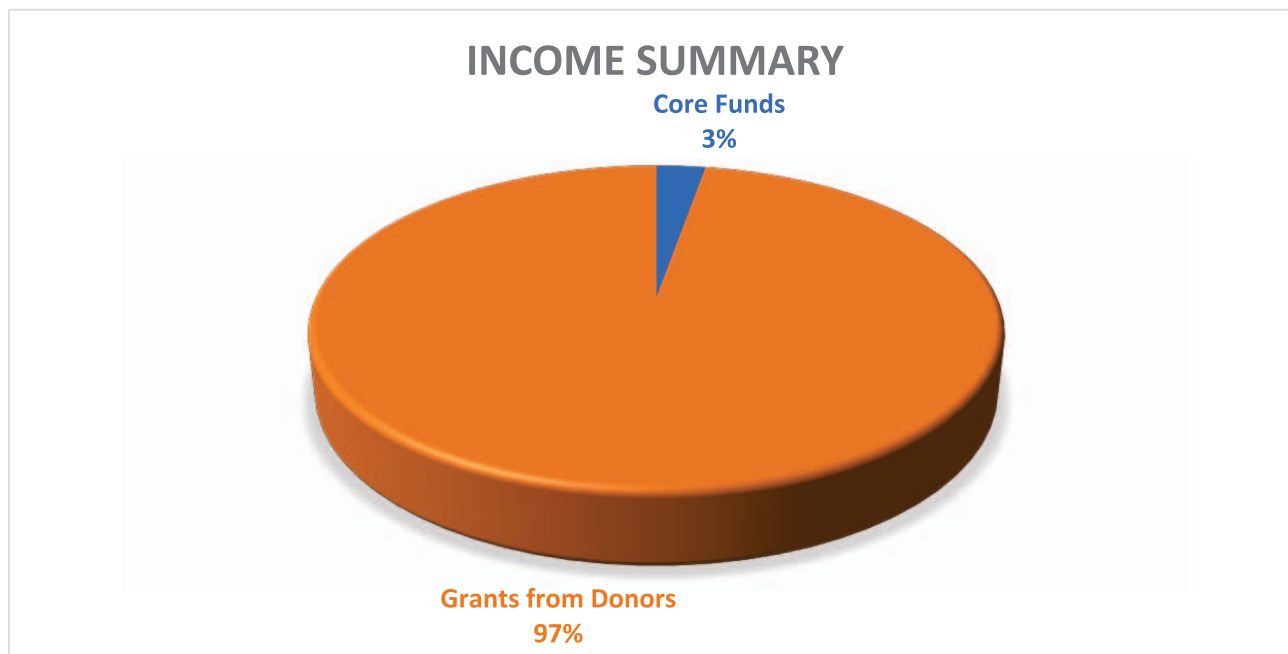
FINANCIAL REPORT

INCOME STATEMENT

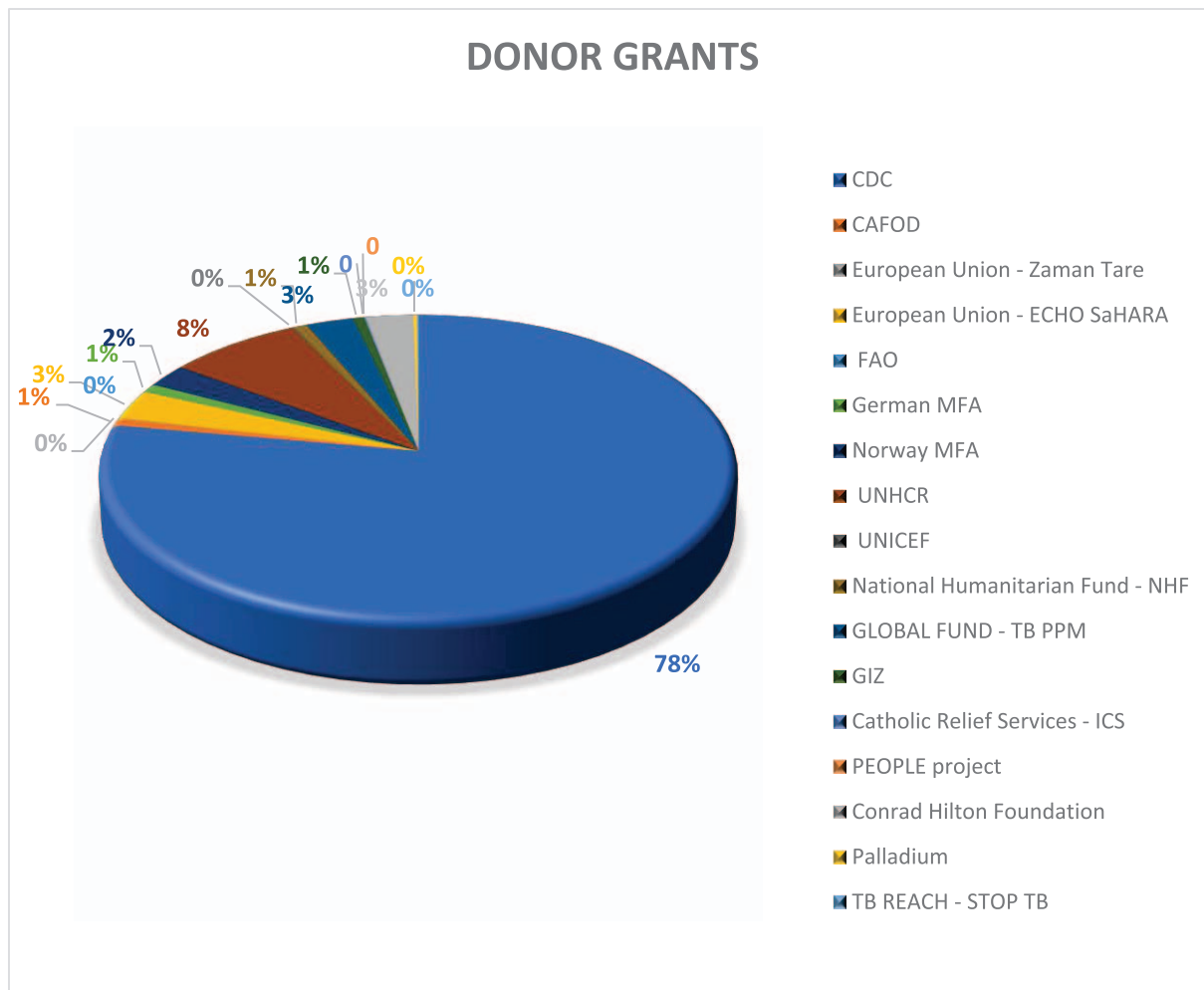
For the Financial Year under review, funding for the organization came from two income streams namely Core Funds (internally generated) and Donor Grants(external).

