

# RWF Newsletter

Issue #3

April 2011

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In the spotlight

## Welcome to

The third edition of our quarterly newsletter. This time we present you with one of our many success stories and wish you happy reading.

If you would like us to consider your article for posting through our newsletter, please contact us through our email address: [info@ruralwfw.org](mailto:info@ruralwfw.org).

## Cross-cutting activity boosts project work

The European Union (EU) is actively involved in a number of projects in Nigeria. It has worked with Nigerian government, partners and NGO's supporting the rule of law, protecting human rights, combating corruption, strengthening political competition and civil society. One of such projects is the "Empowerment for Peace and Security" (ESPS) - a project funded by the European Commission and implemented by Rural Women Foundation in Imo and Abia States.

This project is to build structures that can help alleviate poverty, assist youth and women to obtain gainful employment and to strengthen structures for peace and security. ESPS was embraced by all members of the four communities where RWF was present and implementation seemed easy amidst the spate of kidnaps and crimes. This was due mainly to some of the cross cutting activities carried out by RWF.

The success of any project depends on good advocacy and well carried out cross-cutting activities. Community buy-in and involvement in activities are very important for any project to be implemented without obstacle. RWF ensures proper community entry after consultation with all the gatekeepers and community leaders which builds trust with the community members on the validity and importance of our work in their communities.

RWF, apart from involving members of the communities also engaged in cross cutting activities which are programs that support women and girls to maximize extension and

sustainability of the project and other development programs. In the case of water supply, hygiene, livelihood, provision and access, there is evidence that women and girls do all these work. The drudgery of fetching water by women, caring for hygiene of the children and the home with little amount of water fetched. Since there is community involvement in the implementation of the peace and security project, every member of the communities became involved in the project. RWF developed activities in order to address issues such as public health, clean water and poverty alleviation through income generating activities (IGA). Such activities include the provision of water guards, awareness programs on HIV/AIDS, providing leadership and support in dissemination through peer educators and super volunteers as well as IGA.



The distribution of water guards was a great incentive and also a way of providing clean drinking water which will prevent water borne diseases. Apart from providing safe drinking water, the distribution of the water guards is also aimed at raising awareness to hygiene, improved health, reduced diseases and infant mortality.

Hence, people should learn about the possible solutions for purifying their water in order to get the safest drinkable water possible. The awareness programs on HIV/AIDS was another area where the issue of public health was communicated and the members of the communities applauded RWF effort.



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## news- letter

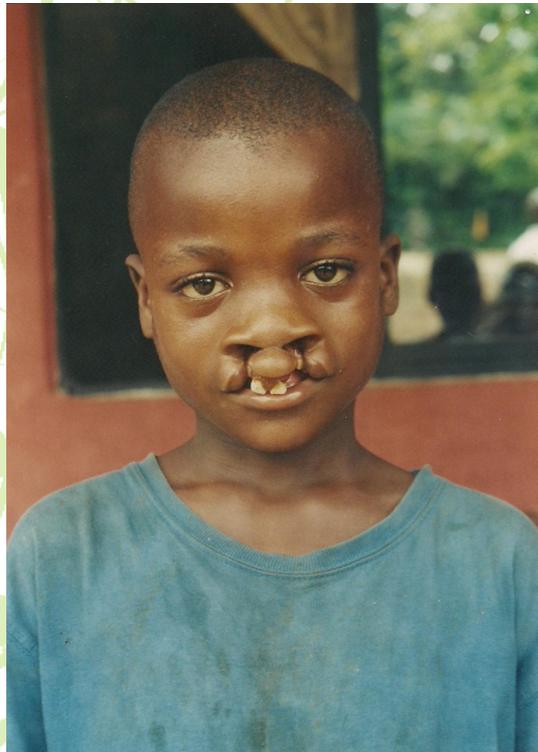
Would you like to receive our newsletter to stay updated about your NGO Rural Women Foundation, right into your e-mail box? Please send an e-mail to [info@ruralwf.org](mailto:info@ruralwf.org) to subscribe and we will keep you updated.

Income generating grant items were distributed to beneficiaries and this was the high-point of the activities to foster the ESPS project. The employment of local staff, identification of super volunteers and volunteers as well as the training and use of peer educators contributed to enhancing the lives of many community members and further boosted the ESPS project.

### Ifeanyi John Ogbonnaya

#### An RWF success story

Ogbonnaya Ifeanyi John, a 9 year old from Umuawa-Ibu, a community in Okigwe Local government area is one of the children identified by RWF staff under its project implementation with the Children of Hope project, a USAID funded program. He was identified and enrolled into the CH project due to his high vulnerability index score.



Ifeanyi was born with cleft lips and this made his condition in the community very precarious as most of the community members believed that Ifeanyi's deformity was as a result of witchcraft and tried to ostracise his mother and father from their community. Ifeanyi's father passed away a few

years after his birth and his mother became mental which worsened Ifeanyi's problems and turned him into a near orphan.

