

CRS' WORK IN NIGERIA

Catholic Relief Services began working in Nigeria in the 1960s. Today, CRS works in partnership with the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria and 11 archdioceses in eight states on a project called **Scaling Up the Nigerian Faith-based Response to HIV and AIDS (SUN)**. The **SUN Project**, which is funded by the **President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)**, helps provide high quality care, treatment and support that are both family and community-centered to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). CRS' continuous efforts to strengthen its partners' capacity in technical and management skills help facilitate the work of the **SUN Project** to meet the needs of Nigeria's OVC.

CRS Nigeria and their partners serve OVC and their families by providing a comprehensive package of services in the areas of education and health care, psychological support and protection, nutrition and economic strengthening through the **SUN Project**. These services help reduce the poverty level, HIV prevalence, and deaths associated with AIDS and give hope to OVC.

Since 1943, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has held the privilege of serving the poor and disadvantaged overseas. Without regard to race, creed or nationality, CRS provides emergency relief in the wake of natural and man-made disasters. Through development projects in fields such as education, peace and justice, agriculture, microfinance, health, HIV and AIDS, CRS works to uphold human dignity and promote better standards of living. CRS also works throughout the United States to expand the knowledge and action of Catholics and others interested in issues of international peace and justice. Our programs and resources respond to the U.S. Bishops' call to live in solidarity — as one human family — across borders, over oceans, and through differences in language, culture and economic condition.

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CRS OVC PROGRAMMING

Making an
Impact in
Nigeria





HOW IS CRS HELPING OVC IN NIGERIA?

In 2002, Nigeria was home to over 1.8 million children orphaned and made vulnerable (OVC) by HIV and AIDS. This year, the number of OVC is projected to reach 8.2 million. CRS services, with funding from PEPFAR, have reached 20,060 orphans and vulnerable children. Orphans and vulnerable children benefit from various services including antiretroviral therapy, general health care, home care, school assistance, education, food security, and psychosocial treatment. The work done by CRS and its partners in collaboration with Nigerian faith-based and community groups is crucial to increasing and strengthening the human and socioeconomic infrastructure of the community. While these services help individuals living with and affected by HIV, they also provide support to schools, orphanages, youth and women's organizations and individuals to help fight the spread of the AIDS pandemic.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CRS and its partners are making positive changes and are leaving lasting impacts in Nigeria. The SUN Project is giving OVC a brighter future. The project has taken steps to combat HIV and AIDS and related health problems by offering health care, educational, and psychological support services to beneficiaries.

CRS and local church efforts are bringing valuable resources and support to 251 local parishes. They are succeeding in the fight against HIV by involving many different stakeholders and by providing links to additional programs to provide a more holistic and comprehensive approach.

CRS has conducted trainings within target communities to help them strengthen their capacity. Twenty-nine CRS and partner staff have participated in Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) trainings, a program focused on income generation. Over 2,000 caregivers in 11 partner (arch)dioceses have attended trainings on OVC care and support, and over 800 diocesan staff and state-level OVC desk officers in eight states have received training on OVC program management.



ABEL: A SUN PROJECT SUCCESS STORY

INTRODUCTION

Abel was an adolescent when he lost both of his parents to AIDS and related diseases. At the age of 15, he was responsible for raising his younger siblings and for protecting his family's property.

The CRS SUN Project identified Abel as a care giver who could benefit from special funds geared toward helping OVC initiate small scale businesses. Abel had previous experience renting a motorcycle and using it to provide taxi services, so he decided to purchase a motorcycle to earn income. His business was proven successful, and he was able to provide for his family.

PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPACT

HIV is forcing young children like Abel to skip their adolescent years and become premature parents to their younger siblings. Abel endures the pain and suffering associated with HIV and has to live with the stigma that makes it extremely difficult for him to find a job. The CRS SUN Project provides psychosocial support to give OVC like Abel hope.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Abel's strength and devotion to his siblings are examples of great leadership. The SUN project in Nigeria provides continuous support to young people like Abel to help guide and support them to improve their lives while defeating HIV and its consequences.



ABEL'S STRENGTH

"Because of the help of CRS, I decided to take in [an orphan from outside my family], to raise him up, to sponsor him in his school fees. Because CRS is helping me, I promised them I would help another orphan which I am doing."