

## CHOLERA PREVENTION TIPS



Wash your hands often with soap and water

Drink and use safe water



STOP THE SPREAD



Cook your food well. Keep it covered, Eat it hot. Peel fruits and vegetables



Ensure your surroundings are clean

New Horizons Unveiled:

Bridging Borders

Breaking Chains

Lighting the Path

Seeding Prosperity

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## New Horizons Unveiled: Charting a Course with Seasoned Stewards

**Suleiman Nathaniel**

DEC marked a pivotal moment at the heart of Bauchi State as it unveiled its new lineup of stewards, setting the stage for a transformative chapter in community development. Amidst cheers and anticipation, the reappointment of seasoned leaders like Sarah Kefas Drambi, Lazarus Ruben Yerima, Kefas Solomon Akundo, and Muhammed Lawal Bello affirmed their unwavering commitment and expertise. Joining them, a cadre of fresh voices and visionaries emerged on the Board of Directors: Mary Adeleke Adenike, Ani Ogechukwu Confidence, Oho Stella Bose, Otu Deborah Bebuo, Barr Yop Shom, Helen John, and Mrs. Efosa Esther Okpiaru, each poised to steer DEC toward unprecedented heights.

Behind the scenes, the stalwart Board of Trustees, including luminaries such as Hannatu Ahmed Yaro, Jonah Lah, Andrew Gwaivangmin Illiya, Dauda Ibrahim Kofar-Bai, Lydia Tsammani Haruna, and Maimuna Mohammed Yakubu, underscored DEC's enduring dedication to its mission. Their collective wisdom and foresight laid a solid foundation for continued impact and innovation in community empowerment.

As the inauguration unfolded, it was clear that DEC was not merely introducing new leaders but heralding a new era of proactive leadership, innovation, and inclusive growth. With this dynamic team at the helm, DEC is poised to navigate new horizons, embodying resilience, vision, and a steadfast commitment to transforming communities for the better.



BoT chair presenting a gift to an outgoing BoD member Hannatu Unanam

BoT chair presenting a gift to the outgoing BoD Rabi Ibrahim



Group picture of the BoD and BoT

Former BoD addressing the meeting

### CORPORATE IDENTITY:

DEC Nigeria, is a membership, non-governmental, non-religious, non-political, non-profit making organization providing, social and micro financial services to women groups, communities and NGOs in Nigeria to enhance their capacity for sustainable development.

### VISION:

A society with equitable opportunities for sustainable development.

### MISSION:

Empowering women to improve their living conditions and status through integrated development services and initiatives.

### CORE VALUES:

- \* Accountability
- \* Inclusion
- \* Integrity
- \* Partnership
- \* Teamwork
- \* Transparency
- \* Innovation/Creativity



# BRIDGING BORDERS:

## A Journey of Partnership and Transformation

Solomon S. Alheri Jane

The month of March marked a vibrant tapestry of collaboration at the Development Exchange Centre (DEC) as Bergmann Ulrike and Zsehaitu Ouedraouo from Bread for the World (BROT) Germany embarked on a journey of discovery and camaraderie. Their visit was more than a mere tour; it was a profound immersion into the heartbeat of DEC's impactful initiatives.

From the moment Ulrike and Zsehaitu were warmly greeted by DEC's management and staff, the atmosphere crackled with anticipation. A comprehensive tour of DEC's headquarters unfolded, revealing the intricate threads of the SSPF project and DEC holistically, painting a vivid picture of DEC's operational prowess.



Wuseli community borehole being shown to the representatives of Bftw

The crescendo of excitement was tangible as the delegation ventured into the Wuseli community, greeted by spirited traditional dances and jubilant faces. Bulus Michael, CQIT chairman, eloquently voiced gratitude for DEC/BROT's transformative support, emphasizing the profound impact of clean water access facilitated by a newly installed borehole—a lifeline for the community.

The day culminated at ECWA Theological College Bayara, where grant-funded machinery symbolized not just progress but prosperity. Discussions reverberated on financial growth catalyzed by



The E.D of DEC addressing the community of Hanani



Tom brown being offered to Bftw reps by the head of programs

strategic investments, underscoring the tangible outcomes of collaborative efforts.

