

COMPASS Update

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Nigerian communities take action to improve health and education

For decades, Nigeria has struggled with high levels of poverty that have led to poor health care and less-than-adequate educational systems. Health care issues include lack of support for family planning, drug shortages, and poorly trained service providers. As for education, public school enrollment is less than optimal, many schools are in desperate need of renovation, and teachers lack continuing education. With the support of the COMPASS Project, Nigerians are taking collective action toward improving their health and educational status, one community at a time.

COMPASS began by engaging communities through Community Coalitions (CCs) at the community level, Quality Improvement Teams (QITs) at the facility level, and clusters of Community Coalitions at the local government level during Local Government Forums (LGF). By enabling community members and local government groups to organize themselves effectively, they could realize their potential to identify and address many of their health and educational problems on their own.

Now in its second year COMPASS has helped many communities achieve their own goals. A few examples:

- Before COMPASS, expectant mothers in Ogudu-Ojota in Kosofe Local Government Area (LGA) (Lagos) received no delivery services at their primary health center. The Quality Improvement Team monitored a COMPASS-supported renovation of the facility and the first baby girl was born in December 2005.
- In communities in Bauchi State, routine immunization was not reaching large numbers of children. The Community Coalition in Futuk in Alkaleri LGA pursued and secured a regular supply of vaccines and promoted their importance, greatly boosting the immunization rates in that community.



Igbo traditional chief speaks at community meeting in Zuba, FCT
Photo: Auwalu Kawu, COMPASS ACO

- The Kwara Community Coalition in Nasarawa helped renovate the primary health care facility and two classrooms at the primary school. They also dug a well for the school.
- After renovating the Dorayi Karama Primary School in Kano, the community's Quality Improvement Team campaigned to promote the importance of girls' education to community members.
- The Community Coalition was instrumental in finally getting electric power restored at the primary health care facility in Karu in FCT after an eight-month outage.

Throughout COMPASS-supported states, groups at the grassroots' level are being organized and empowered to make changes that have a lasting positive impact on their lives and the well-being of their communities. Progress gains momentum, as villagers realize their own potential to identify their needs, develop solutions, and finally take steps to make those solutions become reality.

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Hadiza and Mairo: delighted to wear school uniforms for the first time
Photo: Musa Abdullahi, COMPASS Nasarawa



Pupils of Dari community science school solving a math problem
Photo: Musa Abdullahi, COMPASS Nasarawa

HOW A LITTLE VILLAGE WENT BIG ON REFORM

Eighty-five kilometers from Nigeria's capital lies Dari, a rural settlement with a population of 5,000 located in Nasarawa State. Serving the community's children is an old school building, which, until quite recently, was fast becoming a haven of inactivity. In Dari, many parents encourage their daughters to seek menial jobs in the Federal Capital Territory. Pressured by their families, even children rely on menial jobs and street "hawking" to help supplement family incomes. This effectively deprives school-aged girls of attending school.

Despite the risks and hazards involved, menial "job hunting" has become a popular way to improve living standards, and many girls look forward to their frequent trips to the capital to work for meager salaries. Ten-year-old Hadiza Abdullahi (*not her real name*) recounted her first experience: ***"I was forced to work under hard conditions, such as carrying heavy loads, washing, and other dirty jobs just to make money. Sometimes, I couldn't find a place to sleep."*** Hadiza is just one of many girls who are looking for an improved quality of life. Another 10-year-old, Mairo Sule (*not her real name*), said: ***"I was involved in an accident. I almost died, and there was nobody to take care of me. There was not enough food, and yet I couldn't spend the little money I had made because I had to bring good money back home."***

The migratory habits of these children affected enrollment and retention of pupils at the community school in Dari. Compounding the problem was the lack of a platform for community members to discuss and

resolve common issues. Recognizing this gap, COMPASS helped to establish a Community Coalition including teachers, parents, farmers, traders, and service providers to identify and resolve health and education problems facing the Dari community. COMPASS utilized a participatory approach which encouraged Coalition members to engage actively in developing and implementing solutions, which often included fund-raising or generating volunteer labor.

