



Implemented by:



## Promoting Women's Rights and Gender Equality (WoRGE) in Michika and Guyuk Local Government Areas of Adamawa State

PROJECT BRIEF

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This brief was developed to deepen public understanding of gender equality challenges in conflict-affected regions, share lessons from the WoRGE Project, and inform inclusive, gender-responsive development programming and policymaking. For further information on the issues raised in this brief, please contact: [infonigeria@oxfam.org](mailto:infonigeria@oxfam.org)

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# Acronyms

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>BMZ</b>    | German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development        |
| <b>CBAs</b>   | Community-Based Assemblies  |
| <b>CEPAD</b>  | Centre for Public Education and Mobilisation for Development in Nigeria |
| <b>CGCs</b>   | Community Gender Champions  |
| <b>CRUDAN</b> | Christian Rural and Urban Development Association of Nigeria            |
| <b>EU</b>     | European Union  |
| <b>EYFS</b>   | Early Years Foundation Stage  |
| <b>GALS</b>   | Gender Action Learning System   |
| <b>GBV</b>    | Gender-Based Violence   |
| <b>GIZ</b>    | Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit                 |
| <b>GRB</b>    | Gender-Responsive Budgeting   |
| <b>GRP</b>    | Gender-Responsive Planning  |
| <b>GRPB</b>   | Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting                                |
| <b>GTA</b>    | Gender-Transformative Approaches  |
| <b>HRBA</b>   | Human Rights-Based Approach   |
| <b>HTPs</b>   | Harmful Traditional Practices   |
| <b>IDPs</b>   | Internally Displaced Persons  |
| <b>JRS</b>    | Jesuit Refugee Service  |
| <b>LGAs</b>   | Local Government Areas  |
| <b>MELSA</b>  | Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Social Accountability             |
| <b>PWDs</b>   | Persons with Disabilities   |
| <b>RCA</b>    | Rapid Care Analysis   |
| <b>SGBV</b>   | Sexual and Gender-Based Violence  |
| <b>VAPP</b>   | Violence Against Persons Prohibition                                    |
| <b>VSLAs</b>  | Village Savings and Loan Associations                                   |
| <b>WDSCs</b>  | Ward Development Steering Committees                                    |
| <b>WoRGE</b>  | Promoting Women's Rights and Gender Equality                            |

# PROJECT AT A GLANCE

## PROJECT TITLE

Promoting the Rights of Women and Improving Gender Equality through Conflict-Sensitive Approaches (WoRGE)

## OUR BIG GOAL

To embed gender-responsive planning and build sustainable livelihoods for women.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The main project objective is to *“advance women's rights and enhance gender equality through conflict-sensitive approaches in Michika and Guyuk LGAs of Adamawa state.”* The project seeks to achieve the following specific objectives:

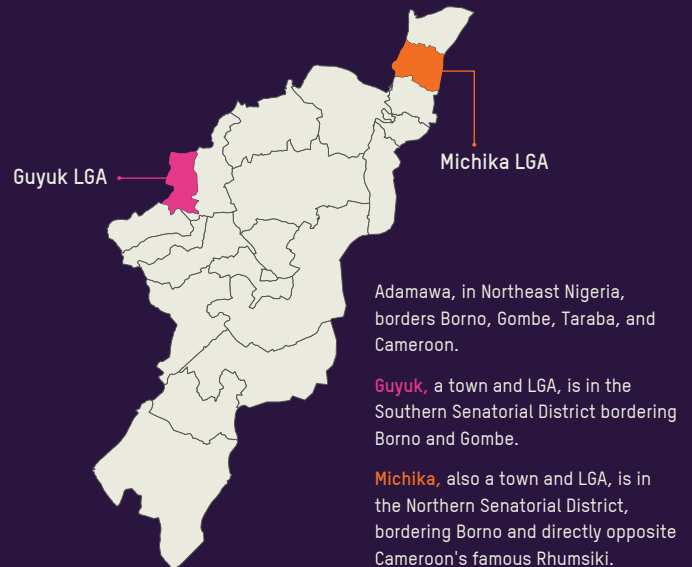
- To improve the participation of women and socially excluded groups in social, political, and economic activities and decision-making processes.
- To strengthen the systems and capacities of government and local institutions towards promoting gender equality and social inclusion.

## LOCATION

Michika and Guyuk LGAs, Adamawa State, Nigeria.

## DURATION

December 2023 – May 2025 (18 months)



## KEY PARTNERS

- Funding Partner: German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
- Co-funding Partner: European Union (EU)
- Implementing Partners: Oxfam, GIZ, CEPAD, CRUDAN

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

|   |                    |                    |                  |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| <b>2,773</b>                                      | <b>1,618</b> (58%) | <b>1,155</b> (42%) | <b>194</b> (7%)  |
| Individuals reached across Guyuk and Michika LGAs | Women              | Men                | Youth            |
|   | <b>610</b> (22%)   | <b>1,637</b> (59%) | <b>998</b> (36%) |
|   | IDPs               | Returnees          | Vulnerables      |

*Initial target was 800 community members (500 women, 300 men) in both LGAs.*

**13**

Community-based assemblies

**13**

Women-only safe spaces created

**25**

Women allocated farmlands

**256**

Radio shows aired, spreading awareness

**6**

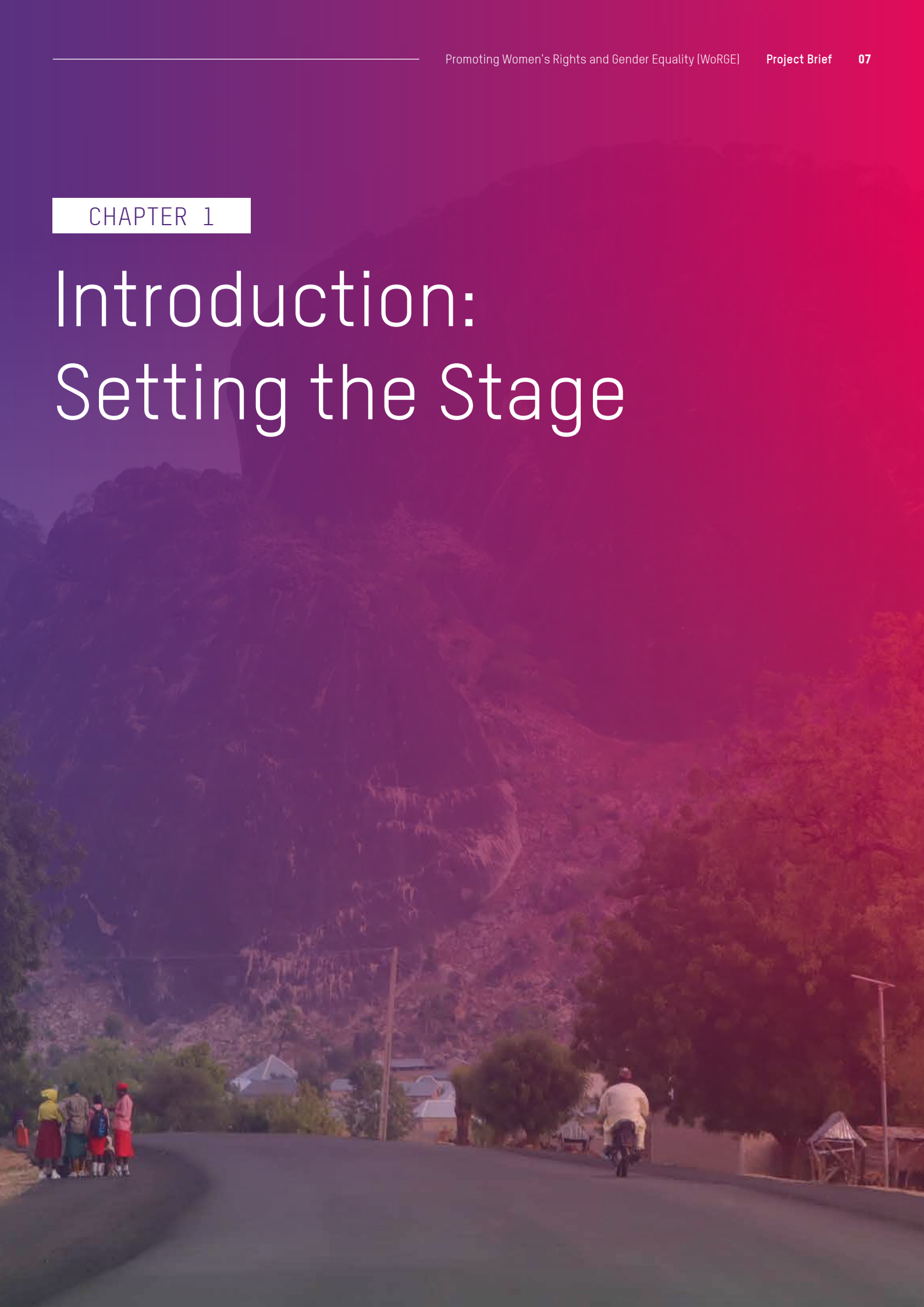
Individuals (women & PWDs) now in Traditional Councils

