

## **LIFT UP CARE FOUNDATION (LUCAF) SMILE PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS IN ANKPA AND LOKOJA LGA**

The journey started in 2013 when a call for Expression of Interest was responded to by LUCAF. The Proposal was concluded after Organisational Capacity Assessments had been carried out and Lift Up Care Foundation was fortunate to be among the successful CSOs in Kogi State. With the various Capacity Building Workshops organised for CSOs staff, LUCAF staff fully participated in and were prepared for good comprehension and implementation of the SMILE Project Goal, Vision and Mission as they are in tandem with the LUCAF's.

Action swung on in March 2014 following the signing of a Fixed Obligation Grant (FOG) Contract. The Contract entrusted 4 Communities, **Ikanekpo, Ankpa, Emere and Enabo** all in Ankpa LGA for Enrolment of **3,500** Vulnerable Children from **875** Households for 6+1 services. LUCAF set about it by embarking on advocacy and sensitisation mission to various stakeholders in the four (4) communities and also at the local government level. It therefore created avenue for selecting Volunteers that underwent training and had 22 among the numbers recruited as Community Based Volunteers to drive the implementation of the project in their various communities. Another 22 volunteers were added towards FY15 following the CRS desire to double the target, VC and Households; and then additional 2 Communities (**Amoke and Abache**). In the same FY15, CRS graciously entrusted Lokoja LGA for LUCAF's coverage as inherited from a sister CSO. We implemented across the following communities in Lokoja LGA namely; **Madabo, Angwan –Kura, Adankolo, Karaworo, Cantonment, Kabawa, Angwan –Pawa, Rimi and Sarki – Noma** communities.

The Project had 16 staff and that include the Executive Director. The other 15 are: Project Manager, Finance Officer, 2 each of VC Officer, Nutrition Officer, HES Officer, Care & Support Officer, M&E Officer and 3 Data Clerks aside 3 Adhoc Data Entry staff that at various points of explosive data collections were engaged for entries into National OVC Management Information System (NOMIS).

The highlight of LUCAF accomplishment on the SMILE Program across the project implementation communities is as follows:

- Enrolments:

### **Ankpa LGA**

➤ Caregivers	-	<b>2,593 (287 Males and 2306 Females)</b>
➤ Vulnerable Children	-	<b>7,107 (3,766 Males and 3341 Females)</b>
➤ Number of Communities	-	<b>6.</b>

## Lokoja LGA

➤ Caregivers	-	<b>641 (123 Males and 518 Females)</b>
➤ Vulnerable Children	-	<b>2,310 (1,229 Males and 1,081 Females)</b>
➤ Number of Communities	-	<b>9.</b>

### • Services:

#### ➤ **Households Economic Strengthening (HES)**

- ✓ Agric Input: Provision of Pro-vitaminA Cassava Stem and Orange Fleshy Sweet Potatoes (OFSP) Vines for **850** Caregivers in the 6 Project Communities of Ankpa LGA in 2015, and **1,350** Caregivers in 2016, in 2017 **1,205** Caregivers got High Quality Protein Maize (HQPM), Bean, Orange, Oil palm, and coconut seedlings, while Lokoja LGA Caregivers were not interested in Agric input, only **198** Caregivers showed interest and got Pro-vitamin A Cassava Stem and OFSP Vines, **158** Caregivers got High Quality Protein Maize (HQPM)
- ✓ Cash Transfer of **N20,000.00** each was provided for **384** Caregivers in the 6 Project Communities of Ankpa LGA and in the 9 Communities of Lokoja LGA **104** Caregivers benefitted in 2016 and in 2018 another **139** set of Cash Transfer beneficiaries got **N20,000.00** each in Ankpa LGA and **55** Caregivers in Lokoja LGA. Towards the end of the program, final cash transfer was disbursed for a total of **466** Caregivers in Ankpa LGA, while a total of **203** caregivers received cash transfer of **N20,000** each. The cash transfer activity is one of the sustainability plans of the project across implementing communities.
- ✓ LUCAF SMILE formed a total of **26** Saving and Internal Lending Commission (SILC) groups across Ankpa LGA in 6 communities and **12** in Lokoja LGA. This has helped members access to loan from the group purse with which they have embarked on small businesses. This has taken root.
- ✓ SMILE in Ankpa LGA enrolled **47** beneficiaries into various vocational skill training in 2017 but **33** in 2018 successfully completed their training and were provided startup kits while, Lokoja LGA enrolled **49** beneficiaries and the **36** that completed their training successfully also were given start up kits appropriately.
- **Health**
- ✓ Trained **60** Adolescents Girls from Emere community on a Module with 14 Sessions covering Sexual and Reproductive Health Issues and HIV/AIDs Prevention with the aim of improving their lives and building their capacity to face life challenges.
- ✓ The project has consistently provided escort services to **28** and **26** PLHIV in Ankpa and Lokoja LGAs respectively after math of HCT conducted for all enrolled beneficiaries.
- **Psychosocial**
- ✓ Provided Refreshment for over **400** Kids and **540** Youths in Ankpa LGA and **144** Kids and **250** Youths in Lokoja LGA at each of their monthly Club Meetings/ Activities as motivation for attendance to improve on their social wellbeing. Special days for children were also organised for the Vulnerable Children (VC) with Refreshment and Gifts to over **100** VC in each of the Project LGAs.

✓ **800** and **700** caregivers in Ankpa and Lokoja LGAs respectively meet on monthly basis at forums (Caregiver Forum) where they discuss family centred issues for the wellbeing of the household. Refreshment were equally provided at their meetings accordingly.

➤ **Nutrition**

✓ Community - Infant and Young Child Feeding (C-IYCF) activities in Ankpa and Lokoja LGAs are solidly in place as forum of encouragement and support for the caregivers and other child bearing women in the communities' especially on exclusive breastfeeding and during their monthly meetings refreshment are provided for **150** and **80** participants at each meeting in Ankpa and Lokoja LGAs respectively. Food demonstration using locally available food items were conducted to enable caregivers utilise what they have to achieve maximum nutrient value. **Tom brown** recipes were prepared to manage moderately malnourish cases identified across communities of Ankpa and Lokoja LGA during the life span of the project.

➤ **Protection**

✓ In each Project Community of the LGAs of Intervention, gender norms sessions were delivered among the caregivers and household heads (Men) as step towards ending discrimination against the girl child and also violence against women. All beneficiary VC without birth certificate have been provided with their appropriately.

➤ **Education**

✓ Education performance assessments of VC in schools were carried out. Challenges were identified. As a step forward to addressing some of the identified challenges, **75** Dual Desks were provided for LGA Primary School, Amoke and LGA Primary School, Enabo in Ankpa LGA each while, **60** Dual Desks were provided for LGA Primary School, Kabawa in Lokoja LGA

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) provided the funds to the tune of over a hundred million naira to accomplish all of the above and more. The program officially kicks started March, 2014 and ended August, 2018.