A total of NGN 24,973,270,345.66 (Twenty-four billion, nine hundred and seventy-three thousand, two hundred and seventy thousand, three hundred and forty-five Naira sixty-six Kobo) was realized.

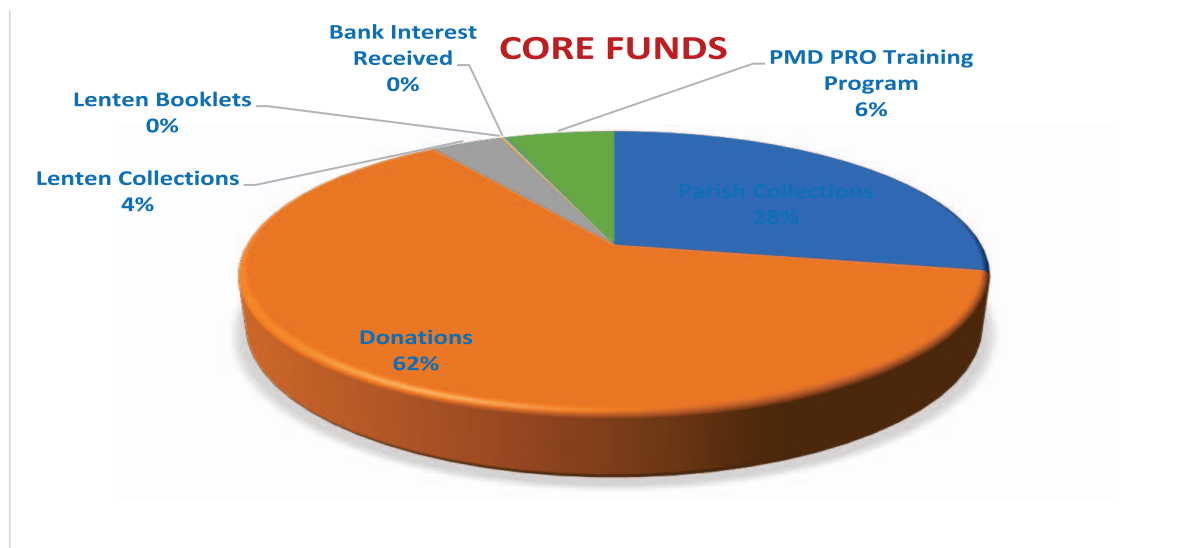
Of this amount, 97% (24,286,216,492.59) came from donor grants while 3% (NGN 687,053,853.07) was generated locally under CORE Funds.



