



SHARING GOOD PRACTICE OF STORIES OF BENEFICIARIES OF IGA TRAINING FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS WITH THE SUPPORT OF IDWF ON 9TH & 10TH DECEMBER, 2021 BY MEMBERS OF NATIONAL UNION OF HOTELS AND PERSONAL SERVICES WORKERS – NUHPSW, NIGERIA

Impact of COVID-19 on the Union and Domestic Workers:

The World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020 declared the Novel Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) as a pandemic which has impacted negatively on the global economy. The various measures adopted by various government to combat the pandemic has thrown many organizations and their Staff into financial crises.

The National Union of Hotels and Personal Services Workers {NUHPSW} lost sixty per cent of its members through:

- Closure of businesses, outlets, redundancy and down-sizing, our numerical strength has greatly reduced by almost sixty percent and by extension our finances too have taken a huge cut
- Most of our Members are now dormant because most properties now operate skeletal services with few workers while majority are at home
- Negotiation capacity and ability of the Union has also reduced drastically due to loss of business and members which may lead to loss of confidence in the union by members
- Unending negotiations with employers just to manage the situation.
- Limitations on recruitment/organizational drive activities.
- Contract of employment of our members are been reviewed downwards in view of bad business climate.
- Training and re-training of our members through quarterly education seminars and workshops have been put on-hold
- Internal democracy in the Union is also been impacted because most branch elections are now put on-hold thereby perpetuating leadership at that level
- Developmental projects including the upgrade of Aluta Relaxation Centre could not commence and other projects at the National Secretariat

All the above actions impacted also on Workers including Domestic Workers because most of the Staff placed on stood off or sacked as a result of low patronage or closure of business outfits are employers of Domestic Workers either through Baby-sitting, Nanny services, Drivers, Cooks, Gardeners, Security Guards or as Cleaners. Most of this Services were dispensed with because they now stay at home without any job.

In summary Domestic Workers suffered the following pains with the pandemic outbreak:

- Loss of jobs and means of livelihood
- Extended working hours above what is internationally recognized and accepted for those that are still fortunate to retain their jobs
- Mental health challenges and stress due to loss of job and inability to provide for their family
- Most Domestic Workers could not pay for their Children School fees
- Many Domestic Workers suffered domestic violence from their partners due to long stay at home and no means of support
- Escalating increase in prices of goods and services especially of food items meant that many families go to bed without food.

Based on the above scenario and the need to cater for members, the Union resolved to replicate its Income Generation Activities which brought about the establishment of Aluta Relaxation Centre with members and Staff. Since this measure has worked for the Union it means it can also work for individuals.

Thus, the need to empower Domestic Workers who have lost their jobs and even those that still have paid employment informed our decision to put forward the proposal for IDWF consideration and which was approved.

The two day training was held on 9th and 10th December, 2021 with *twenty participants all women and with the attached stories, it has been a huge success.*

Challenges to expand the project

At it's meeting of 30th April, 2022 the Central Working Committee of the Union received various reports of Activities from all Zones and one major request from the zones is that, this Income Generation Activities Training be extended to all the Zones in the towns/cities that we have considerable presence.

Taking this project round the zones will require enormous funds which the Union may not be able to raise now. However, the ones already trained have been enjoined to train at least one other person while the Union will provide the needed logistics based on available resources.

Commendation

On behalf of all Staff and Members - most especially beneficiaries of the Solidarity Project through Income Generation Activities Vocational Training - of the National Union of Hotels and Personal Services Workers, we appreciate the determination and commitment of the IDWF towards changing the narrative of Domestic Workers from being totally dependent on their various employers but can also support themselves and family through individual Income Generation Activities like we recently organized for our members.

Similarly our Membership strength too has started increasing based on this project thereby boosting our income from dues from Domestic Workers since they too now can boast of personal income.

This project has empowered them to cater for their family needs and reduced crises and tension in their families as attested to by beneficiaries as stated below.

