Supporting the Socio-Economic Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups including the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in North East Nigeria – Phase I

About the SERCAAG project Phase I

This project aimed to ensure that children verified and separated from CJTF and Non State Armed Groups (NSAG) in three target local government areas (MMC, Jere and Mafa) of Borno state received psychosocial and socio-economic reintegration support, and communities, CJTF and relevant Government Ministries understand the importance of their separation and reintegration. The overall expected result of this project is that grave violations against children are monitored and reported; and children and adolescents who have suffered from such violations, including those formerly associated with armed groups or returning from captivity, are supported to successfully reintegrate into their communities.

Activities

The main activities implemented during the pilot project included transformative dialogues, supporting access to education, apprenticeships and micro-enterprise training, business opportunities and administrative support sessions, supporting girls and boys (above 15 years) to secure self- or wage employment, a radio program featuring drama, debate and other activities done by children, a socio-economic reintegration radio round-table discussion by experts, trauma healing sessions and small community strengthening initiatives in addition to ongoing case management, which began in earnest in April 2019.

Achievements

The project had helped strengthen the resilience of 961 children (170 being girls), enabled access to, and retention in, formal education for 513 children (67 girls), enabled access to literacy classes for 138 adolescents, enhanced employability for 408 Children (74 girls) and contributed to improvement in the attitude of community members in MMC, Jere and Mafa towards children separated from armed groups and their socio-economic reintegration.

| Strengthened resilience of 961 children | Enhanced employability for 408 Children | Improvement in attitude of community members | Enabled access to literacy classes for 138 adolescents | Enabled access to, and retention in, formal education for 513 children |
The project helped increase the psychosocial wellbeing of beneficiaries - reduced social isolation, aggression and difficulty falling asleep were reported by the children. Quality of learning environments at target schools was improved through provision of furniture under a Memorandum of Understanding within which Search provided 600 desks to schools in lieu of school fees. Some of the project’s economic opportunities support beneficiaries earn up to N9,000 per month and are helping buy food and non-food items for their households, while at the same time accumulating savings to re-invest in order to grow their micro-enterprises. The project has also helped to increase community awareness of the need to separate Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups from CJTF and to support socio-economic reintegration of former Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups, including repentant former Non State Armed Group members.

Supporting the Socio-Economic Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups including the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in North East Nigeria – Phase II

The phase II of this project is planned as a 16-month intervention with an extension to Gwoza, Dikwa and Bama in addition to MMC, Jere and Mafa local government areas covered in phase I. This phase of the project aims to provide socio-economic reintegration services to 750 new children associated with armed groups and up to 750 new vulnerable children. In addition, this project aims to support reintegration efforts through strengthening community awareness, cohesion, and peace-building by targeting women, adolescent children, traditional and community leaders, caretakers, and other relevant stakeholders such as teachers. The total project target is 2,461 children, with 1,500 new children beneficiaries and 961 previous beneficiaries who will receive ongoing case management and follow-up support throughout phase II. The aim is to reach around 3,000 direct beneficiaries over the 16-month period under the peace-building component of the project. Moreover, radio programming and other awareness raising tools will reach an estimated population of 2,282,238 indirect beneficiaries including 1,186,764 men and 1,095,474 women.

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The project is funded by UNICEF and implemented by Search for Common Ground

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