Ulrike Bergmann reflected on the day's experiences, stressing the irreplaceable value of firsthand engagement in understanding challenges and celebrating achievements. This immersive journey, beyond mere statistics and reports, affirmed the profound impact of partnership between DEC, BROT, and resilient communities.



ECWA Theological School equipment from SSPF grant

In the tapestry of development, this journey was more than a visit—it was a testament to bridging borders, fostering resilience, and sowing seeds of lasting transformation.

Journeying onwards to Hanani, Bitrus Iliya echoed sentiments of gratitude, celebrating the palpable changes wrought by DEC's interventions. Here, the community spoke of newfound hope and empowerment through diverse projects that addressed crucial needs.

A poignant highlight awaited in Bayara, where the Women with Disability Initiative (WDI) under SSPF showcased resilience in action. Women, overcoming the stigma of leprosy and societal barriers, blossomed into entrepreneurs through tailored training programs. Their journey from dependency to self-reliance left an indelible mark on Ulrike and Zsehaitu, illustrating the power of empowerment.



# BREAKING CHAINS:

## DEC Champions Change on International Day Against Violence

Racheal Luka Fasanya

In a poignant gathering marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, DEC stood at the forefront in Bauchi State, illuminating a path towards a world free from the scourge of gender-based violence. With steadfast resolve, Executive Director Mrs. Helen Abah set the tone, articulating a vision where safety and dignity know no gender boundaries.

This significant day not only kicked off the 16 Days of Activism but also ignited a global movement against all forms of violence targeting women. From the heart of Bauchi, DEC orchestrated a symphony of voices, united in their mission to uplift survivors, challenge societal norms, and foster a culture of respect and equality. Advocacy echoed through every corner, intertwining with awareness campaigns and community mobilization to dismantle barriers that perpetuate violence.

Central to the event was a diverse panel: Mrs. Fibi

Kafi, the esteemed BATV host; Dr. Nakande Jibrin, a compassionate gynecologist at the Teaching Hospital; and Barrister Elizabeth Judge, whose legal expertise and leadership at the "Child is Gold Foundation" fortified the discourse on gender and child issues. Their collective wisdom resonated, weaving narratives of empowerment and resilience.

As voices harmonized and pledges reverberated, DEC illuminated a beacon of hope—a testament to solidarity and action. Each speaker's words, each attendee's commitment, forged a path towards a future where fear and discrimination dissolve, replaced by a world where every individual thrives in safety and respect. DEC's leadership on this pivotal day exemplified not just commemoration, but a steadfast determination to catalyze lasting change, ensuring that no woman or girl ever walks alone in the fight against violence.



A vest for the occasion



The panel answering questions



A staff of DEC asking a question



The E.D of DEC addressing all participants



*The children reciting the National pledge.*

# LIGHTING THE PATH:

## DEC Ignites Educational Transformation In Hanani Community of Bauchi LGA

*Mercy C. Leka*

In the small village of Hanani, nestled in Bauchi State, the concept of education was once a distant dream. Before the intervention of the Development Exchange Centre (DEC), Hanani was a community where the light of learning barely flickered. With no school to speak of, children were not enrolled in any form of education until they reached the age of 10. The village's educational prospects were, quite literally, in the dark.

### **FROM DARKNESS TO DAWN: A community united**

However, the arrival of DEC through the CQIT formed by the Good Governance Unit sparked a revolution. Determined to change the status quo, DEC's intervention became the catalyst for a remarkable transformation. Inspired by the possibility of a brighter future, the people of Hanani united with a common goal: to bring education to their village. Through sheer determination and



*The children of Hanani during an assembly meeting*

collective effort, they constructed classrooms using mud blocks, a testament to their resourcefulness and commitment.

### **BUILDING DREAMS BRICK BY BRICK**

The construction of the mud-block classrooms was just the beginning. The villagers understood that a school was more than just walls and a roof; it required dedicated teachers to nurture and



educate their children. In a display of unprecedented community spirit, the people of Hanani began making monthly contributions to provide stipends for volunteer teachers. This innovative solution ensured that their children would receive the education they had long been deprived of.