As eight-year-old Rakiya Haruna (*not her real name*) prepared to begin hawking with her peers in Nigeria's capital, news reached her that her fate had changed. During a Community Coalition meeting, members had discussed the problem of low school enrollment and the trend in migration, as well as general cleanup of the community. As a result, parents resolved to send their children to school, and forbade menial jobs during school hours, encouraging others in the community to follow their example. In addition, community members agreed to hold cleanup exercises every month. Now the community environment is improved, and members are even taking turns to clean the school. Also, teachers from Dari Science Primary School are improving their teaching skills through the COMPASS teacher-training program and an innovating program of interactive radio instruction.

School enrollment in Dari has almost doubled, increasing from 376 to 687 pupils, almost half of which are girls. Citizens of Dari are pleased with the changes they have created for themselves and their children. As community leader Wakayi Bawa says, ***"If a stranger enters your house and tells you your house is dirty, it does not mean he dislikes you; he only wants you to make amends."***

BRIEFS

- Through their initiatives, members of Gadabiyu Community Coalition (CC) in FCT, have commenced the building of a health facility. Inspired by the formation of the CC by COMPASS in December 2005, two members of the community donated land while other members contributed money and labor. Their efforts catalyzed help from other sources including a donation of 3000 cement blocks, two truckloads of gravel and two of sand, and N300,000 from a member of the house of assembly. Construction of the facility which started in May 2006, has now reached lintel level.
- In a bid to stop the employment of non-qualified teachers, the Nasarawa chapter of the Federation of Muslim Womens' Associations of Nigeria (FOMWAN) made advocacy visits to the Permanent Secretaries of SUBEB and Ministry of Local Government Affairs, and Emirs of Doma and Lafia to discuss teachers' salaries and employment. As a result, the Nasarawa State Education Secretary placed an embargo on employment of non-qualified teachers in the state. On his own part, the Emir of Lafia will discuss issues raised by FOMWAN with his cabinet for presentation to the State Governor.
- 1400 Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) from COMPASS-supported schools are now able to support implementation of the UBE Act and other laws influencing the quality of education. The PTAs were trained through a cascade training by NGOs from the CSACEFA Coalition. Through their involvement, the NGOs have continued to improve their organizational and management capacity.
- Health and Sustainable Development Association of Nigeria (HESDAN) in Lagos has continued to build the capacity of school health marshals to promote the prevention and treatment of malaria and diarrhea. The NGO recently collaborated with WAMCO Plc (Friesland) to donate exercise books and with CHEDCOM (another NGO) to donate 30 Insecticide Treated Nets. In addition, HESDAN launched resource leveraging campaigns with the Dangote group of companies and Union, Zenith and First Banks, all in Ikorodu LGA.

PARTNERSHIPS

- A performance needs assessment (PNA) for revitalizing intra-uterine device (IUD) was conducted in three LGAs in Lagos State in collaboration with the ACQUIRE Project. Focus group discussions were held in the LGAs to identify root causes of low acceptance and interventions which could revitalize the use of IUDs in communities. Next steps will include raising community awareness of modern contraceptive methods including IUD, involving men, and engaging community workers to provide information and referrals.
- The Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) facilitated a discussion with 57 private clinic owners on the importance of providing routine immunization services and the need for private sector involvement. As a result of these meetings, 20 private clinics in Nasarawa and six in Lagos began providing routine immunization in close collaboration with SMOH.
- Continuous collaboration with State Universal Basic Education, State Ministries of Education, National Commission on Colleges of Education, Teacher Research Council, Universal Basic Education Commission, and the Nigerian Teachers Institute, has led to the successful review of the Primary Education Studies. Technical inputs from COMPASS ranged from inclusion of health topics, gender issues, use of local resources for production of instructional materials to literacy and numeracy.
- In a recent partnership, Department of Community Development and Population Activities and COMPASS strengthened the management capacity of 432 service providers and health managers at state and LGA levels in Kano, Bauchi and Nasarawa states, in Contraceptive Logistics Management Systems. The effort helped to streamline how drugs and commodities are purchased, stored, and distributed.
- To create gains in malaria, COMPASS and the Roll Back Malaria (RBM) program trained over 1000 service providers in malaria treatment using the new guidelines. The training which benefitted Lagos, Kano and Nasarawa states was accompanied by RBM distribution of recommended malaria drugs and Insecticide Treated Nets through health facilities.