**13**

Milling & de-husking machines installed, saving women over an hour daily

## CHAPTER 1

# Introduction: Setting the Stage





## 1.1. Context: Northeast Nigeria and the Impact of Conflict

For over a decade, Northeast Nigeria has faced a prolonged and devastating conflict, profoundly disrupting the lives and livelihoods of its communities. This enduring crisis has led to widespread displacement, forcing countless individuals and families from their homes and altering the region's social and economic landscape. In Adamawa State, particularly in Michika and Guyuk Local Government Areas (LGAs), communities are still scuffling with the complex challenges of resettlement, rehabilitation, and reintegration in the aftermath of sustained turmoil. The damage extends far beyond physical infrastructure; it has torn at the social fabric and severely affected the psychological well-being of the population.

The conflict has deepened existing vulnerabilities and introduced new layers of hardship, especially for women and girls. Longstanding socio-cultural norms and discriminatory practices have left them systematically excluded from socio-economic and political processes. Consequently, their needs are frequently overlooked in development and recovery efforts. Despite their resilience and central role in family and community life, women and girls remain underrepresented in critical conversations around social and economic development.

The threat of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), harmful traditional practices, and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV) continues to limit women's and girls' potential. For persons with disabilities (PWDs), the challenges are further compounded, often ignored in development planning and routinely denied protection from violence and exploitation. The pre-existing inequalities in Michika and Guyuk, marked by poverty, high illiteracy rates, limited access to healthcare, and the absence of reproductive rights, have only been magnified by ongoing insecurity, including insurgency, farmer-herder conflicts, and communal unrest. These realities illustrate a pressing need to address gender inequality as a cornerstone of sustainable recovery.

## 1.2. The Challenge: Gender Inequality in Michika and Guyuk LGAs

Even before the escalation of violence, communities in Michika and Guyuk LGAs faced deeply rooted gender

disparities. The conflict has only exacerbated these issues, compounding the barriers that women, girls, and other vulnerable groups face in their daily lives.

### 1.2.1. Socio-economic Disempowerment

Women and girls in these communities have long borne the brunt of poverty and systemic marginalisation. Despite their critical contributions to agriculture and household economies, they remain economically disempowered. High levels of illiteracy, especially among women, limit their access to skills development and economic opportunities. Cultural norms restrict women's roles to domestic and caregiving responsibilities, such as childbearing, fetching water and firewood, and food preparation, leaving them with little time or opportunity to pursue education or income-generating activities. This *"time poverty"* reinforces dependency on male financial provision and perpetuates cycles of poverty.

### 1.2.2. Exclusion from Decision-Making

At every level of governance, household, community, and local government, women and girls are largely excluded from decision-making processes. Traditional institutions, including village and ward leadership structures, are overwhelmingly male-dominated. As a result, the voices and concerns of women, girls, and PWDs are often marginalised or ignored in development planning. Even though women play key roles in political mobilisation, their participation rarely translates into leadership positions. This systemic exclusion undermines efforts toward inclusive governance and equitable development.

### 1.2.3. Vulnerability to Violence and Harmful Practices

Women and girls in Michika and Guyuk face a heightened risk of SGBV and harmful traditional practices. Reports of domestic violence, sexual harassment, and rape remain common, particularly in the context of conflict and displacement. Practices such as early and forced marriages are prevalent, denying girls autonomy, education, and personal development. The exclusion of women from land inheritance, despite their active participation in farming, limits their economic independence. Hidden threats such as child trafficking further endanger vulnerable children, particularly in underserved areas. These violations have lasting consequences on survivors' physical health, mental well-being, and ability to contribute meaningfully to society.



#### 1.2.4. Challenges for Persons with Disabilities

PWDs face layered marginalisation, particularly women and girls with disabilities, who contend with both physical limitations and social stigma. Their voices are largely absent from community decision-making spaces, and their specific needs are rarely addressed in public programmes. Access to essential services like education, healthcare, and employment remains limited due to inaccessible infrastructure and discriminatory attitudes. Consequently, PWDs are disproportionately affected by poverty, exclusion, and violence, with few resources or support systems to help them overcome these challenges.

### 1.3. The WoRGE Project: Our Vision for Change

In response to these systemic inequalities and the prolonged impacts of conflict, the **Promoting the Rights of Women and Improving Gender Equality through Conflict-Sensitive Approaches (WoRGE)** project was launched in December 2023. Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and co-funded by the European Union

(EU), and implemented by Oxfam, GIZ, CEPAD, and CRUDAN, this 18-month intervention is designed to advance gender equality and empower women in Michika and Guyuk LGAs.

WoRGE aims to institutionalise gender-responsive participatory planning while supporting the development of sustainable livelihoods for women. At its core, the project adopts a transformative, rights-based approach, seeking not just to address symptoms, but to confront the root causes of inequality. By integrating the voices of women, girls, men, and boys, WoRGE challenges harmful norms and redistributes power more equitably across households, communities, and governance structures.

The WoRGE project focused on capacity building, community-led advocacy, and strategic engagement with local institutions. It works to empower marginalised groups to claim their rights and shape the decisions that affect their lives. Through this inclusive and conflict-sensitive lens, WoRGE envisions communities where women and girls are not just beneficiaries but leaders and change agents in the journey toward sustainable peace, development, and equality.



## CHAPTER 2

# Project Approach and Methodology





## 2.1. Guiding Principles: Gender Transformative & Human Rights-Based Approaches

The WoRGE project is grounded in two mutually reinforcing frameworks: **Gender-Transformative Approaches (GTA)** and the **Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)**. These principles are central to tackling the root causes of gender inequality, particularly in conflict-affected settings.

The GTA lens moves beyond addressing the symptoms of inequality to actively confronting and reshaping the entrenched gender norms, discriminatory practices, and unequal power relations that sustain the subordination of women and girls. It involves a critical examination of societal structures that dictate rigid roles for men, women, boys, and girls, and it aims to redistribute power, responsibilities, and opportunities within households, communities, and institutions in a more equitable way.

Complementing this, the HRBA ensures that all project activities are anchored in the recognition of the dignity and rights of all individuals. This approach views women, girls, and other marginalised groups not merely as beneficiaries but as rights-holders who are empowered to understand, claim, and exercise their socio-economic, political, and reproductive rights. It places a premium on participation, accountability, non-discrimination, and transparency.

Together, these approaches guide the WoRGE project in addressing both practical gender needs (e.g., improved access to resources) and strategic interests (e.g., shifting social norms), laying the foundation for sustainable gender justice, community resilience, and policy advocacy.

