

Haven of Hope



Counselling and Rehabilitation
of Teenage Mothers

ANNUAL REPORT

YEAR

2013

NARRATIVE & FINANCIAL

MANAGEMENT REPORT

MANAGEMENT REPORT - 2013

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ANNUAL REPORT 2013

PART A: NARRATIVE

INTRODUCTION

1. In January 2013, when we started out with the implementation of this project, little did we know that we were stepping into a challenging but exciting adventure. As we look back to the achievements so far, we feel highly encouraged by the zeal with which the teenage mothers are demonstrating in the rehabilitation programme each has opted for. Our enthusiasm has also been boosted by the feedback we have been receiving from friends and well-wishers, enhanced by the financial support we received during the last quarter of the year.

ACTIONS ON BEHALF OF TEENAGE MOTHERS

❖ MOTIVATION

2. Our initial intention at the beginning of 2013 was to acquaint ourselves to teenage mothers through counselling sessions, assess their needs and plan for the rehabilitation activities in the following year. However, this all changed, as the youths came to our office with some expectations, wondering what this new organization would offer that could change their situation. After presenting the purpose of the foundation, their hopes were roused, and each expressed the desire that she would like to realize her dreams if the opportunity were given to her. In order not to quell down their expectations, it was decided to offer them the opportunity with the available means at hand, without delay. Thus, our first sponsored teen mother took up the option of baby and mother care in June 2013; her example was closely followed by 18 other young single mothers.

❖ REHABILITATION ACTIVITIES

3. In our autumn report, we gave a breakdown of the rehabilitation programmes that were being undertaken by the teenage mothers. Apart from two who dropped out, and 1 who never turned up for her training the rest are continuing steadfastly in their chosen activities as listed below:

- **APPRENTICESHIP - 6 CASES**
 - 1 DECORATION AND TAILORING
 - 3 HAIRDRESSING AND BEAUTY CARE
 - 2 dropped outs (tailoring and decoration)
- **VOCATIONAL TRAINING (POLYTEHNIC) - 3 CASES**
 - 1 BABY AND MOTHER CARE
 - 1 ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING
 - 1 NURSING
- **BUSINESS - LOANS - 5 CASES**
 - 4 BUSINESS ENHANCEMENT
 - 1 NEW ADVENTURE (DROPPED OUT)

▪ **RESUMPTION OF SECONDARY STUDIES - 5 CASES**

- 2 FORM IV
- 2 FORM V
- 1 HIGH SCHOOL

There are therefore currently 16 active cases on our rehabilitation programmes.

➤ **SECONDARY SCHOOL – AND POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTIONS**

4. By the end of the academic year 2013/2014, we are expecting that the 2 form V students who will be sitting for the G.C.E. O levels in June of this year will be successful. One other student will be going in for the CAP (Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle) exams in electrical engineering. We hope that her results will also be good; she will continue her training in the technical section of the G.C.E. in form 5 next academic year.

5. We hope that the upward trend will be the same for the two who are currently in form IV and the one in lower VI grade in the forthcoming academic year.

6. The student in nursing also has one more year to go. We have been particularly impressed by this young lady, whose performance in school has been above average; considering the fact that she being a primary school leaver braved it to undertake the nursing course which is actually designed for those who have completed secondary school. The degree of her enthusiasm and passion thus reflected in her performance, she is highly encouraged both by the school authorities and the team of Haven of Hope to make sure that she achieves her goal.

➤ **A CRECHE IN VIEW (A PIONEER IDEA)**

7. We are looking forward with much enthusiasm to the end of the training in baby and mother care of our first sponsored teenage mother. This promises to be a challenging case for Haven of Hope, as the intention is to create a crèche for her to run. A day-care centre for 0-3 years old is a necessity in the city; with the changing lifestyles of women and girls, many mothers are finding it more and more difficult to find someone to take care of their little children under kindergarten age (<3 years), as it was in the past. We hope that this initiative will relieve many working mothers from the stress of finding suitable solutions for their infant children. We take this opportunity to make a special appeal to fund the establishment of this day-care centre, so that it meets appreciable standards.



T-mother in Baby-care. Here – internship - Vaccination campaign & paediatrics.



Here – internship in nursery school.



With her baby.

➤ APPRENTICESHIP

8. Direct skills training (apprenticeship) with established entrepreneurs in specific trades has been reserved for teen mothers who did not go beyond form 3 in secondary school. These will complete their training between July and October 2014. At the end of the training, depending on their choices, they would either receive loans through our loan scheme to install their own workshops and salons, or work with their current employer/trainer if feasible, or search for jobs elsewhere with other business enterprise. This group will, in any case undertake a 3-day basic business management training course, specifically designed for them.



T-mother training in decoration and tailoring.