ALBUM



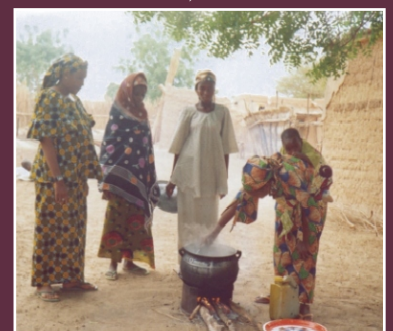
Awareness campaign during 2006 safe motherhood day in Lagos State
Photo: Morris Kamara, COMPASS Lagos



Display of electrical materials donated by Gwagwa Community Coalition for Gwagwa PHC in FCT
Photo: Gombi Ibrahim, COMPASS FCT



Debrief session for district and ward heads on Immunization Plus Days in Zaria
Photo: Dr. Auwalu Kawu, COMPASS ACO



Volunteers prepare for PD/Hearth session in Kano State
Photo: Garba Babale, COMPASS Kano



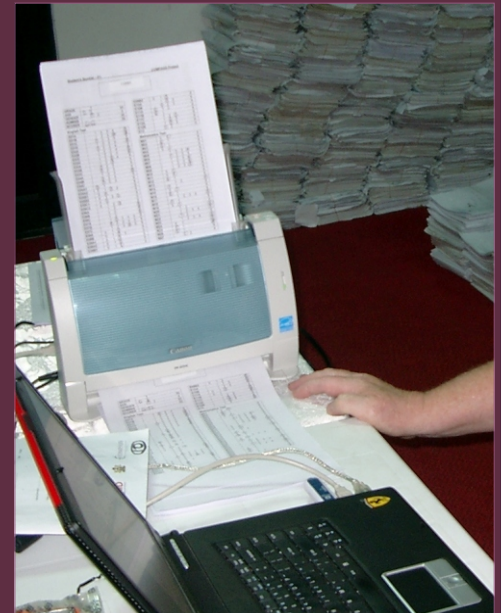
Traditional Birth Attendant explains a point to participants during a dialogue session organized by a subgrantee in Bauchi State
Photo: Rabi Ekele, COMPASS Bauchi



Student testing in a control site in Abuja
Photo: Semere Solomon, COMPASS ACO



Scoring of student achievement tests
Photo: Semere Solomon, COMPASS ACO



Data processing and storage with advanced technology
Photo: Semere Solomon, COMPASS ACO

Advanced student-testing technology comes to Nigeria

Dozens of Nigerian scorers pored over heaps of pupil workbooks in a large conference hall—about the only space that could embrace a task as daunting as the scoring of 16,044 student achievement tests.

When USAID and the Government of Nigeria launched the Community Participation for Action in the Social Sector (COMPASS) Project in mid-2004, the partnership took on the challenge of implementing the largest integrated intervention to date in Nigeria's education and health sectors. The project also heralded new possibilities for evaluating its impact on the quality of basic education in Nigeria through comparing performance trends in schools over the five-year life of the project.

According to UNICEF, most countries rely on academic examinations to determine student competency. Only a few measure student achievement to assess and improve their educational systems. Nigeria recently joined this league through the COMPASS Project.

For the first time ever in Nigeria, rigorous scientific student achievement testing was conducted to assess the impact of interventions in improving math proficiency and English literacy. Carried out by COMPASS through EDUCAN Consultants in May - June 2006. 32,088 pupils, 888 teachers, and 170 head teachers participated in the recent exercise, producing massive numbers of pupil workbooks and questionnaires for scoring.

Launched in the second year of the project, the process involved developing testing tools (which collated 66,000 elements of concrete information and anecdotal notes during a pilot exercise), analyzing preliminary data captured during field-testing, and developing valid test items and testing methods to measure literacy and numeracy achievement of primary 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 pupils.