For Donor Grants, 78% came from CDC in the ACCESS Program followed by 8% from UNHCR and 3% each from Conrad Hilton (B-SLiC project), Global Fund (STOP TB Project) and European Union (Echo Sahara Project).



A total of 62% of CORE Funds came from donations followed closely by 28% from Parish collections and 6% and 4% from PMD Pro training and Lenten collections respectively.



INCOME	2023	2022	Total Annual Income
CORE FUNDS			
Parish Collections	₦ 186,311,195.18	₦ 5,750,000.00	₦ 192,061,195.18
Donations	₦ 229,523,817.67	₦ 198,776,534.65	₦ 428,300,352.32
Lenten Collections	₦ 10,412,259.50	₦ 15,780,444.19	₦ 26,192,703.69
Lenten Booklets		₦ 900,000.00	₦ 900,000.00
Bank Interest Received	₦ 633,843.97	₦ 244,461.75	₦ 878,305.72
PMD PRO Training Program	₦ 6,424,177.33	₦ 32,297,118.83	₦ 38,721,296.16
TOTAL	₦ 433,305,293.65	₦ 253,748,559.42	₦ 687,053,853.07
			₦ -

GRANTS FROM DONORS:			₦ -
CDC	₦ 9,039,336,415.00	₦ 9,850,990,450.00	₦ 18,890,326,865.00
CAFOD	₦ 151,092,312.80	₦ 33,373,887.50	₦ 184,466,200.30
European Union - Zaman Tare		₦ 9,842,483.22	₦ 9,842,483.22
European Union - ECHO	₦ 361,403,287.50	₦ 399,988,490.00	₦ 761,391,777.50
SaHARA		₦ 3,927,993.21	₦ 3,927,993.21
FAO			
German MFA	₦ 223,569,156.00		₦ 223,569,156.00
Norway MFA	₦ 417,792,165.00	₦ 177,066,827.73	₦ 594,858,992.73
UNHCR	₦ 893,590,049.69	₦ 953,876,912.69	₦ 1,847,466,962.38
UNICEF	₦ 29,159,705.00		₦ 29,159,705.00
National Humanitarian Fund - NHF	₦ 182,000,000.00		₦ 182,000,000.00
GLOBAL FUND - TB PPM	₦ 374,377,349.18	₦ 281,073,410.00	₦ 655,450,759.18
GIZ		₦ 156,848,643.70	₦ 156,848,643.70
Catholic Relief Services - ICS	₦ 8,465,636.52	₦ 14,925,947.44	₦ 23,391,583.96
PEOPLE project		₦ 2,302,640.00	₦ 2,302,640.00
Conrad Hilton Foundation	₦ 648,000,000.00		₦ 648,000,000.00
Palladium	₦ 49,512,730.41		₦ 49,512,730.41
TB REACH - STOP TB	₦ 23,700,000.00		₦ 23,700,000.00
TOTAL INCOME	₦ 12,401,998,807.10	₦ 11,884,217,685.49	₦ 24,286,216,492.59
TOTAL INCOME	₦ 12,835,304,100.75	₦ 12,137,966,244.91	₦ 24,973,270,345.66