Their Stories/Testimonies:

Amina Ibrahim Mrs – A Domestic Worker

The outbreak of COVID-19 in 2022 brought untold hardship on families especially workers without alternative sources of income. As a Domestic Worker, Mother and Wife, attending to my family daily needs became extremely difficult and tasking which in most cases resulted in quarrels between my husband and myself that may end up being physically abused.

As a member of the Union which I joined in 2018 and elected Zonal Treasurer in 2021, I reported my challenges to the Union Office and I was directed to see a counselor engaged by the Union to assist members that needs counseling on family issues as well as mental health.

Apart from the counseling that I received, the Union also supported my family of six with food supplies and I also attended a workshop where we were taught how to make:

- *Liquid soap*
- *Vaseline*
- *Curry spice*
- *Jollof rice spice*
- *Peanut.*

Attending the vocational training has totally turned around the fortune of my family because I now have money to support my family with the proceeds from the products which I produced and sell. Now those frequent quarrels at home due to reliance only on my husband income has ceased and I have even reactivated my bank account to

save some money and I have been able to save seventeen thousand {N17,000.00} naira only since I started the business in January 2021.

The training and the support to start the business has made me to become a responsible mother to my four Children and Wife to my husband thereby bringing back happiness, peace and love to my home because what I cannot do for myself and my family before, now I can do it by supporting my family with the proceeds from my sales.

I thank the Union for this great intervention and I will like to call on all women who are at home doing nothing to get up and find something to do to support their family. Domestic Workers shall appreciate more interventions of this kind to other members that are yet to benefit from this exercise. Because now I will not look for paid employment to enable me focus on my little business.



Amina Ibrahim displaying her products that has continued to fetch her good money. Thanks to IDWF.

Sarah Paul Miss

My name is Sarah Paul and a Member of National Union of Hotels and Personal Services Workers which I joined in 2020 during the pandemic after a member of the Union got me a cleaning job to earn a living and support my family. But due to the lock down and low patronage, I lost the job almost immediately.

As the first born in a family of eight, I have to look for means to support my Parents and Siblings. Joining the Union as a Domestic Worker enabled me to received food support twice and was nominated to attend this Income Generating Activities training in December, 2021

The training has turned me to Small Scale Business Lady that supplies Liquid Washing Soap to Offices and Homes as well as sell Food Spices to neighbours.

The union gave me ten thousand {N10,000} naira only to begin the business and I have continued to smile ever since.

I started with ten {N10,000} thousand naira as my capital and was able to make additional seven thousand {N7000} naira now. There is a great change now because we have regular flow of income due to the liquid soap and curry spices am selling.

My recommendation is that it is good to belong to the Union and I am very happy to be part of the union because they have been very supportive to me and my family. My recommendation is for others to come and join the Union so that their lives will change positively just the way my own life has changed.

Based on the support we received we have been telling others too to join the Union and they have been doing so. In my zone now, we have increased from mere fifteen members to almost fifty members and we have continued to increase in number daily due to the good news we share about being member of the Union.



Spices produced by Sarah Paul a participant above liquid soap produced by her.

Aisha Abdulsalam Mrs -

Aishatu Abdulsalam is my name, with a family of five Members and I have been a Union Member since 2018.

As a daily paid Domestic Worker who survived and support the family based on income earned cleaning, washing and cooking for families on daily basis, during the pandemic nobody can go out to look for daily needs, things were very difficult and there was hunger within the family.

Due to the remote area where I lived with my family, we could not access any support but however, a Union member called me to attend a training organized by the Union Headquarters in 2021 and I never regret attending the training.

Gradually things are getting better with the money I realized from selling peanuts, liquid soap and Vaseline which I started with the ten thousand {N10,000.00} naira only given to us by the union after the training with the support of IDWF. Thank you IDWF, thank you NUHPSW who did not sit on the money but used it to benefit we women. Although Male members are complaining that why must they be excluded from such great opportunity but the Union stood its ground that only Women will benefit from this training.

I appealed to the Union to please help more domestic workers who are not presently working to also earn a living.



Peanuts produced by Hajia Aisha Abdulsalam for sale above and liquid soap plus Vaseline below.