Explaining the school testing selection process, education testing expert Gilles Fournier of EDUCAN noted that 130 schools in Kano, Nasarawa and Lagos states, where COMPASS implements basic education interventions, participated in the assessment. He added that 40 schools from the Federal Capital Territory were randomly selected as control schools.

The process also involved five separate training events and preparation of a step-by-step checklist and scoring guide which were distributed to test administrators and scorers.

According to education testing expert Dr. Denis Mildon, also of EDUCAN, several measures were taken to assure the reliability and consistency of scoring by teams. Periodically scored papers were reviewed to assure that scorers were using the scoring guides in a consistent manner.

To verify consistency of scoring from year to year, 200 pupil workbooks from each grade level were set aside for rescoring at the next scoring session.

“Beyond implementing a variety of interventions, community-based education projects should be able to demonstrate how assessing literacy and numeracy can improve the quality of education,” said COMPASS Senior Education Advisor Semere Solomon.

The results of the student achievement testing will provide insight into the effectiveness of the COMPASS/GoN partnership which targets interactive radio instruction (IRI) as a primary component of the project, along with teacher training interventions, scholarships targeting Primary Education students, development and distribution of instructional materials, school health and nutrition interventions, and subgrants and capacity-building assistance to Parent-Teacher Associations.

In Lagos, Nigeria, Toyin Adekunle and other program volunteers, equipped with shoulder bags filled with brochures and educational materials, provide information at community festivals and meetings. They teach community members about good nutrition, disease prevention, simple skills for taking care of sick children at home, treatment of infections and injuries from accidents, and management of symptoms such as high fevers and dehydration.

Throughout developing countries, high rates of illness and death in children under the age of five are mainly caused by treatable and preventable diseases such as malaria, measles, diarrhea and acute respiratory infections. Malaria, the number one killer, accounts for 30% of deaths in this vulnerable group. In many rural settings, parents lack basic knowledge and skills on childhood illness. Further exacerbating the problem, those wishing to seek help at a health facility often have no means to pay for the services or experience anxiety about seeing a service provider.

Through its community health intervention strategy to improve the health and well-being of children living in Kano, Lagos and Nasarawa, the COMPASS project engages over 1,000 trained volunteers (known locally as Community Health Promoters) to teach community members especially mothers - about family health.

So far, over 50,000 clients in the three states have been reached by community health promoters, with information on how to prevent and treat malaria and good nutrition. They also maintain effective links between the communities and health care providers and often refer community members to health facilities.

VOLUNTEERS hit the streets

against common childhood illnesses



A Community Health Promoter invites mothers to immunize their children during the 2006 child health week in Ojo LGA in Lagos State
Photo: Dr. Joseph Monehin, COMPASS Lagos

"Since they are volunteers, it is easier to continue their efforts" said Dr. Joseph Monehin a COMPASS State Child Survival Program Manager. ***"Their membership in the Community Coalitions has proved effective for reaching a wider audience with messages on reproductive health and family planning as well."***

YOUR LEGACIES ARE SECURE

This issue is dedicated to the memories of our dear colleagues, Dr. Bunmi Dosumu, and Dr. Ben Aigbomian. Their passion for improved health and education services remain an inspiration to all of us. May their gentle souls rest in perfect peace.



Dr. Olubunmi Olukemi Dosumu
USAID/Nigeria



Dr. Benjamin Aigbomian
COMPASS Public-Private
Partnership Advisor

Amina Abdullahi, an 18-year-old polio victim, sat on a wooden stool in a crowded workshop. With a slight smile, she held a hand-dyed cotton cloth on its edge, steering it through the new sewing machine. As she pushed the cloth, one could see that both her hands were slightly twisted. When she got up, she walked favoring her left leg.



Amina at work in KPVTA workshop
Photo: Mohammed Jiya-Doko, COMPASS Kano

A story of survival

how a little push made the difference

She is just one of thousands of polio victims. Polio is an infectious disease caused by a virus that invades the nervous system and can cause crippling paralysis.