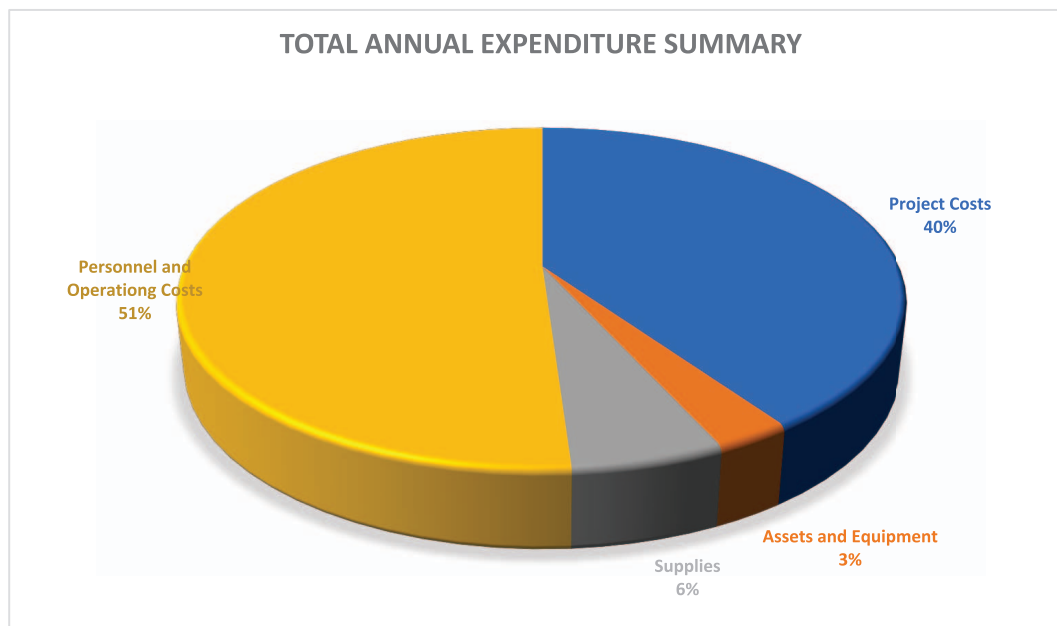
NOTES:

The financial year of the funding varies in some cases with the Organisation's financial year. Therefore, it is pro rata of the Income received in the period between October 2022 to September 2023 that is reported. Some of the income has a cross-cutting period spanning into the next year.

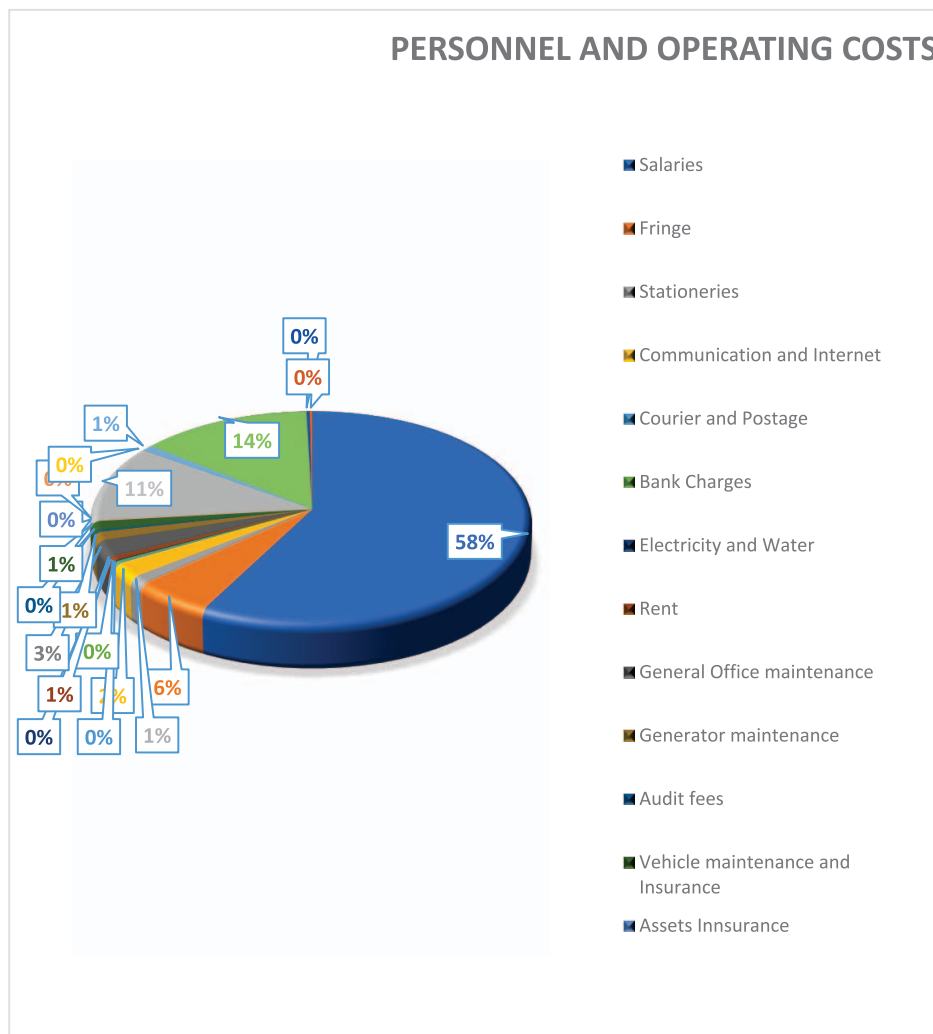
EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