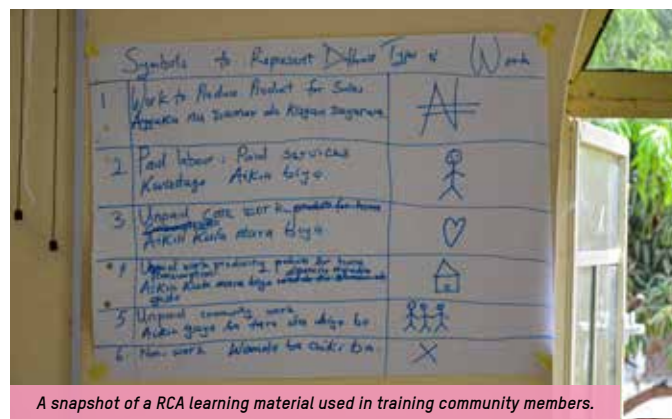
## 2.2. Key Methodologies

The WoRGE project utilises a blend of participatory and evidence-based methodologies to catalyse deep community engagement and promote sustainable gender transformation.

### 2.2.1. Rapid Care Analysis (RCA)

Rapid Care Analysis (RCA) is a crucial tool employed by the WoRGE project to understand and visualise the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work, predominantly borne by women and girls. Through participatory exercises, such as a "time-use analysis of a typical 24 hours," RCA helps communities recognise how women spend significantly more time on domestic roles like cooking, cleaning, and childcare, often combining

multiple tasks simultaneously. This analysis vividly demonstrates the "time poverty" experienced by women, leaving them with minimal leisure time and limiting their engagement in productive, income-generating activities.



A snapshot of a RCA learning material used in training community members.

By making these hidden realities visible, RCA sparks crucial dialogues within households and communities, prompting men to acknowledge the extensive, often unacknowledged, care roles played by women and encouraging willingness to redistribute these responsibilities more equitably. It directly informs interventions aimed at reducing this burden, such as the provision of labour-saving tools like milling machines, to reduce the drudgery of care work.

### 2.2.2. Gender Action Learning System (GALS)

The Gender Action Learning System (GALS) is a highly participatory and transformative methodology central to the WoRGE project's approach. GALS empowers individuals and communities to analyse and break through gender-based barriers and inequalities that prevent them from achieving their development visions. It utilises simple, visual tools like the "Vision Road Journey," "Happy Family Tree," "Gender Justice Diamond," and "Livelihood Efficiency Tree," which are adaptable across diverse literacy levels and social statuses.

These tools facilitate self-reflection and collective action, helping participants to articulate their aspirations, identify opportunities and challenges, plan expenditures, and re-evaluate traditional gender roles. GALS has proven particularly effective in enabling gender balance and socio-economic empowerment, enabling individuals like Dorcas Barnabas to achieve significant financial goals through structured saving and investment. It encourages joint family planning, collaborative division of labour, and a shift in mindset towards collective progress and a more harmonious household. GALS serves as a practical, self-spreading movement for sustained gender justice.



### 2.2.3. Positive Masculinity

The WoRGE project adopts a Positive Masculinity framework to proactively involve men and boys as allies in the pursuit of gender equality, rather than perceiving them as obstacles. This approach directly addresses harmful notions of masculinity that often perpetuate violence and discrimination against women and girls, while also recognising the burdens these traditional roles place on men themselves.

By involving male gender focal points and encouraging male champions, the project aims to trigger a shift in societal beliefs and practices that traditionally relegate women to subordinate positions. Men are encouraged to critically reflect on their roles, challenge patriarchal power structures, and actively participate in domestic activities and care work, thereby promoting shared responsibilities within households. This approach ensures that gender transformation is a collective endeavour, not a conflict between genders. By promoting positive masculinity, WoRGE promotes an environment where men support women's agency, leadership aspirations, and economic empowerment, leading to more harmonious homes and inclusive communities.

## 2.3. Partnership and Collaboration

The success of the WoRGE project is underpinned by a robust and strategic network of partnerships. Led by a consortium comprising Oxfam, the Christian Rural and Urban Development Association of Nigeria (CRUDAN), and

the Centre for Public Education and Mobilisation for Development in Nigeria (CEPAD), the project is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), co-funded by the European Union (EU) with oversight from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

This multi-actor collaboration brings together diverse expertise, community access, and implementation capacity across Michika and Guyuk LGAs. Regular planning and review meetings among partners ensure alignment with project objectives, enable adaptive management, and facilitate knowledge exchange. Oxfam provides strategic leadership and ensures compliance with gender-sensitive standards through the review of Terms of Reference, budgets, and activity monitoring.

The consortium also collaborates with a broad spectrum of external actors in Adamawa State, including peer organisations and stakeholders working on gender, peacebuilding, and development. These connections enhance the project's reach, facilitate learning, and open doors for future synergy.

Importantly, WoRGE maintains strong relationships with key government institutions such as the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, the State Planning Commission, and the Ministry of Budget and Finance. This engagement supports the institutionalisation of gender-transformative policies and practices, ensuring the project's impact is not only deep but also sustainable at scale.



## CHAPTER 3

# Making a Difference: Project Activities and Implementation



A cornerstone of the WoRGE project's strategy is the deliberate and inclusive engagement of diverse stakeholders, recognising their pivotal role in promoting and sustaining gender equality. This includes building the capacity of key community actors and government figures to champion transformative change, while cultivating open dialogue at all levels.

### 3.1. Engaging Stakeholders for Lasting Change

#### 3.1.1. Community Entry and Stakeholder Engagement

Understanding that strong local relationships and community ownership are foundational to success, the WoRGE project carried out intensive community entry and stakeholder engagement activities across Michika and Guyuk LGAs from February 17–23, 2024. These efforts served to formally introduce the project, sensitise key actors on the importance of gender equality, and secure collaborative support before broader implementation.

A joint team from CEPAD, CRUDAN and Oxfam visited strategic locations, including LGA secretariats and palaces of district and ward heads, to meet stakeholders where they are. In Michika, 91 stakeholders (26 women, 67 men) were reached, and 75 in Guyuk (41 women, 33 men).

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Key stakeholders (99 women, 67 men) were engaged as part of the community entry project activity by Oxfam, CRUDAN and CEPAD teams across Michika and Guyuk LGAs through direct visits to local government secretariats and traditional palaces, securing vital support for the WoRGE project.



Key highlights of these engagements included:

- **Introducing Project Goals:** Stakeholders were briefed on WoRGE's objectives, implementing partners, timelines, expected outputs, and their anticipated roles in project success.
- **Community Ownership:** Discussions emphasised women's participation in decision-making and strengthening local institutions. In Guyuk, political and administrative leaders contributed to pre-selecting project wards, bolstering a sense of ownership.
- **Adapting to Local Contexts:** Feedback was encouraged and incorporated. For example, Michika stakeholders recommended using the term equity instead of equality. Bazza Marghi stakeholders voiced concern over low female political participation and social exclusion, while Madzi Ward leaders called attention to discriminatory inheritance practices.
- **Building on Past Success:** The team highlighted WoRGE's alignment with successful initiatives like Oxfam's PROACT (Guyuk) and CDP governance (Michika), helping to build immediate trust.
- **Deepening Community Commitment:** The engagements stirred enthusiasm across a broad spectrum, traditional leaders, women's groups, religious figures, and existing structures like WDSCs and VSLAs.

#### 3.1.2. Roundtable Dialogues

High-level roundtable dialogues convened in Michika and Guyuk brought together influential stakeholders, community leaders, traditional rulers, government officials, and civil society actors. These forums provided space for open, critical examination of harmful cultural and religious norms, including early/forced marriages, denial of land rights to women, domestic violence, and covert child trafficking.



Participants explored the harmful impacts of these practices, ranging from economic marginalisation to deep social exclusion. These sessions ensured new understanding, with one participant noting, *"I now see gender discussions as promoting peace and community progress."*

- Stakeholders made strong commitments to:
- Raise awareness of harmful practices and discriminatory customs;
- Promote affirmative action for women, PWDs, and IDPs in decision-making, employment, and access to resources;
- Sensitise community members on land allocation to women;
- Support the review of inactive land laws;
- Engage religious leaders in using their platforms for sustained community sensitisation.