Hajia Aisha preparing Vaseline in her kitchen.



Hajia Aisha making liquid soap at home.

GRACE JOHN Mrs – A Widow and Domestic Worker

As a Widow and a Domestic Worker, life has not been easy due to loss of my husband and breadwinner of the family. However, we have continued to survive from money realized as a Domestic Worker working as Nanny for families that drop their Kids while going to work and this has helped to put food on my family table before the pandemic.

I joined the Union in 2019 after learning that the union can assist in time of needs.

When the pandemic started in 2020, families that I used to take care of their Children no longer see the need to bring them again because we all now sit at home. Without doubt, things became tough and no-where to turn to because no more income coming in again.

The Union came to our rescue in December, 2021 when I was nominated from my Zone to attend a training on income-generating idea for domestic workers affected by covid-19 to empower and build their capacity in caring for themselves.

At the training we learnt how to make different kinds of spices for our cooking and for sale, liquid soap, Peanuts and Vaseline – which people like more than the ones produced by companies.

To the glory of God and support of the IDWF and NUHPSW, I started with five thousand {N5,000.00} naira only mainly for spices and Liquid soap as at December 2021 and have gained about ten thousand {N10,000.00} naira now that has assisted me to pay my Child's School Fees.

It has helped me cater for my family and has opened more horizons and customers.

I recommend more capital support from the Union if possible as I have seen proof of profitability of the business and gradual growth of the business.



Liquid soap and spices produced by Grace John on display.



Grace John, a Zonal Leader giving vote of thanks at the Workshop.

ENOH BLESSING LAMI Mrs

I decided to join the Union in 2020 after a fellow Domestic Worker took me to the Centre where the Union shared food items to members at the pick of COVID-19 pandemic and despite being not a member, I benefited from the good gesture. This good gesture prompted me to register as a Union Member.

Supporting my family of six as a Domestic Worker during the lockdown without Government support and no social insurance and job became a big issue for me and my husband.

During COVID-19 there were a lot of challenges things were very hard for everybody there was lockdown. All the industries were closed down, no money, no work, no business, no food and no money for our children to go to school. Everything was so hard for me and my family but God sent the union through the NUHPSW and IDWF to support us through food items.

A succor came again when my zonal leader selected me to be part of a training on Income Generating Activities being organized by the union for Domestic Workers in December, 2021.

The union came with a very good support through skill acquisition and initial capital support of ten thousand {N10,000.00} to establish our own small scale business.

This program has engineered a change in our life which has reduced poverty amongst members and the business is growing and now there is a change in my family living style because we no longer beg for food non collect food items on credit again.

A lot has changed in my life now, we can eat, my children are now going to school not like during COVID-19

My recommendation to others is that they should use the Capital wisely and the union should not forget us in future with further trainings and support. We too we shall continue to tell others on the need to join the join Union because of what we have seen and benefitted as members and to always pay our dues monthly.



Liquid Soap by Lami blessing Eno



Group photograph of all participants with the Liquid soap and Vaseline produced at the workshop. Thanks to IDWF.



Liquid soap and spices produced for sale by Ruth Ogar

RUTH OGAR Miss

My name is Ruth Ogar, a live in Domestic Worker who lost her job with the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 and also a Member of the National Union of Hotels and Personal Services Workers which I joined in 2019.

As a member of family of eight, feeding and coping with all necessities of life - without money and a job - was very difficult during the pandemic.

I thank the Union for giving us vocational training and ten thousand {N10,000.00} naira to start producing what we were taught and without asking us to refund it but use the gains to feed our families and grow the business.

There is much difference because I always have money with me now from the sale of liquid soap and spices. Since I started the business, I have been able to save eight thousand five hundred {N8,500.00} naira which I hope to grow and use to rent a Shop to carry out the business. There is a great change because we have frequent flow of money coming every day.

Everything has changed because we no longer lack food and money in my house.

My recommendations is for others to come and join the union because the union will give them their full support and to the IDWF and the Union, they should continue with the good work they are doing and God will continue to blessed them.