### **A BEACON OF HOPE: The Impact of DEC's Intervention**

The impact of DEC's intervention in Hanani has been nothing short of transformative. The village, once lagging in educational development, now hums with the activity of eager young minds. The classrooms, built from the earth beneath their feet, symbolize not just a place of learning, but a beacon of hope and progress. Volunteer teachers, supported by the community's contributions, embody the spirit of dedication and service.

### **A NEW ERA OF POSSIBILITIES**

The success of Hanani's educational initiative is a powerful reminder of what can be achieved when a community unites with purpose and determination. Children who once waited until the age of 10 to start school now embark on their educational journeys much earlier, paving the way for a brighter future. The villagers' monthly contributions have created a



*A teacher teaching the children alphabets.*

sustainable model of education, ensuring that the torch of knowledge continues to burn brightly for generations to come.

Hanani's journey from educational darkness to enlightenment is a compelling testament to the power of community spirit and the far-reaching impact of DEC's intervention. By uniting to build classrooms and support volunteer teachers, the people of Hanani have not only transformed their village but have also lit a path for other communities to follow. This story of collective effort and perseverance is a shining example of how even the smallest villages can achieve great things when their hearts and minds are set on a common goal.



*The children being taught a nursery rhyme by the teachers*



# Seeding Prosperity: DEC's Path to Economic Empowerment

Godiya Dagums



*A.g Micro finance of DEC addressing staff during the meeting.*

In the serene hills of Plateau State, Development Exchange Centre (DEC) orchestrated a loan review meeting that echoed with the collective pulse of progress. Bringing together a tapestry of stakeholders, the gathering of DEC staff transcended mere discussion—it was a symposium of foresight and empowerment.

Amidst the rustling leaves and the crisp mountain air, participants fervently dissected the intricacies of loan utilization. Every word spoken bore the weight of potential, each idea a seed destined to bloom into economic vitality. The focus wasn't just on borrowing and repayment but on cultivating a sustainable ecosystem where loans become catalysts for lasting change.

With meticulous scrutiny, obstacles were identified like stones in a fertile field—challenges to accessing loans, disparities in repayment, and

barriers hindering equitable distribution. Yet, amidst these challenges lay opportunities, carefully sowed by the collective wisdom of those gathered. Plans were forged like pathways through a verdant landscape, paving the way for improved access to financial resources and nurturing an environment where responsibility and transparency flourish.

At its core, the meeting exemplified DEC's ethos of fostering openness and accountability. It wasn't merely about numbers on a ledger but about equipping communities with the tools and knowledge to harness financial resources effectively. This proactive approach isn't just about managing loans; it's about sowing the seeds of prosperity that will bear fruit for generations to come.

DEC's journey towards economic empowerment isn't just a story—it's a narrative of resilience, innovation, and collective ambition. As stakeholders depart, they carry with them not just plans but a shared commitment to nurturing growth and planting the seeds of a brighter future.



*Cross section of participants at the event.*



# A SPARK IGNITES A Brighter Future

Dogara James



Drama presentation at Baram Dutse community, Bauchi LGA

In the heart of Bauchi LGA, Bauchi State, a captivating drama unfolded across the communities of Wusili, Baram Dutse, Hanani, Ma'as, and Mulang. The performances, vibrant and compelling, were not merely a spectacle but a powerful call to action. Each scene painted a vivid picture of the transformative power of education, particularly for girls.

As the actors brought the struggles and triumphs of

young girls to life, the audiences were moved to laughter, tears, and ultimately, to a profound realization. The importance of educating girls was no longer an abstract concept but a tangible goal within reach. The drama ignited a fire within these communities, fostering a deep commitment to prioritize and support girls' education.

The ripple effect was immediate. Families, once hesitant, promised to enroll their daughters in school. Community leaders, inspired by the drama, said they will set up initiatives to ensure that no girl was left behind. The once distant dream of brighter prospects became a shared vision, as the communities united in their quest for empowerment through education.

In Wusili, Baram Dutse, Hanani, Ma'as, and Mulang, the drama did more than entertain—it became a catalyst for change, lighting the path to a future where every girl could shine.



Drama presentation at Hanani community, Bauchi LGA



# A Mother's Love:

## Nurturing Hope and Health

Esther Bala

In the heart of Bauchi, the Development Exchange Centre (DEC) buzzed with purpose as Mr. Mainas Ayuba led a transformative training program for Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs). The initiative, championed by Executive Director Helen Abah, is more than just education—it's a beacon of hope for maternal and infant health across communities.