As in many other countries, polio victims in Nigeria are confronted with discrimination and find it difficult to lead a



Some of Amina's products on display
Photo: Mohammed Jiya-Doko, COMPASS Kano

normal life. For Amina, the situation worsened when her father passed away. She became the sole provider for her family, and although she wanted to train as a tailor, nobody would let her practice in their shop. **"I gave up hope of ever learning anything, as no one would accept me, and with my father's demise, the future looked bleak,"** she said. Social discrimination has led many polio victims like Amina to resort to "street begging", a common site in most Nigerian cities.

In 2003, Amina learned of the Kano Polio Victims Trust Association (KPVTA), an organization set up 26 years ago to provide financial and technical support, including vocational training, for its polio-disabled members so they can engage in cottage industries to support their families. Hoping to learn new skills and then set up her own shop, Amina joined KPVTA where she began to learn and practice tailoring with 30 other women in the tailoring class. The women took turns practicing on only two sewing machines and often had to wait around for as long as four days to get a chance at the machines. Most of them gave up.

Learning of the situation, COMPASS provided the Association with new equipment, under funding provided by the Leahy War Victims Fund, including three welding machines, 10 sewing machines, five knitting machines and two specialized embroidery machines. The news spread fast among members of the Association and Amina and most of the other trainees returned to the center, along with 23 new members in the tailoring classes, for a total of approximately 53.

In August 2006, Amina learned she had been admitted into an advanced vocational skills acquisition training organized by COMPASS in collaboration with the JOBS project in Kano. **"I was filled with tears,"** she said **"when my name was called as one of those to benefit from the special training."** With only three weeks in this advanced class, Amina has improved her sewing skills markedly and is confident she can use them to fulfill her dream of opening her own shop.

IMPROVING the quality of service COMPASS-FMoH launch National Obstetric Care Protocol in Abuja

Each year, millions of women, newborns, and children die of preventable causes. In Nigeria, 704 out of 100,000 women die during childbirth. While the interventions that could save their lives are widely known, they are often not available either to health care providers or to those who need them most.

One of the Millennium Development Goals is to improve maternal health care by the year 2015. Concretely, this translates into achieving a 75% drop from the unacceptable levels of maternal mortality registered in 1990. However, this can only be realized through increased availability of cost-effective health care solutions for women and infants.

In collaboration with COMPASS, the Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) in 2005 launched a campaign to improve the technical skills of health care providers by promoting timely interventions during emergencies and increasing the use of services by pregnant women in Nigerian communities.

“Working closely together in 51 LGAs in Kano, Lagos, Bauchi, and Nasarawa states, as well as the FCT, the partnership has recorded several milestones,” commented COMPASS Senior Reproductive Health Advisor Dr. Habib Sadauki. ***“More than 2,000 community- and facility-based providers have improved their reproductive health and family planning skills through this collaboration.”***

Recognizing the importance of quality standards, COMPASS and the FMoH agreed to update the National Clinical Service Protocol for Obstetric and Neonatal Care. ***“This task became necessary, since the existing document was outdated and was no longer helpful in reducing the unacceptably high maternal and infant deaths in the country,”*** said Dr. Shehu Sule, Director of Community Development and Population Activities, FMoH.

So it was worth celebrating when the comprehensive, user-friendly document was finally published after a year of research, writing, consultations, and review by a distinguished team of health managers and trainers from Nigerian tertiary institutions, the Nigerian Medical Association, the Nursing and Midwifery Council, Schools of Midwifery, FMoH, and development partners.

The inclusion of recent advances in obstetric care makes the manual indispensable for health care providers, who may not have had access to other sources of up-to-date information. ***“Most of the common obstetric and immediate neonatal problems and disorders in Nigeria have been captured in this protocol,”*** commented Professor O.A. Ladipo, President of the Association for Reproductive and Family Health and a member of the review team.

