

ActionAid Nigeria/Start Fund Emergency Assistance in IDP Camps in Benue State

Co-Implemented with First Step Nigeria

Report of Activities



February, 2021

1.0 Background

The emergence of COVID-19 pandemic across the world has adversely impacted all facets of the economy and society at large. Livelihoods is one of the notable areas the pandemic has had its negative impact, as many households have lost their livelihoods due to the pandemic thereby rendering many people jobless and causing a lot of hardship in Nigeria and other parts of the world. In times of emergencies, people who are living in various camps due to forced displacement become more vulnerable.

The Start Fund emergency assistance in the internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps in Benue state co-implemented by ActionAid Nigeria and First Step was meant to reduce the hardship faced by the IDPs as a result of COVID-19 pandemic in Benue state.

The intervention started with a planning meeting between ActionAid Nigeria and First Step project Team. Major outcomes of the planning meeting were; development of the intervention budget, setting intervention timelines and key deliverables.

The intervention lasted for two (2) months between January and February, 2021.

2.0 Activities

2.1 Stakeholder Engagement

The project started with stakeholder engagement to first of all inform relevant stakeholders about the intervention in the state and seek their support in the course of the intervention.

ActionAid Nigeria Team together First Step Team visited the Governor of Benue state, represented by his Deputy, Engr. Benson Aboonu. The Deputy Governor was delighted to welcome the Team in his office and promised the support the government to ensure successful implementation of the emergency assistance in the IDP camps in the state.

At the meeting were Commissioner of Health and Human Services, Commissioner for Youth and Sports and other government functionaries.

The Team also had engagements with camp officials and informed them of the intervention and sought their support and cooperation for successful implementation of activities in the IDP camps. The camps selected for the intervention were; Daudu 3 IDP camp, Gbajimba IDP camp in Guma LGA and Federal Housing IDP (Ichwa) camp and Abagena IDP camp in Makurdi LGA.

Some of the IDPs were selected to form women committees and community volunteers to support the implementation of the intervention across the 4 IDP camps. This was to ensure that the IDPs who the intervention targeted were fully carried along and were actively involved in effective implementation of the intervention.



Group photograph between ActionAid/First Sept Team and Benue state government representatives after the stakeholder engagement meeting held at the Deputy Governor’s office in Makurdi

2.2 Registration and Distribution of Cash for Food Assistance to IDPs

ActionAid/First Step Team jointly carried out registration of the IDPs in the four IDP camps for effective intervention. 1,500 beneficiaries across the 4 IDP camps were registered. The breakdown of these numbers across the 4 IDP camp are as follows; 450 in Gbajimba IDP camp, 500 in Daudu 3 IDP camp, 350 in Abagena IDP and 200 in Federal Housing (Ichwa) IDP camp. The sum of N15, 000 was distributed to each of the beneficiaries after registration.

Pictures 2-5: Pictures of ActionAid/First Team carrying out registration and distribution of cash for food to the IDPs





2.3 Sensitization on COVID-19 by Community Volunteers in the IDP camps

The Community Volunteers and Women Committees formed across the 4 IDP camps were trained to support the sensitization of the IDPs on COVID-19 to enhance awareness and disperse myths about the pandemic. This sensitization which lasted for 15 days was carried out by the community volunteers and monitored by First Step project team.

The sensitization was based on the following major areas concerning the COVID-19 pandemic;

- i. What Corona Virus Disease is
- ii. How Corona Virus disease can be transmitted from one person to another
- iii. Common signs of the Corona Virus disease and
- iv. Things you can do to protect yourself and others from the Corona Virus disease

Pictures 6 - 8: Sensitization on COVID-19 by Community Volunteers and Women Committees



2.4 Post Distribution Monitoring

In order to track how the beneficiaries used the money distributed to them, First Step project Team with funding support from ActionAid Nigeria carried out a post distribution monitoring exercise across the 4 IDP camps in Benue state. The IDPs expressed their excitement about how useful the cash for food assistance helped them in feeding their households members and reducing hunger. Others testified that they used part of the money to invest in their small businesses which yielded more profit to them.

The story of Alice

Alice Agashi is one of the beneficiaries who received the cash for food assistance of N15, 000. She is one of the persons living with disability and resident in Daudu 3 IDP camp. Alice is skillful in weaving, a skill she uses to fend for herself and the family. According to her, “I have used part of the money I received to buy food and used the rest to buy wig. After weaving, I sold it and got a profit of N2, 000. This skill helps me to be productive and be self-reliant.”



Alice Agashi seen weaving one of her wigs during the post distribution monitoring visit to Daudu 3 IDP camp

2.5 Learnings

In the course of implementation of the Start Fund emergency assistance, the following learnings were noted;

- i. The active involvement of the camp officials and IDPs in the implementation process proved very effective. As a result of this, the intervention was able to reach the real targeted population since they live together and knew one another. Other interventions which could not actively involve the IDPs in the implementation process achieved very little in this regard
- ii. The involvement of the IDPs in the implementation of activities in the camps enhanced acceptability and support which resulted in the successful implementation of the intervention
- iii. The IDPs appreciated the sincerity, transparency and genuineness of purpose of the Team in all engagements and activities in the camps. This was indeed inspiring and encouraging to the Team, to continue to uphold the values of the organizations involved in the implementation of the intervention

- iv. The IDPs appreciated the cash for food assistance more than food items distributed to them by other stakeholders. According to them, this helped them to purchase the kinds of food they really wanted while part of the cash was used to invest in small businesses which yielded more profit to them and helped them to be more self-reliant

2.6 Conclusion/Recommendations

The Start Fund Emergency Assistance achieved success. This is attributed to the intervention strategy adopted, which allowed for active participation of the IDPs in all the activities engaged in the course of implementation of the project. It is therefore recommended that;

- i. All interventions in the IDP camps should involve the IDPs actively to achieve effectiveness and efficiency
- ii. All actors should ensure transparency and accountability in all engagements with the IDPs and other relevant stakeholders as this enhances the support of targeted population towards the success of interventions
- iii. Interventions in the IDP camps should have a component that targets support to livelihoods. This contributes immensely to making the affected population self-reliant