Amidst the solemnity of the opening speech, Helen Abah's words resonated deeply. She underscored the important role TBAs play in community health, urging participants from diverse backgrounds to embrace their responsibility with unwavering commitment. Over the next 10 days, these caregivers delved into comprehensive training, equipping themselves to safeguard lives during childbirth and beyond. Over the past years, one part of the training of TBAs is to ensure women are encouraged to exclusively breastfeed their babies which has been evident.

Introductions reveal a tapestry of stories—TBAs like Juliana Sambo from Gaidam Community in Kwaya Kusar LGA, Borno State, who tenderly nurtures her 4-month-old daughter, Emmanuella. Despite the challenges of their remote locale, Emmanuella

thrives under the nourishing embrace of her mother's breast milk, a testament to the natural bond and health benefits that breastfeeding bestows.

Across the lands in Kutiki community, Kwaya Kusar LGA, another mother, Jummai Hassan, cradles her own 4-month-old, Fatima Hassan. Each radiant smile exchanged between mother and child speaks volumes of their profound connection—a joyous testament to the transformative power of maternal love and the purity of breast milk.

DEC's Health Unit stands at the forefront, collaborating tirelessly with health ministries to elevate the importance of exclusive breastfeeding. Their advocacy echoes far and wide, promoting not just nutrition but fostering a foundation of health and resilience in communities.

In the enchanting dance of motherhood, where every touch and every smile tells a story of hope and promise, DEC's commitment shines brightly. Through education, advocacy, and heartfelt support, it empowers mothers like Juliana and Jummai to nurture not just infants, but futures filled with health, happiness, and endless possibilities.



The participants showcasing their first aid boxes



The ED of DEC handing over a first aid box to a community head



Emmanuella Sambo who is exclusively fed by her mother Julina Sambo.

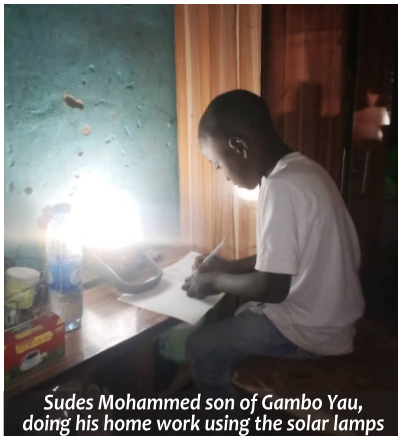


Fatima Hassan smiling radiantly in the arms of her mother Jummai Hassan

# RUWOCA/SSPF EMPOWERING BARAZA:

## Stories of sustainability and resilience through the RUWOCA Project

Hajara Haruna Aliyu



Sudes Mohammed son of Gambo Yau, doing his home work using the solar lamps

In recent years, climate change has emerged as a critical challenge globally, heavily influenced by human activities. The Baraza community in Dass Local Government Area of Bauchi state, with its rich

natural resources and a population that primarily depends on agriculture, found itself at a crossroad.

Traditional energy sources, such as firewood and battery-powered torches, not only contributed to deforestation but also posed significant health risks due to smoke inhalation. This practice not only heightens the risk of health issues from smoke inhalation but also underscores the community's vulnerability to climate change impacts. Particularly affected are women and girls, who face systemic barriers in accessing financial or technical resources and land ownership. Consequently, they find it challenging to adapt to climate change, putting them at greater risk during climate-related events. Similarly, children and young people suffer due to their unique physiological and developmental needs

Moreover, systemic barriers hindered women and girls from accessing financial and technical resources, exacerbating their vulnerability to climate change impacts. Historically, the community members have relied on traditional energy sources, such as firewood collected from fallen trees, contributing to deforestation, and battery-powered torches. However, Baraza boasts commendable agricultural yields, showcasing its potential amidst environmental challenges

Recognizing the untapped potential of agricultural waste in a community with year-round farming, the Rural Women Climate Advocates (RUWOCA) project introduced an innovative solution: the creation of eco-friendly briquette charcoal. This initiative empowered 20 women through the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA), providing them with targeted training in briquette production. Their commitment and effort turned into a sustainable enterprise, producing over



The RUWOCA beneficiaries packing their briquettes for sell

25 bags of briquettes and generating over 150,000 Naira in revenue. Community members are now using briquette instead of firewood 90% beneficiaries have now switched to

clean renewable energy lamps. This achievement not only offered an alternative to fossil fuels but also highlighted the economic and environmental benefits of repurposing agricultural waste. The success story of these women in the Baraza community underscores the profound impact of sustainable development projects. By harnessing local resources and empowering women economically, the RUWOCA project has paved the way for enhanced community resilience against climate change.