These dialogues marked a significant step toward collective accountability and community-led transformation.

### 3.1.3. Capacity Building for Leaders (Government Officials, Traditional Leaders)

To deepen stakeholder engagement, the project held intensive three-day training workshops for government officials and traditional leaders in both LGAs. Participants included district/village heads, councillors, and LGA executives.

The workshops covered:

- Gender concepts, diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- Gender-responsive planning and budgeting;
- GBV and HTP prevention and response strategies.

Crucially, these sessions led to notable mindset shifts. Leaders who initially resisted women's participation in decision-making began to embrace the concept. A councillor from Michika reflected: "I am a changed person now... this training touched me in a special way to become a better person."

The practical exposure to gender-responsive budgeting helped participants understand how inclusive planning can improve community well-being and ensure equitable distribution of resources.

## 3.2. Empowering Communities from Within

WoRGE is grounded in the belief that real, lasting change comes from within. The project prioritises local capacity-building and the creation of inclusive spaces for learning and collective action.

### 3.2.1. Community Gender Champions (CGCs) Training

A key strategy involved identifying and training 144 Community Gender Champions (CGCs), 40 in Guyuk (20 women, 20 men) and 104 in Michika (57 women, 47 men), through three of four planned training modules.

The CGCs were equipped with tools and approaches, including:

- Rapid Care Analysis (RCA)
- Gender Action Learning System (GALS)
- Community-level GBV and HTP response

Through the participatory GALS methodology, CGCs now lead gender-sensitive interventions and facilitate dialogue around shared household visions and inclusive leadership. Many have evolved into peer educators and business trainers, helping over 500 community members adopt the GALS approach.

This has not only expanded the project's reach but has also improved the economic standing and agency of champions and their communities.

# 144

Dedicated  
Champions  
Identified &  
Trained

- **MICHIKA:** 104 CGCs (57 Women, 47 Men)
- **GUYUK:** 40 CGCs (20 Women, 20 Men)

*These CGCs became peer educators and business trainers, reaching out to over 500 community members.*



### 3.2.2. Community-Based Assemblies (CBAs)

To complement CGC efforts, WoRGE established Community-Based Assemblies in all 13 project wards (8 in Michika, 5 in Guyuk). These CBAs are designed as monthly platforms for community members to engage in critical dialogues about gender, promoting gender equality, understanding power imbalances, and addressing the root causes of marginalisation, oppression, and exclusion.

These mixed-gender forums engaged 1,192 community members (578 women, 614 men) in deep discussions on:

- Gender roles and household equity;
- Power dynamics and marginalisation;
- Redistribution of unpaid care work;
- Conflict-sensitive planning.

Facilitated primarily by the trained CGCs, the assemblies promotes peer learning, ensuring knowledge is cascaded to other community members. The CBAs have been instrumental in identifying existing GBV and HTPs and fostering behavioural changes, helping households plan more harmoniously. Evidencing this shift, a traditional ruler in Guyuk expressed interest in inviting facilitators to cultural festivals, stating that the project had *"helped make marriage sweet."*

### 3.2.3. Women-Only Platforms (Safe Spaces)

Recognising the need for private and empowering spaces for women, the project established 13 Women-Only Platforms across the LGAs (8 in Michika, 5 in Guyuk), reaching 401 women (249 in Michika, 152 in Guyuk). These platforms serve as vital safe spaces where women can openly and freely discuss critical issues that affect them, ensuring sensitivity in guarded discussions.

Key topics explored included **"Women Economic Empowerment"** and **"Women in Peace and Conflict environment,"** alongside step-down learning from GALS and RCA trainings. These platforms are facilitated by representatives from the trained Gender Champions, ensuring continuous learning and agency building for improved participation of women in decision-making processes.

A significant outcome is the exposure of women to the importance of becoming more economically viable, which helps to minimise their vulnerability and over-dependence. Through the capacity gained from these platforms, many participants have reported improved relationships with their spouses and demonstrated an increased ability to speak up on issues affecting them in their communities.



### 3.3. Addressing Harmful Practices and Promoting Rights

#### 3.3.1. GBV/HTP Response Mechanisms Training

Three rounds of training were conducted for Community Gender Champions (CGCs) to strengthen their understanding of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs), and community-level response mechanisms. The sessions were grounded in survivor-centred approaches, emphasising dignity, rights, and safety.

The training addressed the root causes and impacts of GBV, challenged harmful gender roles and stereotypes, and equipped CGCs with tools to transform these norms. A notable story shared highlighted a shift in behaviour after a young boy resisted his father's use of canes to discipline his mother, showing the potential for intergenerational change.

CGCs also developed soft skills in gender-responsive decision-making, survivor support, and social accountability. They learned to recognise the intersections of GBV and broader violence against women and girls, integrating these principles into daily interactions. Each training round concluded with CGC-led action plans focusing on awareness creation, case handling, reporting, and community dissemination of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act.

#### 3.3.2. Advocacy on Land Rights and Inheritance

The WoRGE project actively advocated for women's land rights and inheritance, addressing longstanding discriminatory practices in Michika and Guyuk LGAs, where women, despite being active farmers, are traditionally denied land ownership, a practice that severely reinforces their economic vulnerability and limits their agency.

Stakeholder roundtables revealed growing awareness of the economic harm these customs cause. Participants committed to sensitising communities, supporting the review of Adamawa's inactive land law, and working with traditional leaders to allocate farmland to women.

As a direct result of the advocacy, 25 women in both LGAs were successfully allocated farmland. This marked a significant step toward economic empowerment and demonstrated the effectiveness of community-driven advocacy in challenging harmful norms and promoting women's rights.



# 25

Women allocated farmland in Michika and Guyuk LGAs.



# 1,547

Total participants recorded across 13 Community-Based Assemblies (CBAs); 8 in Michika, and 5 in Guyuk.



# 697

Women were reached through 13 Women-Only Platforms (Safe Spaces).

#### TIME POVERTY INSIGHTS (RCA FINDINGS) & INTERVENTION

Time spent on unpaid care work by women and men:



12 hrs/day



4 hrs/day



- 13 Milling and De-husking Machines Installed (8 in Michika, 5 in Guyuk).
- 20–50 households served per machine
- ~1 hour 30 minutes saved per household/day



# 75%

of women involved in the project now report increased confidence and self-expression, a testament to the lasting personal and collective transformation the WoRGE Project continues to drive.

Recognising economic disempowerment as a barrier to gender equality, the WoRGE project prioritised livelihood improvement in Michika and Guyuk LGAs by equipping women with practical business skills and resources.

### 3.4. Economic Empowerment and Livelihood Improvement

#### 3.4.1. Application of GALS Tools for Business Development

Through the Gender Action Learning System (GALS), women, who previously struggled with financial management or lacked business acumen, were trained in financial planning, savings, and business growth. Participants like Ms. Dorcas Barnabas and Mrs. Bakinamau Wycliffe leveraged tools like the "Vision Road Journey" to set financial goals, save strategically, and launch or expand their businesses.

The impact was substantial: 74 individuals started new businesses, 20 invested in livestock (pigs and goats), 15 expanded ventures, 10 acquired land, and 10 built homes. This demonstrates the direct link between GALS training and tangible improvements in livelihood options and financial independence.

#### 3.4.2. Community Milling and De-husking Machines

To address women's "time poverty" and improve food processing efficiency, the project installed 13 milling and de-husking machines, 8 in Michika and 5 in Guyuk, across intervention wards. This followed insights from the Rapid Care Analysis (RCA) training, which revealed that manual grain milling consumed significant time and energy, especially for women and girls.

In Dukul Ward, Guyuk LGA, for instance, women previously walked two hours to access milling services or spent up to four hours daily using stones to process grains. The new machines reduced food processing time by an estimated 1 hour and 30 minutes per household each day and offered a more hygienic alternative.