A total of ₦ 24,005,577,928.87 (twenty-four billion, five million, five hundred and seventy-seven thousand, nine hundred and twenty-eight Naira, eighty-seven Kobo) from the ₦ 24,973,270,345.66 (Twenty-four billion, nine hundred and seventy-three million, two hundred and seventy thousand, three hundred and forty-five Naira sixty-six Kobo) income realized was expended during this financial year leaving a surplus of ₦967,692,416.79.

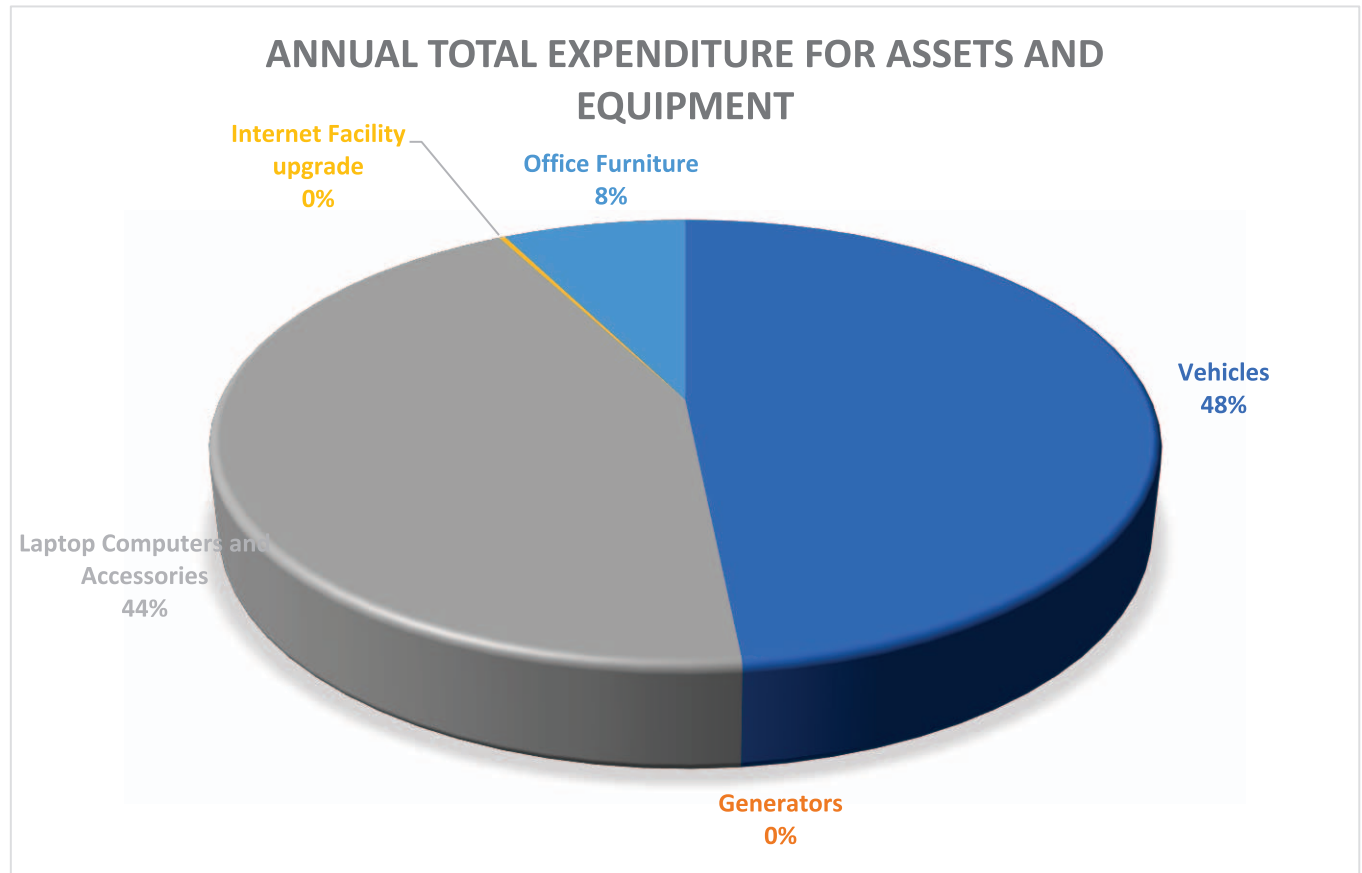
Expenditures came under four main broad categories namely Projects (40%), Assets and Equipment (3%) Supplies (6%), and Personnel/Operation Costs (51%).