### Aisha Ibrahim's

story is a vivid illustration of the unintended consequences of these traditional practices. Engaging in activities like deforestation without awareness of their environmental impact, Aisha,

among others, contributed to pollution and the exacerbation of climate change. However, the introduction of the Rural Women Climate Advocates (RUWOCA) project marked a turning point for Aisha and the Baraza community. The RUWOCA project illuminated the intricacies of climate change through educational programs, transforming Aisha's understanding and actions towards the environment.

This enlightenment spurred a communal movement towards environmental conservation,



The beneficiaries leader receiving money for sold briquettes on behalf of the group



notably shifting gender dynamics. Aisha recounts how men in the community began to support conservation efforts, symbolizing a united front against climate change. Moreover, the project facilitated economic empowerment for women like Aisha through the Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA). With a loan of 30,000 Naira, Aisha embarked on an entrepreneurial journey, venturing into the rice trade. Her business thrived, reflecting not only her personal growth but also the potential for sustainable development within Baraza. The RUWOCA project's influence extends beyond individual success stories. It has fostered a culture of environmental stewardship and collective action within the community. Aisha proudly notes the change in the landscape, with trees now planted in front of houses as a testament to their commitment to combating climate change. Aisha Ibrahim's evolution from a homemaker to a successful entrepreneur and environmental steward is a testament to the transformative impact of community-driven initiatives like the RUWOCA project. Her story, and that of the Baraza community, serves as a beacon of hope, demonstrating the power of education, unity, and action in paving the way for a sustainable and prosperous future.

**Gambo Ya'u's** journey is a testament to resilience and adaptation. Initially burdened by the cost of disposable batteries for lighting, her engagement with the RUWOCA project catalyzed a shift towards sustainability and economic empowerment. By joining the VSLA, Gambo not only expanded her



Aisha Ibrahim showcasing her rice business courtesy of the RUWOCA project

business into cloth trading but also transitioned to using solar energy, eliminating the need for costly batteries. This switch not only saved her 16,000 Naira but also reduced her environmental footprint. Gambo's story

highlights the project's role in promoting clean energy and supporting women's entrepreneurship, leading to financial independence and a more sustainable lifestyle. Jamila Danlami's Leap into Entrepreneurship: Jamila Danlami's life in Baraza was transformed by her involvement with a VSLA, which offered her a platform to venture into groundnut oil production. The initial loan of 20,000 Naira became a seed for growth, enabling her to

significantly contribute to her family's income. Jamila's successful entry into entrepreneurship underlines the importance of financial empowerment and community support in overcoming economic barriers. Her thriving business not only ensures her family's prosperity but also serves as an inspiring model for sustainable development within her community.



Aisha Shuaibu joyfully explaining how the project changed her life and that of her family

### **Aishatu Shu'aibu: From small-scale snacks production to thriving enterprise:**

Aishatu Shu'aibu's story is one of remarkable perseverance and entrepreneurial spirit. Faced with financial challenges, her decision to join the VSLA provided the necessary capital to expand her cin cin snack business exponentially. The loan transformed her business, improving her family's quality of life and setting a precedent for financial discipline and innovation within her community. Moreover, the introduction of a modern, smokeless stove by the RUWOCA project not only improved her cooking process but also her family's health, showcasing the holistic impact of community-driven development initiatives. Collective Impact on Baraza Community: The narratives of Gambo, Jamila, and Aishatu illustrate the profound impact of the RUWOCA project and VSLAs on individual lives and the broader Baraza community. By addressing climate change through sustainable practices, empowering women economically, and fostering innovation, these initiatives have paved the way for a brighter, more resilient future. The stories of these women are emblematic of the transformative power of community solidarity, financial empowerment, and environmental stewardship. Together, they underscore a collective journey towards sustainability, prosperity, and enhanced quality of life in Baraza.