Since their installation in December 2024, each machine

now serves 20–50 households daily. Communities have taken ownership of maintenance, ensuring sustainability. This intervention not only eased the burden of unpaid care work but also improved household well-being and opened up new income opportunities.

#### 3.4.3. Addressing Time Poverty (Unpaid Care Work)

The WoRGE project identified the unequal burden of unpaid care work as a key driver of "time poverty" for women and girls, limiting their access to education, economic opportunities, and public participation. Through Rapid Care Analysis (RCA), communities examined daily time-use patterns and found that women spent an average of 11.5 hours per day on unpaid care tasks, compared to just 4 hours for men.

These findings meaningful conversations among couples and community members, leading to shifts in household dynamics. Mr. Lordson, after RCA training, began helping with firewood and food prep, tasks he once ignored. Mr. Hayatu Halilu Abba also started cooking and washing dishes, challenging local gender norms.

To support this shift, milling and de-husking machines were introduced, easing grain processing and freeing time for women to pursue income-generating work. These combined efforts promoted shared responsibilities and greater gender equality at home.

### 3.5. Leadership and Governance for Inclusion

Achieving gender equality in the WoRGE project necessitated the active involvement of women and marginalised groups in leadership and governance. This dual approach focused on developing individual skills and promoting institutional changes towards more inclusive systems.

#### 3.5.1. Transformative Leadership Training for Women

To strengthen women's representation in political, administrative, and community decision-making spaces, the project organised a 3-day Transformative Leadership Approaches and Women's Rights training in October 2024. The sessions, held in Michika and Guyuk, reached 104 women, both current and aspiring leaders. Participants explored strategies to overcome structural barriers like cultural norms, lack of family support, and economic exclusion. Seasoned women politicians with over 25 years of experience shared insights into navigating these challenges.



The training inspired participants to form women's leadership groups, mentor others, and promote intergenerational knowledge transfer. By the end of the programme, many had developed personal action plans to advocate for increased women's representation and leadership in their communities.

### 3.5.2. Gender-Responsive Planning & Budgeting

To institutionalise gender equity, the project also strengthened the capacity of local governments and traditional institutions in gender-responsive planning and budgeting (GRPB). Held in Yola, the sessions trained 40 political, administrative, and traditional leaders, including community gender champions, on how to design inclusive policies, plans, and budgets.

Participants practised developing GRPB strategies tailored to their LGAs. Michika prioritised maternal health and school infrastructure, while Guyuk emphasised increasing girls' school enrollment and building crèches for women teachers. These trainings highlighted the importance of using gender analysis to allocate public resources equitably and address the needs of women, men, children, PWDs, and ethnic minorities. Participants committed to

mainstreaming these approaches into their governance systems.

### 3.5.3. Inclusion in Traditional Councils and Committees

One of the most transformative achievements of the WoRGE project was breaking gender and disability barriers in traditional leadership. Following advocacy and capacity-building efforts, three women and three persons with disabilities were appointed to traditional councils across three wards in Michika, historically male-only domains. Their inclusion marked a significant shift, giving voice to previously excluded groups in high-level community decisions.

In Guyuk, a woman joined the Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee, and traditional leaders pledged to identify and appoint qualified women to leadership roles. Notably, the area crowned its first-ever female first-class chief based on merit, a landmark moment in the region's history. These milestones reflect the project's success in challenging entrenched norms and promoting inclusive governance structures that better reflect the needs of all community members.



## 3.6. Raising Awareness and Visibility

### 3.6.1. Radio Programmes

To reach a broad audience, including indirect beneficiaries across multiple states and communities, the project implemented a robust phone-in radio campaign. Broadcasts were conducted in Hausa and local languages, covering not only Michika and Guyuk LGAs but extending to other LGAs such as Song, Gombi, Mubi North and South,

WoRGE's success hinged on effective communication and widespread visibility. These were key to spreading vital gender equality messages and building understanding and support from a broad audience.

Yola North and South, and Girei. The radio programmes also reached audiences in neighbouring states, including Gombe, Taraba, Borno, and Yobe.

Listeners actively participated by calling in during live broadcasts to share views and seek clarification on gender-related issues. Each partner organisation hosted live sessions followed by repeat broadcasts within the same week, ensuring greater accessibility. From June 1st to December 10th, 2024, the project aired 79 episodes, comprising 40 live and 39 repeat broadcasts, consistently amplifying key messages on gender equity and the harmful effects of discriminatory cultural practices

### 3.6.2. Commemoration of International Days

The project strategically marked international observances to advocate for gender equity at scale. Notably, WoRGE collaborated with other GIZ-funded initiatives such as NURU Nigeria and Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) to commemorate the International Day of Rural Women. These events provided high-impact platforms for rural women to raise issues directly with decision-makers.

For instance, the event drew participation from the Office of the Wife of the Governor, the Ministry of Women Affairs, and the Ministry of Transport. Rural women shared first-hand challenges, limited land ownership, restricted access to extension services, inadequate skills training,

and exclusion from political spaces. A communique summarising these concerns was submitted to the Adamawa State Government, advocating for inclusive reforms and greater political representation for rural women.

Speakers emphasised the multifaceted roles rural women play in conflict-sensitive regions, balancing food production, caregiving, and socio-economic contributions, often while facing gender-based violence, poverty, and exclusion. These commemorations served as critical moments to elevate grassroots voices and build momentum for gender justice.

### 3.6.3. Media Engagement

Beyond radio, WoRGE adopted a multi-platform media strategy, engaging TV, print, and digital platforms like Facebook and Twitter, to share its activities and impact. Media professionals were directly involved in project activities to enhance gender-sensitive reporting and amplify public discourse. Strategic partnerships with government institutions ensured knowledge transfer to ministries such as Women Affairs, Justice, Budget, and Finance. Project highlights featured in Oxfam's Naija Tori newsletter reached over 4,000 national and 1,000 international stakeholders, broadening the project's visibility and reinforcing gender equality across sectors.





## CHAPTER 4

# Our Impact: Tangible Results and Success Stories



The WoRGE project has recorded significant progress in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in Michika and Guyuk LGAs. Below are highlights of key achievements aligned with the project's logframe targets.

## 4.1. Key Achievements and Progress on Targets

### 4.1.1. Increased Participation of Women in Leadership

One of the key objectives of the WoRGE project was to increase the participation of women and marginalised groups in decision-making across social, political, and economic spheres. The project has made significant progress toward this goal. As a result of targeted training on economic empowerment, affirmative action, and inclusive leadership, 37 women now occupy leadership roles; 21 in Michika and 16 in Guyuk.

A particularly groundbreaking achievement is the election of three women and three persons with disabilities into traditional councils in three Michika wards, marking a historic transformation in long-standing male-dominated governance structures. One woman was appointed to the Guyuk Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee, expanding women's presence in conflict mediation and community governance.

These outcomes directly support the project's target of increasing leadership participation among women and adolescent girls, from a baseline of 13.65% to an ambitious goal of 70% among 500 targeted individuals, demonstrating meaningful strides toward inclusive governance at the community level.

### 4.1.2. Development of Gender-Responsive Plans

A core focus of the WoRGE project was to build the capacity of government and local institutions to promote gender equality and social inclusion. A major milestone in this regard was the development of two gender-responsive plans, one for each LGA (Michika and Guyuk). These plans are designed to serve as guiding documents for local government development priorities and are positioned for integration into the 2025 LGA and state budgets.

This achievement directly addresses the project's output indicator on the creation of gender-responsive plans at the community, ward, and LGA levels, an area that previously lacked any such frameworks.

To support this outcome, the project facilitated capacity-building workshops on Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and Gender-Responsive Planning (GRP), reaching 92 women and 209 men. This represents a significant enhancement in the knowledge and skills of key institutional stakeholders. The resulting plans are grounded in community-identified priorities, gathered through inclusive town hall meetings and dialogue sessions, ensuring that future budgets are more aligned with grassroots needs and more equitable in addressing gender disparities.