➤ SMALL SCALE BUSINESS LOANS

9. After having taken classes last July in basic business management, out of the 4 teenage mothers who were already in business, 3 are doing quite well and have boosted up their business capital and profit margins. One had a misadventure, as her working capital was stolen after she had just finished a very good sales' day. She is now struggling to catch up with the little balance that was left. The only failure we experienced was the one who ventured into business for the first time. By the end of the year, her capital was totally depleted. She has not been to our office to seek for solutions since then. We hope that she can take care of herself and her two kids.



A success story – Through HOH loan scheme teen-mother gains self-sufficiency in orange business.

ADMINISTRATION

10. As 2013 was a test year, our emphasis was to ensure the successful implantation of this project in the community. We made the effort at this initial stage to spend the bulk of available financial resources directly on the target group. Thus, we limited our administrative expenses and other supporting activities to the strict necessary.

➤ OFFICE PREMISES

11. With the aim of utilizing the limited resources we disposed of with maximum result, we located our offices in the garage of the residential premises of the Founder of Haven of Hope. So far, we have been able to perform from this location with no major problem, as access is easy and the space available is convenient for the number of staff currently on board.

➤ STAFFING

12. For the time-being, the project has only one full time paid regular employee who assumes multifunctional duties. For extra hands, we use the services of a consultant or an auxiliary worker. The Founder who is also the Chief Executive Director of Haven of Hope is committed to the organization gratuitously. We intend to continue to render our services with the same spirit that has motivated us so far, while hoping that the organization will receive support from other sources. This will enable us increase the number of assisted teenage mothers, and expand our scope of action.

13. Irrespective of the limited funds available during the reporting period, we reckoned that it was essential to emphasize on the importance of discharging our duties at high professional standards. To this effect, our employee, who assumes the role as Administrative Assistant undertook a 4-month's administrative assistant training course, in a highly reputable professional training institution.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

14. On the onset of our operations, our office was well equipped with highly performing computer equipment, which, combined with commendable internet services by our local supplier, we have been able to ensure timely communication with our partners, friends, donors, well-wishers, etc., all over the world. In order to increase public awareness worldwide, we signed an agreement with a local firm specialized in communication and information technology to create and manage our website, which went live in September 2013. As we familiarize ourselves with the available social networks on line, we will in the near future create spaces for Haven of Hope and link these to our website.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

15. As our presence becomes more conspicuous in the local community through the impact our assistance project is making on the lives of teenage mothers, we are looking forward to organizing gatherings on larger scale in which we will invite other government

authorities, local NGOs, ecclesiastical bodies, educational institutions, business community, etc., in the view of expanding our scope of influence and collaboration. We also plan to go on the air sometime in the near future. Prior to opening our office for the reception of teenage mothers, we had introduced the organization to various government departments, NGOs dealing with social matters, and several religious entities. The main promoter of Haven of Hope has been the Regional Delegation for the Empowerment of Women and the Family. Meanwhile, public awareness has mainly been through billboards, flyers and word of mouth.

AGRICULTURE

16. While bearing in mind the principle of prioritization and cautiousness, we have not engaged fully in farming activities. Within this context, fruit trees have already been planted in our orchard located in the village of Alatakoh, just outside the outskirts of the city of Bamenda, on a 3500sqm2 plot. With regard to farming projects in the villages of Mforya (2.2 hec.) and Adiabo (1.8 hec) , these are on hold, although tracks have been dug, using rudimentary means that can enable standard size vehicles to drive to each site. The exact crops to be planted are still to be determined, as we hope to reinforce our team with a qualified and experienced agronomist who will be fully responsible for this sector. The aim of cultivating crops and fruits is to have a back-up source of income for the project in a long-term perspective.

SPECIAL EVENTS

17. During the reporting period, we have had the opportunity to bring teenage mothers together in order to familiarize them with each other and with ourselves, encouraging them as a group that need to stay connected with each other, so as to support themselves now and always. On the two occasions (in July 2013 and December 2013), we invited the Regional Delegate for Women's Empowerment and the Family who sent a representative to particularly encourage the teenage mothers, and counsel them to use the opportunity given to them wisely and avoid falling in the same snare again. During the Christmas party on 22 December, we also invited the Director of our partner organization - the African Dream - CCEMMED, the Godfather of Haven of Hope - Hon. A. Akonteh, and other friends and well-wishers. Teenage mothers and their children were presented with Christmas gifts, which included among other things, clothes for their children and perfumes and deodorants for the mothers.



Teens with kids at Party



Kids during party



Distribution of gifts.



Encouraging Teen-mothers.

CONCLUSION

18. The experience of 2013 has been positive and encouraging. Therefore as we are being ushered into 2014, we have a better perspective of the tasks that await us. We are also conscious of the magnitude of the work that needs to be done in order to properly address the problem of teenage mothers in Cameroon. Our efforts hardly measure a drop of water in the ocean for now, but we hope, and call upon any support to this cause, no matter how little, to continue to carry out this work of love, to change the lives of these youths while there is yet time, so that they will be good mothers for their children, women of virtue for their future husbands, and citizens who will positively influence their communities wherever they will settle in the future.



Family picture: Teen-mothers and kids, guests and staff at Christmas Party.