

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The SMILE Program is a five year (April 2013 – March 2018) Cooperative Agreement between Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). CRS Nigeria leads the SMILE (Sustainable Mechanisms for Improving Livelihoods and Household Empowerment) consortium consisting of ActionAid Nigeria and Westat designed to scale-up care and support services for orphans and vulnerable children in Benue, Kogi, Edo, and Nasarawa states and the FCT.

SMILE seeks to improve the wellbeing of 500,000 Vulnerable Children (VC) and 125,000 caregivers. It will be implemented through an umbrella grants mechanism (UGM) whereby CSOs receive sub-grants to support capacity strengthening and program implementation at the community level. The project will also strengthen the Nigerian VC response by working at the state level to strength the organizational systems and technical capacity of the five State Ministries of Women Affairs and Social Development (SMWASD) and Social Welfare Department of targeted Local Government Areas (LGA) to be able to coordinate a more holistic response by working in collaboration with relevant line ministries.

In addition, SMILE will facilitate CSOs' collaboration with communities to manage integrated and comprehensive VC programs with a focus on the provision of appropriate HES services informed by market information; and quality nutrition and food security services to VC and their households.

THE CONSORTIUM

Catholic Relief Services as the consortium lead will provide general oversight on program implementation besides being responsible for grant management and direct service delivery. It was founded in 1943 by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and assists the poor and disadvantaged overseas on the basis of need, regardless of creed, ethnicity or nationality. CRS operates in over 99 countries and re-established presence in Nigeria in 2000. Currently, the agency focuses on such areas as HIV and AIDS including orphans and vulnerable children, treatment, PMTCT, peace building, health system strengthening, microfinance, agriculture and emergency relief. CRS Nigeria has worked at different projects in more than 26 states of Nigeria and FCT.

ActionAid Nigeria (AA) which leads the systems strengthening component of the program, is a Non-Governmental Organization working with the poor and excluded, promoting values and commitment

in civil society, institutions and governments with the aim of achieving structural changes in order to eradicate injustices and poverty in Nigeria. It is registered with CAC, Nigeria and is also an affiliate of ActionAid International. ActionAid Nigeria commenced programmatic operations in January 2000 and currently operates in almost all the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria with over 100 staff spread across various offices in the Country.

Its program is spread in Six Thematic Areas: Democracy and Governance, Health, Education, Food and Agriculture, Conflict and Human security and Women's rights. Linking all these is its geographically based integrated Local Rights Program (LRP) which is being implemented in twelve states of the federation.

Westat is an employee-owned corporation founded in 1961, headquartered in Washington DC with a staff of more than 1,900 professionals, including program evaluators, epidemiologists, public health specialists, statisticians, data managers, and information systems specialists. Westat will leverage its expertise in research methods and data management to develop SMILE's Strategic Information System (SIS) to facilitate data informed decision making by the SMILE management team.

SMILE TARGET

All VC in the states will benefit from improved state-level capacity; however SMILE will target at least 50% of the LGAs per state (Benue-12, Kogi-11, Nassarawa-7, Edo-9 and FCT-3) for direct service delivery from CSOs. Population and VC prevalence will drive selection of target LGAs. Table below shows estimated targets for VC that will receive direct services.

| States | Total | Total | Total | Project |
|----------|------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| | Population | Children | OVC | Target |
| Benue | 4,253,641 | 1,999,211 | 979,614 | 249,746 |
| Nasarawa | 1,869,377 | 878,607 | 281,154 | 71,678 |
| FCT | 1,406,239 | 660,932 | 145,405 | 37,070 |
| Kogi | 3,314,043 | 1,557,600 | 327,096 | 83,391 |
| Edo | 3,233,366 | 1,519,682 | 227,952 | 58,115 |
| | | 6,616,033 | 1,961,221 | 500,000 |

SMILE SERVICES

The program will provide services to vulnerable children and households based on their identified needs using relevant national assessment tools. Services will be provided based on the household approach for impact. The community will be involved in the targeting of vulnerable children and households to ensure that the most vulnerable are enrolled for services and promote community ownership and sustainability. On the other hand, the State Ministry of Women Affairs and the Social Welfare Department of the LGA will be assessed using relevant national tools. A staff of the SMILE project will be embedded in the SMWASD to facilitate the implementation of the work plan to be developed after the institutional capacity assessment.

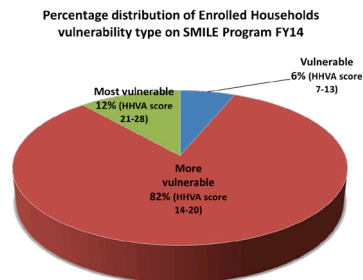
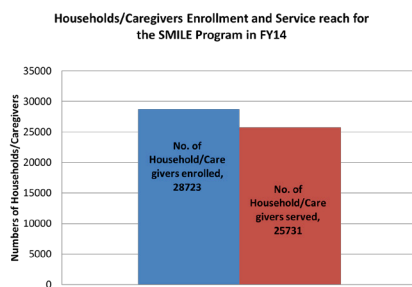
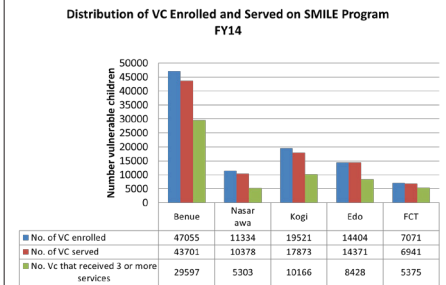
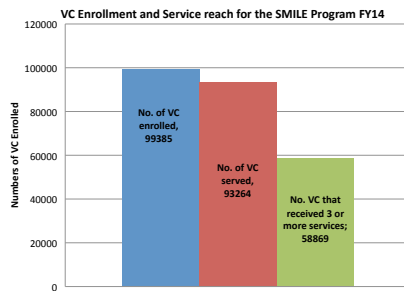
SMILE IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

The implementing partners under the SMILE program will be Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). These will be responsible for direct service delivery to vulnerable children and their caregivers at the household level. A total of 50 CSOs will be selected as implementing partners through a competitive Bidders' Conference to be observed by donor and government representatives to ensure a transparent and fair process. The Bidders' Conference, which will be preceded by a call for

Request for Information (Rfi), will be conducted in the state capitals of the project states to provide detailed information about the program. At the end of the Bidders' Conference, CSOs will be requested submit concept notes based on the Request for Application (RFA) to be issued at the Bidders' Conference. The CSOs that submit successful concept notes will be supported by the program to develop full proposals that will be funded.



Figure 1: Child level FGD during SMILE Rapid Assessment in Kogi State



Contact information:

Sasha Angelevski Chief of Party Catholic Relief Services
Plot 477, 41 Crescent, A Close Gwarinpa II Abuja
Tel: 08135354449

Email: sasha.angelevski@crs.org www.crs.org