Recommending the Protocol for use by all health care providers during a formal launch in September 2006, the Honorable Minister of Health, Professor Eytayo Lambo, stated, ***“Developing a National Clinical Service Protocol for Obstetric Care is within the current health sector reform***



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH
NIGERIA

NATIONAL CLINICAL SERVICE PROTOCOL for OBSTETRIC AND NEONATAL CARE



Front cover of the National Clinical Service Protocol for Obstetric and Neonatal care



Honorable Minister of Health Professor Eytayo Lambo flanked by Director DCDPA Dr. Shehu Sule, COMPASS Senior Reproductive Health Advisor and some health management experts during the launch

Photo: Kemi Ayanda, COMPASS ACO

agenda for quality service provision. It is also in line with our vision of zero tolerance regarding the death of women from pregnancy-related causes.”

Optimistic about the relevance of the Protocol in contributing to the reduction of maternal and child deaths, Dr. Sule said, ***“It is my sincere hope that with the proper implementation and use of this document at the various levels of service delivery, Nigeria will be on course to achieving one of the health-related Millennium Development Goals.”***



A FOMWAN member speaks at a community dialogue session
Photo: Karen Sani, COMPASS ACO

Community dialogue improves immunization coverage in Kano

Malama Hafsat is a female Islamic scholar in Warawa Local Government Area. Like most women in this very remote part of the country, Hafsat performed house chores and took care of her family's needs, in the mornings. In the afternoons, she taught women in the royal house about the Islamic way of life.

Hafsat is highly respected for her knowledge and practice of the tenants of the Islamic faith. In recognition of the role she could play in reaching community members with accurate information on the importance of accepting immunizations for their children, a COMPASS partner, FOMWAN (Federation of Muslim Women's Association of Nigeria), paid an advocacy visit to the traditional ruler and Malama Hafsat, prior to the May 2006 Immunization Plus Days (IPDs)

The advocacy Team highlighted the serious shortfalls in childhood immunization in Nigeria, saying fewer than 13% of children aged 12 - 23 months were fully immunized, according to the 2003 National Immunization Coverage Survey. In 2005, the country accounted for 95% of confirmed polio cases in Africa and as of September, 2006, 64% of all polio cases in the world were from Nigeria.

Following this visit, Hafsat included immunization messages in her classes with 40 women students. She discussed the safety and benefits of immunization and emphasized that as a basic disease prevention measure, getting immunized is the Islamic right of the child and the mother's obligation. Feeling defensive, this generated disapproval from her students who left the afternoon lessons in anger.

Learning of the uproar, the traditional ruler conveyed a community dialogue session, as had been introduced by COMPASS in Project-supported communities. The forum

created a platform for a larger number of community members to discuss immunization, express their fears and doubts about it, and dispel polio vaccine myths, such as the belief that it can decrease fertility and may cause diseases like HIV/AIDs.

With COMPASS' accurate and culturally-appropriate information, the traditional ruler was able to reinforce the importance and benefits of immunizations, calm the situation, and return classes to normalcy. The intervention paid off as the number of children immunized during the May rounds of IPDs in Warawa LGA increased from 54,045 to 62,224 in June 2006.

Proud of their decisions, three women called the attention of Nabila Ismail, a COMPASS Polio Eradication Officer, during the rounds to say **"we were part of the group addressed in the Hakimi's Palace and we would like to get our children immunized."**

Through its polio eradication program, the Community Participation for Action in the Social Sector (COMPASS) Project has partnered with the National Program on Immunization and other donor agencies to improve the coverage and quality of polio supplemental immunization activities in Kano, Bauchi, Jigawa, Katsina, Zamfara, Kebbi, Sokoto and Kaduna states.

COMPASS gathers data on a regular basis to identify where and why children were not immunized, take rapid action in assisting partners with focusing resources on effective solutions, and complement immunization activities where needed. Additional support through community outreach and advocacy to religious and political leaders is provided by COMPASS' four Nigerian partners.

COMPASS UPDATE is published quarterly by the Community Participation for Action in the Social Sector (COMPASS) to communicate the work of our Project .

COMPASS represents a partnership between the Government of Nigeria and the United States Agency for International Development. The Project engages local Nigerian communities in building high quality, integrated health and education

COMPASS is implemented by nine partner organizations under the leadership of Pathfinder International

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