

Nigeria: Empowering Women in Male-dominated Skills Sectors and Support for Vulnerable Groups.

The Global Programme Migration for Development (PME), Nigeria provides migration and reintegration advice on new perspectives and employment opportunities in countries of origin. The programme promotes and funds activities which support (re-)integration into the job market and foster economic stability for returnees and the local population. One of such activities is the provision of vocational training measures aimed at getting unemployed youths/local population and returning migrants into jobs/self-employment towards helping them achieve economic stability.

CONTEXT AND INITIATIVE

In Nigeria, females are disadvantaged in terms of access to education, employment, wages and a skewed legal system. Gender inequality is fueled by many factors including socio-cultural practices, low incomes, patriarchy, lack of access to education, health and finance.

Vocational and technical education has been identified as key to the economic and industrial revolution of Nigeria, however, due to gender stereotypes and societal perceptions, some vocational and technical skills are perceived by the Nigerian society to be solely reserved for men and are therefore dominated by men. Some of these vocational and technical skills set include car tracking and electric fence installation, auto repair, air conditioning repair, CCTV installation, hair barbing, cell phone repair etc. with very few women working in these sectors.

GENDER – A QUALITY FEATURE OF OUR WORK

As part of our gender equality focus and integration as well as ensuring active participation of female beneficiaries in these vocational and technical skills areas, the programme supports training and empowerment of females, including returnee and survivors of human trafficking and the local population some of whom are victims of sexual and domestic violence to go into these skills areas for economic sustainability.

The programme partners with service provider such as the first female mechanic in Nigeria and other key actors in the gender space to provide technical trainings in auto repair and mechanics and other vocational technical skills dominated by men as well as entrepreneurial skills training for female beneficiaries of the programme and it has been very impactful.



The Programme also provides livelihood and economic support through vocational skills trainings for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Women, children and the aged are the most vulnerable groups and they make up the majority of the IDP population in Nigeria and are hardly protected from the adverse effect of displacement. Vocational skills training and business startup are provided for female IDPs for economic sustainability. What really makes the difference for them is that providing access to markets is an integral part of our strategy. Their products are now sold in supermarkets across Abuja.



Also, in terms of ensuring support for addressing the vulnerabilities of women and the girl child during the COVID 19 lockdown, the programme organized a Gender Conference with the theme

“Addressing the Vulnerabilities of Women in the COVID-19 Era: Towards Achieving a More Gender Equal and Inclusive Society on the 8th March 2021.

A one billion naira (2,087,682 Euros) women support Trust Fund was launched at the Conference by the State Governor to support women livelihood recovery from the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic in the State. The fund is accessible to PME beneficiaries.

Other vulnerable groups supported by the Programme include survivors of human trafficking, physically challenged groups, survivors of sexual and domestic violence as well as children of returned migrants through psycho-social, sheltering, medical and educational support.