The production and use of briquette charcoal have fostered environmental stewardship, reducing deforestation and pollution. This initiative serves as a beacon of hope, demonstrating how grassroots empowerment and innovative solutions can lead to significant environmental and socioeconomic improvements, setting a precedent for sustainable development in rural communities.

## SUCCESS STORY

# TURNING THE TIDES: Spotlight on Village Savings and Loans

Maina Dawi

**D**EC's Economic Empowerment unit is undoubtedly "Turning the Tides" especially in rural communities as it continues to make waves with its Village Savings and Loans training programs in Kwaya Kusar, Bauchi and Numan communities.

These initiatives focus on financial management, savings, and lending skills, fostering self-sufficiency and entrepreneurship. The continuous training on Village Savings and Loans is aimed at empowering the local residents economically. This training focuses on imparting knowledge on financial management, savings, and lending skills.

These efforts contribute to community development, poverty reduction, and improved financial access, particularly in rural regions. Ultimately, these training sessions help communities build resilience, stability, and the capacity to make investments for their future. Here are few out of the thousands that have benefited from the VSLA program.



VSLA training at Salahu community Kwaya Kusar LGA, Borno State

## From Small Seeds to Big Harvests

**H**alima Musa, a dedicated educator in the Gaidam community of Kwaya Kusar LGA, Borno State, has achieved remarkable success through the village savings loan program. By mastering grain storage techniques, she has turned modest reserves into substantial profits. Through careful management, her initial small grain reserves have grown significantly, providing her with a steady source of income. Halima's achievements highlight the powerful impact of



Halima Musa showing off her grains

community-based financial programs, demonstrating how they can empower individuals



## SUCCESS STORY

to flourish economically.

### A Feather in His Cap:

#### *The Tale of Hammu Beri*

On a radiant Monday morning, this story was captured in Gaidam community in Kwaya Kusar LGA, Borno State, basking in the sun's golden glow, promising a day brimming with hope and potential, we celebrate the extraordinary person of Hammu Beri, the esteemed Mai Angwa.



*Hamma Beri of Gaidam community feeding his ducks*

Beri has ingeniously transformed his village savings into a flourishing duck business, turning a modest investment into a promising venture. His visionary leadership and hands-on approach to development projects have earned him respect and admiration.

Hammu Beri's story is not just one of personal triumph; it's a testament to the community's resilience and forward-thinking spirit. His success embodies the strength and unity of Gaidam, proving that with the right leadership, even the smallest seeds can grow into the most fruitful harvests.

### Sowing Seeds of Success:

#### *Lemsu Saidu's Flourishing Harvest*

In the vibrant village of Paka, Borno State, the rhythm of life hums with promise and potential. Amidst the lively chatter of the marketplace and the golden fields of grain, one woman's story shines as a beacon of hope and perseverance.

Lemsu Saidu, a dedicated member of the Village Savings and Loans Association, has embarked on a journey that transformed her life. Once uncertain



*Lemsu Saidu proudly displaying her grains from the harvest.*

about her financial future, Lemsu now stands as a testament to the power of community and strategic investment. Her participation in the association opened doors she never imagined, allowing her to invest her savings into farming—a decision that reaped a bountiful harvest.

The sight of Lemsu proudly showcasing her bags of grain is a picture of triumph. Her fields, once a symbol of hope, now overflow with the fruits of her labor. Selling her grains on market days, Lemsu no longer fears financial instability. Her income is secure, and her needs are met with ease, bringing a profound sense of stability and peace.

Lemsu's story is a compelling narrative of resilience and success, illustrating how the seeds of hard work, nurtured by community support, can grow into a flourishing harvest. Her journey is a powerful reminder that, indeed, you reap what you sow.

With a smile that radiates contentment, Lemsu shares her story. She no longer worries about financial instability; the money from selling her grains on market days provides a steady income, ensuring her needs are met with ease. Lemsu's journey from uncertainty to security is a powerful reminder that with the right support, hard work truly does pay off.

