

**Project: KOSACA HAF II PROJECT**

## **INTRODUCTION**

**Lift Up Care Foundation (LUCAF)** implemented a project tagged “**KOSACA HAF II PROJECT FOR THE PROMOTION OF HEALTHY LIVING FOR PLHIV AND IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN OKENE LGA OF KOGI STATE**” which covered a period of **18 MONTHS (MAY 2014 TO OCTOBER 2015)** at a total project cost of **N12, 207,000.00** with the support from **World Bank**. It focused majorly on prevention of new HIV infections and promotion of the wellbeing of Vulnerable Children and People Living with HIV through improve system and structures in selected communities in Okene Local Government Area of Kogi State.

The success of implementation recorded in the selected project communities of intervention was in the robust cooperation, commitment and support of several institutions and individuals such as the line ministries, Traditional rulers, Community gatekeepers, implementing CSOs in the LGA, LACA Officer of the LGA, Chief Social Welfare Officer of LGA, and other relevant stakeholders enjoyed through articulately arranged advocacy visits.

LUCAF adopted Community mapping strategy for administering questionnaire on randomly selected PLHIV and PABAs in Okene LGA which successfully produced fact sheet on Okene PLHIV’s attitude towards attendance of clinics and usage of their drugs as prescribed and also their belief in medium of HIV transmission.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Conduct Orientation for project staff**

LUCAF had position its staff well through orientation meetings and training for adequate comprehension and weekly project implementation team meetings where field fact were presented for review, study, discussion and deciding new strategies.

### **Trainings for community based volunteers**

Since the success of implementation depended much more on response of the target groups, Lift Up Care Foundation skillfully and consultatively selected and worked with support group leaders to identify, select and train volunteers across the identified support groups in Okene. The meticulously carried out training was visible during and after the project implementation.

Nationally approved assessment tools on OVC programming in Nigeria (Child Vulnerability Index, Child Status Index and Enrollment Cards) were employed to obtain detailed baseline assessment of child and households data.

### **Monthly monitoring of child school attendance**

Lift Up Care Foundation (LUCAF) through the volunteers conducted a monthly school visit for attendance monitoring of the enrolled children which measured vulnerable children's attendance level and school performance

### **Monitoring of PLHIV Support Group meeting**

Lift Up Care Foundation M&E officer attended and monitored the PLHIV support group meetings which encouraged regular attendance of meetings for experience sharing and proper adherence encouragement alongside the normal health talk by the support group members.

### **Quarterly child growth monitoring**

A quarterly child growth monitoring was a policy for child's nutrition status throughout the life of the project.

### **Community dialogue sessions with PLHIV Support Groups**

Community dialogue sessions were held with PLHIV Support groups where issues identified in the cause of HAF II Project implementation were discussed and addressed by LUCAF.

### **Training of Caregivers and PLHIV support group members on Income Generating Activity**

LUCAF identified through home visit and support group meeting activities and provided trainings on Income Generating Activities (IGA) for caregivers in Okene LGA which placed them well for financial freedom. Among many self and little finance involving production learning given are Liquid soap, Perfume, Room-freshner, Shampoo and Dettol soap. Also packaged with the trainings, was business management and knowledge to accessing the necessary materials for the production of the entire products demonstrated.

### **Disbursement of start-up grant to caregivers in Okene**

As a follow up to IGA trainings, LUCAF disbursed the sum of N10,000 to of the caregivers as a startup grant to enable them invest in identified viable businesses of their choice.

### **Establishment of Kids' Clubs in Okene**

Kids' Clubs were established to bring children together and the *Kids Club Manual* was adopted to support trained volunteers in psychosocial support – to facilitate short psychosocial support sessions among the children in age range of 6 to 12 years.

### **Referral of vulnerable children to access basic health investigation**

Children were referred to Okene Zonal hospital for basic health investigation (Malaria and HIV testing) and treatment.

### **Distribution of food supplements to caregivers of vulnerable children**

As part of the integrated services rendered to children, LUCAF distributed rice, beans and ingredients to caregivers to support the nutrition requirement of vulnerable children under their care.

### **Sensitization and capacity building for PLHIV on the prevention of Opportunistic diseases**

Capacity building sessions were organized for PLHIV to equip and enhance their knowledge on the proper ways of preventing opportunistic infections and disseminate the knowledge to colleagues which are mostly PLHIV and Relatives (PABA).

### **Condom Promotion Activities**

As part of the sponsor's mandate to LUCAF in Okene LGA assignment, several condom messaging, sensitization and demonstrations were carried out at individual volunteer cohort level and special sessions organized by LUCAF PMT.

### **Enrolment of Vulnerable children into school**

LUCAF identified and enrolled vulnerable children who were of school age but not in school owing to non-affordability of the school fee and or materials, paid fees and or provided materials for such.

### **Enrolment of Old Vulnerable Children into Vocational training centers in Okene**

Older vulnerable children were enrolled into vocational training centers and later provided with start-up kits to embark on their learnt trade e.g tailoring, mechanic, computer training, vulcanizing etc.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS**

- ✓ LUCAF successfully met the target of **1,925 PLHIV and 210 OVC** given to achieve by the sponsor.
- ✓ We transferred knowledge of HIV prevention and OVC programming to volunteers in Okene LGA for cohort group sessions and detail baseline assessment of child, household and service delivery successfully.
- ✓ We succeeded in the identification and formation of Child Protection Committee CPC for the purpose of the project.
- ✓ Effective monitoring of program and PLHIV support activities were also achieved.
- ✓ We built the capacity of some PLHIV Okene LGA on status disclosure our PLHIV clients now courageous to disclose their status to their spouses.
- ✓ SOP and NPA standard of services have been rendered to vulnerable children in our project implementing communities.

## **CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT**

- LUCAF had to employ and re-train another person as M&E Officer as the initially trained person that was part of KOSACA HAF II start up workshop resigned his appointment with the organisation.
- Short supply of data capturing tools by KOSACA forced LUCAF to within make more copies to cushion the effect.
- Community leaders are indispensable on any issues concerning the vulnerable children and their households in the community as they render indirect services to the households and the children which interventions are augmenting.
- Existing structures' patronage enhances project success and can therefore, not be neglected e.g Social welfare officer and Okene LACA officer.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Availability of necessary data capturing tools at the right time will boost achievement. Timely release of funds will prevent disconnect with already trained volunteers in the field for continuation of activities.

## ***Acknowledgements***

LUCAF acknowledges the support given by **the Ohinoyi of Ebiraland** and all his ward heads, **the Local Government Chairman** and his officials, Traditional Singers and Musicians, Religious and Opinion Leaders, Executive Director and staff of RELIEF, other community stakeholders and indeed our cooperating clients; Vulnerable Children and their caregivers and PLHIV leaders and members alike.

## **CONCLUSION**

To us, **LUCAF**, we went into implementation with great zeal and passion to add value to the lives of the target beneficiaries and, are grateful to **KOSACA** for giving us the opportunity to show-case our program implementation abilities. We give God the overall appreciation for life, protection, love and wisdom etc to successfully implement and achieve the whole lot. **To God be the glory.**