### In the spotlight

#### EU Empowers women and youth for peace and security project

To assist in fostering peace and security in Nigeria, The European Union (EU) uses poverty alleviation program to empower the women and youths in two communities (Izombe and Ohaji) in Imo state and two communities (Amaba-Ukwu Item and Umuisiobu) in Abia state. Rural Women Foundation (RWF) through the EU funding distributed income generating grant items to 300 women and youths selected from the four communities as the beneficiaries. This EU-INSIDE project titled "Empowerment for peace and Security" directly benefited more than 3,000 people in the two states through various activities which included IGA grants, distribution of basic care kits, trainings on conflict management and resolution, business management, accounting and book keeping, partnership skills, good governance, etc. The project also provided job opportunities for more than 8 community members.

When RWF staff identified him in his community as one of the malnourished children, he was referred to the hospital at Okigwe where he was treated for his malnourishment. After this initial referral which involved minimal costs which was paid through funds provided by the Children of Hope project, RWF staff took an extra interest in Ifeanyi and decided to explore ways to help the boy to overcome not only his cleft lips problems which greatly affected his intake of normal food and made him look a lot younger than his years but also how to help with his home situation which was equally unstable due to the mental state of his mother.



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## contact info

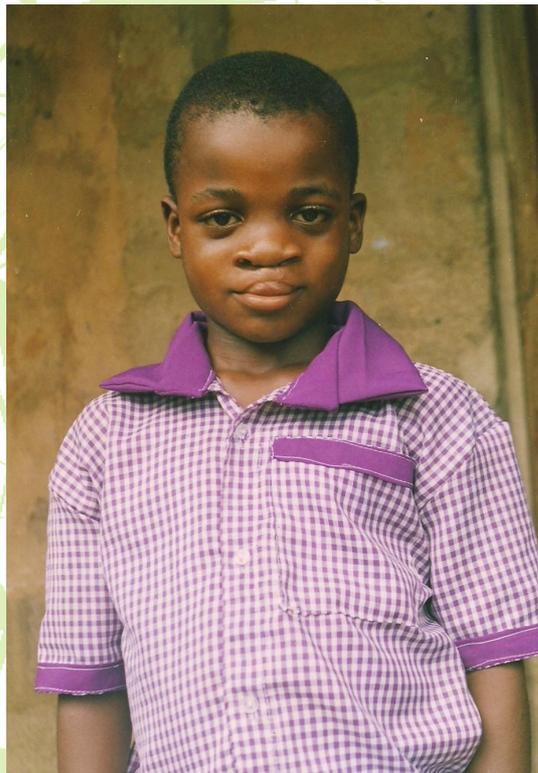
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Through enquiries by RWF staff, it was discovered that there was a group of doctors under the Smile Train International program who were located at Enugu and carried out operations to correct cleft lips problems in children and adults. RWF staff made appointments with the doctors located at the Orthopedic hospital in Enugu and arranged for consultation with Ifeanyi. This was the beginning of the collaboration between RWF, The smile train doctors and Orthopedic hospital Enugu. This resulted in the first of several operations carried out by the Smile Train doctors at Enugu to correct Ifeanyi's cleft lips problems.



The operation was a complete success and Ifeanyi did very well during his recovery period. RWF staff encountered many problems in trying to keep Ifeanyi out of trouble through involving the whole community in his case. Ifeanyi's mother who had a mental condition was only interested in taking her son out with her to beg on the streets of Umuawaibu. Due to the seriousness of the operations that were conducted on Ifeanyi, RWF staff agreed with the Eze of Umuawa -

ibu that he must care for Ifeanyi during the surgery recovery periods and that the mother could only visit occasionally to avoid a relapse. RWF also provided Ifeanyi through the Eze of Umuawa Ibu with a variety of foodstuffs (mostly liquid food to keep him during the recovery period as well as pocket money to purchase some extra food for him.

Since the last operation on Ifeanyi which was carried out in February 2011 to further correct his dental settings, Ifeanyi has done well and began integration into a sort of normal life.

Despite this success story and how Ifeanyi's new appearance has given him and his community an added boost, constant bickering between his sick mother and the community members is still a source of worry for RWF staff who do not know how to ensure Ifeanyi's safety from his mother without interfering too much in his family situation.

This is the journey so far for master Ogbonaya Ifeanyi John who is now 10 years old.

RWF's strategy is now to focus on trying to find help for Ifeanyi's mother. This could be in the form of referral to a hospital where she can get medication for her mental problems but also through sourcing for funds on her behalf and helping her to start her own business which can help her to support her son. Without this sort of intervention, RWF staff will continue to worry about Ifeanyi's situation.