### From Drought to Deluge:

#### *Geoffrey Munan's Ripple Effect of Prosperity*

In the arid heart of Kodomti Community, nestled deep within Adamawa State's Numan LGA, Geoffrey Munan stood at the precipice of change. With the stroke of entrepreneurial

## SUCCESS STORY

brilliance, he transformed a modest share-out from the Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) into a cascading torrent of success.

Empowered by the VSLA's timely investment, Geoffrey set his sights on revolutionizing the community's water supply. Armed with unwavering determination, he procured a state-of-the-art water pump, turning his humble water-selling business into a lifeline for the parched community. The once-thirsty streets now echoed with the symphony of flowing water, a testament to Geoffrey's unwavering commitment to service.



*Geoffrey Munan filling cans from the water pump.*

But Geoffrey's vision didn't stop there. Drawing upon newfound skills from environmental training, he cultivated a flourishing garden of seedlings. Each plant not only symbolized hope but also bolstered Geoffrey's diversified approach to sustainable entrepreneurship. With each sale of these resilient seedlings, Geoffrey not only nurtured his business but also sowed the seeds of prosperity within Kodomti's soil.

Geoffrey Munan's journey from VSLA recipient to community stalwart exemplifies the transformative power of strategic investment and steadfast dedication. His story is not just about water pumps and seedlings but about revitalizing a community through resilience and innovation.

### **“Stella Samson: Paving Paths of Progress in Kikan”**

In the heart of Numan LGA, Adamawa State, Stella

Samson stands as a beacon of unwavering commitment and resilience within the Kikan community. Her influence stretches far beyond the confines of her roles in DEC's Community Quality Improvement Team (CQIT), where she orchestrates tasks with precision and dedication.

Stella's journey is a testament to the transformative power of strategic investment and entrepreneurial acumen. With keen foresight, she harnessed the resources from her VSLA share-out to not only bolster her business but also to amplify her impact within Kikan. Through astute reinvestment, she elevated her business activities to new heights, breathing life into local commerce and becoming a catalyst for economic growth.

Beyond her entrepreneurial pursuits, Stella's contributions resonate deeply within community projects. Her involvement in the CQIT is marked by efficiency and prompt execution, ensuring that initiatives aimed at enhancing community life thrive under her guidance. Whether it's improving infrastructure, advocating for educational advancements, or championing healthcare initiatives, Stella stands as a formidable force for positive change.

Stella Samson's story transcends mere accomplishments; it embodies the spirit of resilience and leadership. Her unwavering commitment to the betterment of Kikan serves as an inspiration, illustrating how one individual's drive can ignite a community's journey towards prosperity and sustainable development.



*Stella Samson roasting proteins for sell*



# Breaking Barriers:

## DEC's Impactful Journey of Empowering Women in Kaduna State

Beatrice Ankama

In line with our unwavering commitment to ensuring effective documentation of outcomes and fostering deeper engagement with our clients, the Development Exchange Centre (DEC) embarked on a transformative journey with a monitoring visit to Kafanchan, Kachia, and Kawo in Kaduna State. The primary objective of this visit was to attend the Women's Council meetings and gather success stories from our clients. These meetings serve as vital platforms for dialogue, skill-sharing, and strategizing to address gender disparities and advance socio-economic development among women.

DEC's visit to Kafanchan, Kachia, and Kawo was a compelling journey of discovery, highlighting both challenges and triumphs. By addressing the concerns raised and celebrating the success stories of our clients, DEC reaffirms its vital role in empowering women and fostering socio-economic development in Kaduna State. These stories are not just narratives of success; they are powerful testaments to the impact of financial empowerment and the indomitable spirit of the women we serve.

### Empowering Women: The Heartbeat of DEC's Mission



*Women council meeting at Kafanchan branch.*

The Women's Council meetings in Kafanchan, Kachia, and Kawo provided invaluable insights into the challenges and triumphs of DEC's clients. Addressing the concerns raised, particularly regarding loan approval delays and low initial loan amounts will further enhance DEC's support for women's economic empowerment. The success stories gathered underscores the significant positive impact of DEC's initiatives, demonstrating the organization's crucial role in fostering socio-economic development among women in Kaduna State.