#### 4.1.3. Enhanced Agency and Livelihoods

Enhancing women's agency towards becoming self-reliant and addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) was a key output of the project. Through the Rapid Care Analysis (RCA) and Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) training, community women, girls, and persons with disabilities (PWDs) have seen an increase in access to resources and opportunities that improve their livelihood. Critically, 74 individuals utilised their GALS knowledge to start new businesses, while 20 invested in livestock farming (such as pig and goat production), 15 expanded existing businesses, 10 purchased land, and 10 built new houses. This demonstrates direct, tangible economic empowerment. Furthermore, the project facilitated the installation of 13 milling and de-husking machines (8 in Michika, 5 in Guyuk) across 13 wards. These machines have significantly reduced women's time poverty by approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes daily, offering more hygienic food processing and freeing up valuable time for other productive activities. 25 women in Guyuk and Michika LGAs were allocated farmlands following strategic advocacy on land rights. The project reports also indicate that 75% of supported women demonstrated an increased opportunity to express their self-interest in areas of economic empowerment, health, well-being, leadership, and social inclusion.

persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the project communities have gained improved access to resources and livelihood opportunities.

As a result of these interventions:



**74** individuals applied their GALS training to launch new businesses.



**20** invested in livestock farming (including pig and goat rearing).



**15** expanded their existing enterprises.



**10** acquired land.



**10** constructed new homes.

These outcomes are clear indicators of tangible economic empowerment.

To boost women's productivity, 13 milling and de-husking machines were installed across 13 wards, saving women an average of 1.5 hours daily and improving food hygiene. Strategic advocacy also secured farmland for 25 women in Michika and Guyuk. Project data shows 75% of supported women reported greater ability to advocate for their interests in areas like economic empowerment, health, and leadership, highlighting the project's broader impact.

# 40



Political, administrative, and traditional leaders were trained on Gender-Responsive Planning & Budgeting with the following focus areas:

- **MICHIKA:** Maternal health and school infrastructure
- **GUYUK:** Girls' enrollment and crèches for teachers

#### 4.1.4. Strengthened Institutions

The project strengthened women's agency and economic self-reliance while addressing the reduction of vulnerability to Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Through the application of Rapid Care Analysis (RCA) and Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) training, women, girls, and



## 4.2. Voices of Change

### 4.2.1. Michika Success Stories



## The Custodian Who Chose Change: A Traditional Leader's Awakening

Baba Gomna Zakawa, the traditional leader of Michika 1, was once a staunch guardian of cultural norms, many of which were discriminatory. *"As a traditional leader, I made sure the custom of the land is kept... I did not see the need to start changing the culture that was handed down to me,"* he recalled.

However, the WORGE Gender Project prompted a deep transformation. Through high-level dialogues and awareness sessions, he and other leaders came to understand the damaging impact of harmful practices. *"I was convinced that the new knowledge was for good, and I became an advocate to my people."*

He began to actively share teachings from the project in his community, highlighting the legal implications of gender-based violence and promoting reforms. *"This project has brought many positive changes in the lives of my people, and nothing can stop us from continuing with the knowledge from this project."*

## From Baking to Banking: Dorcas' Journey to Financial Freedom

Dorcas Barnabas, a 25-year-old baker from Vi-Bokka ward in Michika LGA, had been in business for over three years without tangible results. *"I cannot see any savings and no achievements,"* she said, reflecting on her early challenges. Despite making cakes for major events, her income disappeared without structure or savings.

Her turning point came through the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) training under the WORGE Project. Equipped with tools like the Vision Road Journey, she set a bold target of ₦500,000 in five months and diligently cut trivial expenses, adopted savings plans, and focused her business goals.

*"At first, it appeared impossible... but I decided to give it a try,"* Dorcas shared. By December 2024, she had saved ₦600,000 — the largest sum she had ever owned. With this, she invested in purchasing and storing 10 bags of grains, anticipating resale when prices peak. *"More knowledge gave me the edge. I now lead the change I want to see."*



## Being Gender Sensitive Is a Basic Human Right and a Collective Win – Ibrahim Musa Zaruwa's Story

Ibrahim Musa Zaruwa, a Gender Champion from Bazza Margi in Michika LGA of Adamawa State, believes gender sensitivity is not only a human right but a catalyst for community transformation. Trained through the WORGE Project, Ibrahim confronted deep-rooted norms, beginning with his own household. *"I told myself that the change must start with me,"* he recalls. He now shares domestic duties and ensures his children, regardless of gender, do the same.

One of the most defining moments in his journey was revisiting a case in which he had supported denying a woman access to land inheritance. With legal knowledge and advocacy skills from the WORGE Project, Ibrahim convinced stakeholders, despite resistance, by quoting laws, ultimately helping the woman secure her rightful land. *"I spoke their language, with facts and law. It changed their perspective,"* he says.

Since then, Ibrahim has led community sessions on gender roles, GBV, and women's rights, using dialogue to challenge harmful norms. *"When we empower women, we empower communities. It's a collective win,"* he says.



## Transforming Communities Through WORGE: More Stories of Change from Michika

In Michika LGA, deeply rooted traditions once guided how communities treated women, resolved disputes, and made household decisions. But through the Gender Stand-Alone Project known as WORGE, a quiet revolution began, one conversation, one leader, one community at a time.

Traditional leader Baba Gomna Zakawa reflects, *"I once upheld harmful customs, but WORGE helped me see their impact. Now, I advocate for positive change."* Through dialogues and action planning, he and fellow leaders now lead efforts to address gender-based violence, forced marriages, and inequality in their communities.

In a landmark achievement, three women and three persons with disabilities were officially welcomed into traditional councils, an outcome made possible by persistent community sensitisation and inclusion-focused training. This milestone has reshaped how decisions are made, ensuring broader perspectives are represented.

For Mr. Hayatu Halilu Abba, a Fulani man from Bazza Tilijo, the project was life-changing. *"If someone had told me I'd one day support my wife in house chores, I wouldn't believe it,"* he admitted. Inspired by WORGE's gender and time-use training, Hayatu now shares household duties, campaigns against gender-based violence, and helps enrol children in school.

Similarly, Mr. Ishaka Umar from Wambilimi Tilli had never imagined the impact joint planning and shared labour could have on family happiness and productivity. *"WORGE taught me skills for peaceful coexistence and made me a community ambassador,"* he said. He now promotes shared household roles and supports his family with farming.

Finally, Mr. Luka Bitrus from Madzi ward shared how the project helped his community abandon the idea that educating girls is a waste. *"We now see forced marriage and educational neglect for what they are, harmful practices we must leave behind,"* he stated.

Together, these voices echo a collective realisation: change is possible when knowledge meets commitment. WORGE has not only shifted mindsets but reshaped lives across Michika.



#### 4.2.2. Guyuk Success Stories

### Sowing Seeds of Economic Empowerment: Mrs. Wycliffe's Journey Into Livelihood

In Guyuk ward, 48-year-old Mrs. Bakinamau Wycliffe had spent over a decade as a housewife, relying solely on her husband's unstable farming income. With five children and rising expenses, the family often struggled, especially in poor harvest years.

Through the WoRGE project trainings, including Rapid Care Analysis and GALS, Mrs. Wycliffe gained new perspectives on economic empowerment. Inspired, she used allowances from the sessions to start a small pig farming venture, purchasing her first female pig.

*"I have a special joy knowing that I'm growing a source of income,"* she shared. Today, her pig is thriving and expecting offspring, marking the beginning of a more secure future.

Mrs. Wycliffe's story is a testament to how knowledge and small investments can unlock economic resilience for families.



### I Used to Be Shy But Now I Am Bold – Mrs. Azimile Donald Bobo

Mrs. Azimile Donald Bobo, a 42-year-old civil servant in Guyuk LGA, struggled for years with stage fright and a lack of confidence. She couldn't speak up even in church or community settings, and the fear held her back professionally and personally. She desperately wanted to overcome this.