For Personnel and Operating Costs, Salaries (58%) constituted the highest expenditure item followed by travels (14%) and trainings/partners' meetings (11%).

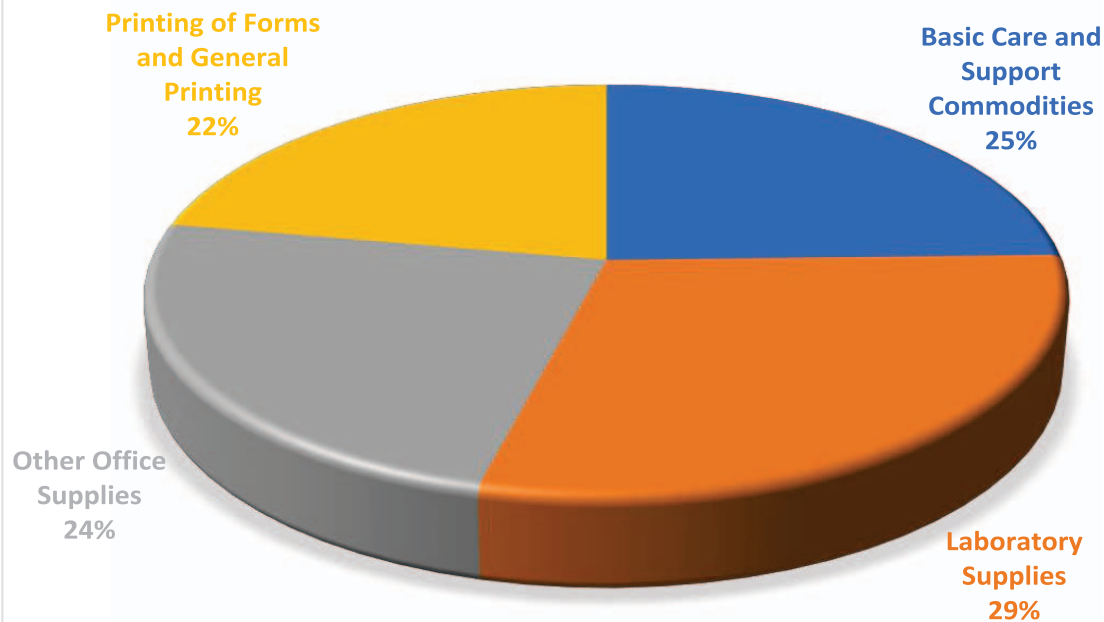


For Assets and Equipment, Vehicles consumed \$8% of expenditure followed closely by Laptop computer accessories (44%) and Office Furniture (8%).