#### Shining a Light on Success

The monitoring visit was not just about identifying challenges but also celebrating the extraordinary success stories of women whose lives have been transformed by DEC's support. These narratives are a testament to the resilience and determination of our clients, highlighting how targeted financial assistance can turn the tide in their favor.

### Transformative Journeys: The Power of Financial Support

Victoria Luka Garba from Kafanchan is a shining example of transformation and hope. Since joining DEC in 2017, her pig farming venture has expanded into a diversified farm with goats, pigs, cows, and palm trees, empowering her to provide for her family



*Victoria Garba feeding her cows*

and educate her seven children. Her journey from a government worker selling food to a full-time farmer underscores the profound impact of DEC's support.

Regina Andrew's story is a beacon of perseverance. From a modest loan of 20,000 naira in 2013, her petty trading business in Zonkwa, Kafanchan, has blossomed into a substantial enterprise, allowing her to support her family and elevate her economic status. Her current loan size speaks volumes about her entrepreneurial spirit and DEC's crucial role in her success.

Halima Sani from Kawo, Kaduna, demonstrates

*Continue in the next page*



# EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES:

## DEC's Visionary Leadership in Women's Development"

**Yahaya Abdul**

In the heartlands of Kano State, Nigeria, the Development Exchange Centre (DEC) orchestrates a symphony of compassion and progress under the guidance of its esteemed Board of Directors and dedicated management. Their visionary leadership has propelled DEC to the forefront of women empowerment through impactful community health and microfinance initiatives. This commitment stands as a testament to DEC's unwavering dedication to fostering inclusive development across diverse communities.

From the remote corners of Taka Lafiya in Kofar, Kura LGA, to Sara, Sindimina (Kwatia) in Birnin Kudu LGA, Jigawa State, DEC's initiatives have become a beacon of hope and healing. Their efforts resonate deeply, nurturing vulnerable populations with grace and determination, thereby enriching lives and fostering sustainable progress. DEC's strategic focus on supporting women reflects not only their acute understanding of local needs but also their profound commitment to creating a more just and equitable future for all.



The consultant checking the bp of a patient at the outreach at Taka Lafiya Kano.



The women being addressed by a DEC staff before the commencement of the outreach at Sara Community in Jigawa State.



DEC staff attending to a patient at Sara Community.



A collection of some of the drugs that were given during the outreach.

## Breaking Barriers:

DEC's Impactful Journey of Empowering Women in Kaduna State

Continued from previous page



Halima Sani feeding her sheep

extraordinary resilience. Starting with a small loan of 10,000 naira in 2014, her business has grown significantly, enabling her to purchase a Keke Napep, support her husband in constructing a house, and ensure her children's education. Halima's journey showcases the transformative power of financial support in uplifting families and communities.



Grace Ezech attending to a customer in her shop

Grace Ezech from Kafanchan, at just 27, has expanded her phone sales business from a small-scale operation to owning two shops, thanks to DEC's support. Her success has allowed her to support her husband in building a four-bedroom house and provide quality education for her children, illustrating how access to financial resources can transform lives.



*Tranquil Haven:*

## DEC Guest House and Conference Centre



**N**estled in the heart of Bauchi, Bauchi State, DEC Guest House and Conference Centre stands as a beacon of hospitality. Operated by Development Exchange Centre, a pioneering NGO championing women's empowerment, this establishment serves as more than just a place to stay—it's a testament to community-driven initiatives.

Offering a range of amenities, from air-conditioned rooms and a cozy restaurant to state-of-the-art conference facilities, DEC Guest House ensures comfort and functionality for every guest. Whether hosting seminars, accommodating tourists, or providing a serene retreat for visitors, every detail is crafted with care.

With 24-hour reception, scenic balconies for breathtaking views, and meticulous security measures, DEC Guest House guarantees a seamless experience. It's more than a place to rest; it's a space where purpose meets comfort, embodying the spirit of empowerment and community development that defines its parent organization.

### ● Reception



### ● Comfortable accommodation/ Fully Air conditioned



### ● 2 Conference Halls and 2 Syndicate rooms



### ● Laundry Services



### ● 100 and 150KVA Generators



- Restaurant, Catering Services and Assorted Drinks
- DSTV/Satellite Network Services
- Good Security Network
- Sufficient Parking Space

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