Her turning point came when she was nominated as a Gender Champion and invited to trainings where she was expected to share knowledge with others. *"At first, it was a big challenge,"* she admitted. But with consistent mentorship and encouragement from the project, she started to grow.

A key moment was attending a transformative leadership training for women, where hearing others' stories inspired her to keep practising. Gradually, her confidence soared.

Now, she leads discussions and trainings for both men and women. Her civil service colleagues have noticed a "marked improvement," praising her ability to express opinions and challenge poor practices. Mrs. Azimile's story is a powerful testament to personal growth fueled by support and opportunity.





## One Milling and De-husking Machine Saves Us Four Hours of Stress – Dukul Ward

In Dukul Ward, a hilly area of Guyuk LGA, women faced a tough daily reality. Without a milling and de-husking machine, they had to grind grains by hand using stones or walk two hours carrying heavy sacks to the mill in Guyuk town, and then carry the flour back home.

This backbreaking work could take up to four hours each day. During the WoRGE project's Rapid Care Analysis, it became clear that providing a milling and de-husking machine would greatly ease this burden. In December 2024, the project installed a milling and de-husking machine in Dukul Ward, transforming how food is prepared.

The machine now serves 20 to 50 households daily, reducing the time and effort required, while also providing a cleaner, more hygienic way to mill grains. The community has taken responsibility for maintaining it carefully, knowing how much it improves their lives.

This simple intervention not only frees up women's time but also supports their health and opens doors to more productive opportunities — proving how one practical solution can create lasting change.

## Diverse Paths to Empowerment: Other Guyuk Successes

The WoRGE project has sparked meaningful change across Guyuk, opening doors to empowerment through shared responsibility and new perspectives. One such transformation is that of Mr. Lordson, who for over fifteen years believed domestic chores were solely his wife's duty. A Rapid Care Analysis session revealed just how unbalanced their household responsibilities had been, prompting a powerful shift in his thinking.

Motivated by this insight, he began supporting his wife with cooking, gathering firewood, and childcare. The change strengthened their home life and positioned him as a vocal advocate for gender equity. Today, Mr. Lordson trains other men, challenging long-held norms and promoting shared household roles.

Similarly, Mr. Ampeni Agabus, inspired by the "Vision Road Journey" tool during GALS training, decided with his wife to build their own mud house, leaving behind an inconvenient family home. They've cleared land, made blocks, and are collecting roofing materials, hoping to move in by April 2025.

These stories highlight how WoRGE's trainings nurtured economic viability, joint planning, and personal initiative throughout the community.

### 4.3. Data and Figures

The WoRGE Project continues to create tangible change across Michika and Guyuk LGAs, translating its gender-focused, community-driven approach into meaningful results. **Reaching a total of 2,773 individuals, 58% of whom are women**, the project has not only engaged communities broadly but also ensured inclusivity, with significant participation from youth, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, and vulnerable populations.

Capacity building has been a cornerstone of the intervention. **A total of 30 trainings**, split equally between the two LGAs, have strengthened knowledge on gender and leadership. Notably, 239 individuals (117 men and 122 women) were equipped with GALS (Gender Action Learning System) tools, and 397 government and traditional leaders (258 men, 139 women) were trained to become agents of change within their communities.

Community engagement platforms have flourished. 13 Community-Based Assemblies now serve as regular spaces for dialogue, drawing **1,547 participants monthly**. Similarly, 13 women-only safe spaces across the LGAs **provide 697 women with a trusted environment to learn and share**. Beyond physical spaces, the project also leveraged media, **airing 256 radio shows** (128 live and 128

rebroadcasts), to sustain conversation and awareness around gender issues.

Economic empowerment outcomes have been just as striking. Using GALS knowledge, 74 individuals launched new businesses, 15 expanded existing ones, and 20 invested in livestock. Others made life-changing strides, with 10 buying land and another 10 building new homes. Women have also benefited from time-saving tools, such as 13 milling and de-husking machines, and 25 women have gained access to farmland, significantly reducing the time and stress spent on sourcing land.

In leadership and governance, the project's advocacy has borne fruit. **37 women now hold leadership positions supported by the project**, while three women and three persons with disabilities have been included in Michika's traditional councils. One woman now contributes to peace and conflict resolution efforts in Guyuk. Both LGAs have developed gender-responsive plans and hosted budget town halls influenced by project advocacy.

Perhaps most powerfully, 75% of women involved in the project now report increased confidence and self-expression, a testament to the lasting personal and collective transformation the WoRGE Project continues to drive.

# 3

rounds of GBV/HTP response mechanisms trainings for Community Gender Champions (CGCs) which led to CGC-led action plans on VAPP Act, awareness creation, and case handling

# 104

women trained in Transformative Leadership, leading to action plans and new leadership groups.

# 239

community members trained (117 male, 122 female), with many applying the GALS knowledge to successfully start or expand businesses and invest in assets.

# 8

individuals reached key positions, Michika: 3 women and 3 persons with disabilities appointed to traditional councils. Guyuk: 1 woman joined the Peace & Conflict Resolution Committee, and the first-ever female first-class chief was crowned.

# 256

radio shows aired: 128 live broadcasts and 128 rebroadcasts.

# 397

government and traditional leaders trained (258 males, 139 females) alongside community members.



## CHAPTER 5

# Challenges, Lessons Learned, and Recommendations for the Future





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## 5.1. Challenges Encountered

Despite robust planning and dedicated implementation, the WoRGE project faced several challenges that required adaptive responses and ongoing strategic engagement.

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### Political transitions and government personnel changes

One notable hurdle was political transitions and changes in government personnel. The project commenced in December 2023, coinciding with the near completion of the tenure for local government electoral officials. This led to a continuous power transition, first to appointed Local Government Supervisors and then to newly elected LGA officials after the conclusion of the LGA elections. This necessitated repeated advocacy visits and reintroductions of the project's aims and objectives to newly appointed or reassigned Commissioners and Directors within various ministries. These changes could sometimes disrupt momentum and required additional time and resources for re-engagement and ensuring project buy-in from new leadership.

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### Insecurity

Insecurity remained a persistent concern, although no direct attacks on project team members or participants were reported. While progress had been made in addressing insecurity within Adamawa State, ongoing attacks by armed groups in neighbouring states posed significant risks to project implementation. The rising insecurity and fragile security situation disrupted scheduled activities, causing delays or cancellations of visits, workshops, and training sessions, and hampering community engagement. Safety concerns also restricted mobility, preventing access to the 13 political wards in Guyuk and Michika LGAs. Also, the fear of potential attacks often deterred community members from participating in project activities.

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### Socio-economic challenges

This presented a significant backdrop to the project's work. The lingering effects of changes in existing policies at the beginning of President Bola A. Tinubu's administration continued to influence fluctuations in the prices of goods and services. This led to a continuous rise in the cost of living, pushing more of the population into extreme poverty and hunger, with women and girls being disproportionately affected. While the government was making efforts to address these rising costs, the impact on citizens remained substantial, adding a layer of economic vulnerability to the communities the project served.

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### Community-level resistance due to religious and cultural beliefs

The project also encountered initial resistance at the community level from certain religious ethos and cultural beliefs. Some married Muslim women faced religious ethical standards that discouraged their participation in social/public activities. Similarly, during trainings, some male participants initially perceived discussions on gender-related issues as a challenge to their masculinity, particularly concerning traditional norms where women are subservient or where men do not engage in domestic work. Statements like *"a woman can never be equal to a man"* or fears that empowering women would lead them to "misuse it" or "challenge or disrespect their husbands" were voiced. These challenges were often rooted in fears that the initiative would empower women to challenge traditional norms and roles, especially concerning reproductive rights. However, these instances were addressed through the adoption of conflict-sensitive and gender-transformative approaches like Rapid Care Analysis (RCA) and Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS), which helped to make the benefits of addressing gender issues visible to them.