Lastly, for Supplies, expenditures were closely shared by Laboratory supplies (29%), Care and Support Commodities (25%), Office supplies (24%) and Printing (22%).

ANNUAL EXPENDITURE FOR SUPPLIES



EXPENDITURE	2023	2022	Annual Total
PROJECT COSTS:			
Contractual Costs - Subgrant to Partners	₦ 4,378,381,956.28	₦ 5,298,450,298.30	₦ 9,676,832,254.58
TOTAL	₦ 4,378,381,956.28	₦ 5,298,450,298.30	₦ 9,676,832,254.58

ASSETS AND EQUIPMENT

Vehicles	₦ 309,929,450.60	₦ 24,101,250.00	₦ 334,030,700.60
Generators			₦ -
Laptop Computers and Accessories	₦ 192,103,541.80	₦ 110,604,665.58	₦ 302,708,207.38
Internet Facility upgrade	₦ 540,431.00	₦ 1,053,000.00	₦ 1,593,431.00
Office Furniture	₦ 20,372,000.00	₦ 31,357,332.75	₦ 51,729,332.75
TOTAL	₦ 522,945,423.40	₦ 167,116,248.33	₦ 690,061,671.73

SUPPLIES

			₦ -
			₦ -
Basic Care and Support Commodities	₦ 54,110,735.00	₦ 285,430,597.00	₦ 339,541,332.00
Laboratory Supplies	₦ 200,815,742.60	₦ 204,259,102.00	₦ 405,074,844.60
Other Office Supplies	₦ 170,188,730.96	₦ 161,230,165.31	₦ 331,418,896.27
Printing of Forms and General Printing	₦ 200,673,885.47	₦ 104,642,596.59	₦ 305,316,482.06
TOTAL	₦ 625,789,094.03	₦ 755,562,460.90	₦ 1,381,351,554.93

₦ -

**PERSONNEL AND GENERAL
OPERATING COSTS:**

	₦	₦	₦
Salaries	4,098,442,156.72	2,978,127,221.48	7,076,569,378.20
Fringe	389,727,012.91	287,195,169.85	676,922,182.76
Stationeries	79,830,995.82	63,378,389.80	143,209,385.62
Communication and Internet	164,450,728.51	109,113,950.61	273,564,679.12
Courier and Postage	11,560,408.08	7,385,025.65	18,945,433.73
Bank Charges	19,290,279.72	13,529,241.94	32,819,521.66
Electricity and Water	9,628,890.27	7,766,247.73	17,395,138.00
Rent	50,846,807.69	19,476,970.65	70,323,778.34
General Office maintenance	131,954,580.66	177,160,657.79	309,115,238.45
Generator maintenance	102,586,869.06	53,761,348.41	156,348,217.47
Audit fees	15,129,100.00	15,304,430.00	30,433,530.00
Vehicle maintenance and Insurance	83,204,050.07	84,935,587.09	168,139,637.16
Assets Insurance	3,127,425.00		3,127,425.00
Recruitment expenses	9,210,700.00	2,634,850.00	11,845,550.00
Training of Partners and Meetings	466,819,306.77	941,263,650.25	1,408,082,957.02
Publicity	3,423,834.00	727,260.00	4,151,094.00
Assistance to Indigent Persons	93,546,998.25	22,875,438.00	116,422,436.25
Travel - Domestic	832,084,326.94	851,737,917.51	1,683,822,244.45

Travel - International	₦ 10,103,514.70	₦ 19,414,381.28	₦ 29,517,895.98
Subscription to Caritas Internationalis and Caritas Africa	₦ 26,576,724.42		₦ 26,576,724.42
TOTAL	₦ 6,601,544,709.59	₦ 5,655,787,738.04	₦ 12,257,332,447.63
			₦ -
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	₦ 12,128,661,183.30	₦ 11,876,916,745.57	₦ 24,005,577,928.87
			₦ -
SURPLUS	₦ 706,642,917.45	₦ 261,049,499.34	₦ 967,692,416.79



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