## 5.2. Key Lessons Learned

The implementation of the WoRGE project provided valuable insights into strategies that effectively promote gender equality and women's empowerment in conflict-affected communities. These lessons offer important guidance for designing future interventions and ensuring lasting impact.

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### Increased Stakeholder Receptivity

One major lesson was the shift in stakeholder receptivity over the course of the project. Initial resistance, particularly in Michika, was rooted in fears that empowering women could undermine traditional roles and norms. However, sustained dialogue, consistent messaging, and culturally sensitive engagement helped ease these fears. Over time, community members who were once sceptical began to embrace change. For instance, some men now openly support their wives by sharing household chores and childcare. As one participant put it, *"I used to believe a woman's place was only in the kitchen, but now I help my wife and it brings us closer."* This demonstrates that persistent, respectful engagement can challenge deep-rooted beliefs and ensure genuine acceptance of gender equality initiatives.

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### Inclusion in Traditional Leadership

The project sparked groundbreaking changes in traditional leadership structures. Historically, women and persons with disabilities (PWDs) were excluded from community leadership roles. This began to shift during the project, with Michika nominating three women and three PWDs into leadership positions. In Guyuk, traditional leaders went a step further by appointing the area's first-ever female first-class chief, an unprecedented move based on merit. These milestones show that with targeted advocacy and capacity building, even long-standing exclusions can be reversed, allowing marginalised groups to contribute meaningfully to decision-making and governance.

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### Localisation of Tools

Localising project tools was another key success factor. By tailoring materials to reflect local language, culture, and lived realities, the project made its messages more relatable and easier to absorb. Participatory tools such as the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) and Rapid Care Analysis (RCA) proved effective across literacy levels and social groups. This localized approach fostered deeper community engagement and encouraged behaviour change because the content felt practical and relevant. As a next step, the development of a localized community learning manual is recommended to standardize and expand access to the training tools.

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### Active Involvement of Stakeholders

The visible support of traditional rulers and newly elected LGA chairmen played a major role in strengthening community buy-in. Their endorsement encouraged widespread participation and built a sense of local ownership around the project's goals. This leadership-led influence created ripple effects across the community, helping to normalise conversations about gender equality. The project's collaboration with local and state government representatives also ensured strategic knowledge transfer and alignment with existing government programmes. By engaging stakeholders at multiple levels, from elders to policymakers, the project was able to overcome initial resistance and embed gender equality into the wider social and governance structures.

### 5.3. Recommendations for Sustained Impact

To ensure the continued positive trajectory and long-term sustainability of the WoRGE project's achievements, the following recommendations are put forth.



#### Expand Project Coverage to Additional LGAs and Wards

Given the project's demonstrated impact and increasing demand from communities, it is highly recommended to scale up activities to additional Local Government Areas and wards. Communities such as Zah ward in Michika and Dumna in Guyuk, which continue to face heightened gender inequality and Gender-Based Violence (GBV), would greatly benefit from the intervention. Expansion will help replicate and deepen the behavioural changes already observed.



#### Develop a Localised Community Learning Manual

To standardize training materials/delivery and ensure accessibility for diverse community members, the development of a localised community learning manual is strongly recommended. This manual should be tailored to the specific cultural and linguistic contexts of the communities, enabling a wider and more consistent dissemination of the project's transformative learnings.



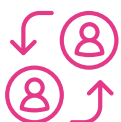
#### Continue Culturally and Religiously Sensitive Approaches

The project's success in overcoming initial resistance highlights the importance of adopting cultural and religious sensitivity in gender transformative programming. Future interventions should continue to prioritise messaging techniques and approaches that resonate with local contexts and encourage positive attitude shifts towards power relations, rather than alienating communities.



#### Sustain and Deepen Engagement with Stakeholders

Building on the active involvement of LGA chairmen, traditional rulers, and religious leaders, it is vital to sustain regular engagement with these stakeholders. Regular follow-up dialogues, workshops, and collaborative initiatives should be organised to reinforce learning, deepen understanding of complex gender dynamics, and ensure continued commitment to inclusive governance and women's rights.



#### Strengthen Mentorship and Peer-to-Peer Learning Mechanisms

The success of Gender Champions in cascading knowledge and the establishment of mentorship strategies for women in leadership indicate the power of peer-to-peer learning. Investing further in strengthening these mentorship networks and facilitating regular exchange visits or forums for champions and leaders will ensure continuous learning, problem-solving, and sustained advocacy within communities.



### Advocate for the Activation and Enforcement of Relevant Laws

Advocacy efforts should continue to focus on the activation and enforcement of legal frameworks that protect women's rights, including the VAPP Act, inheritance laws, and other gender-sensitive legislation. Particular attention should be paid to the review and implementation of inactive land laws, alongside robust community education on the legal implications of harmful practices.



### Scale Up Time Poverty Alleviation Interventions

The introduction of community milling and de-husking machines significantly reduced the time burden on women, allowing for greater participation in economic, educational, and leadership activities. Scaling up such innovations and exploring additional interventions to address unpaid care work will further increase women's agency and well-being.



### Embed Gender-Responsive Budgeting and Planning into Local Governance

While gender-responsive plans have been developed, sustained efforts are needed to ensure their full capture and implementation in LGA and state budgets. Continuous capacity building for budget drafters, monitoring frameworks, and community feedback mechanisms will ensure accountability and the equitable allocation of resources for all genders.

# Project Team

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- Johnbosco Abazie, *MELSA Officer*
- Eric Agada, *Finance Officer*
- Bulus Zira, *Supply and Logistics Assistant*
- Maxwell Osarenkhoe, *Communication Officer*
- Hasiya Ahmadu, *MELSA Officer*

## CEPAD Staff

- Dennis Tsakpa, *Project Manager*
- Milcah Gaman, *Project Officer*
- Ben Sunday, *Gender and Governance Advisor*
- Benjamin Ngablai, *Finance Manager*
- Milcah Gaman, *Project Officer*
- Gabiya Yusuf, *Project Officer*
- Mohammed Njidda, *Volunteer Support Staff*
- Ladu Atiwurcha, *HR and Admin Assistant*

## CRUDAN Staff

- Tobi Salawu, *Director of Programmes*
- Moses Alago, *Project Officer*
- Tobi Salawu, *Director of Programmes*
- Ene Mary Ejeh, *Finance Officer*
- Rejoice Zinas, *Gender Officer*
- Boniface Taddewus, *Local Government Supervisor*

## GIZ Support Team

- Bolaji Aina, *Deputy Commission Manager*
- Hassana Lawal Bello, *Gender Advisor*
- Christian Idoko, *M&E Coordinator*

## Other Key Supporting Individuals

- Regina Afiamo, *Fmr Deputy Country Director/Director of Programmes, Oxfam*
- Helen Akinyemi, *Fmr Gender Justice Manager, Oxfam*
- Enoch Bamaiyi, *Fmr Project Coordinator, Oxfam*



## Photo Gallery









































**OXFAM**

**THE FUTURE IS EQUAL**

Oxfam is a confederation of 21 affiliates operating globally in 78 countries, working to see a world without poverty. We are a worldwide development organization that mobilizes the power of people against poverty. Around the globe, we work to find practical, innovative ways for people to lift themselves out of poverty and thrive. We save lives and help rebuild livelihoods when crisis strikes, and we campaign so that the voices of the poor influence the local and global decisions that affect them.

Our work in Nigeria is hinged on three pillars: (i) Accountable Governance (ii) Gender Justice (iii) Just Economies

Oxfam in Nigeria strives to fight poverty and inequality by empowering civil society organizations and advocating for change in Accountable Governance, Economic and Food Systems, and Gender Justice. Our aim is to create a transparent, inclusive, and just society in Nigeria through collective action and empowerment. The Future is Equal!






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     Oxfam in Nigeria

