

Beneficiaries Tell Success Stories of Kebetkache Devt Empowerment Project in Rivers

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As part of efforts to boost long-term sustainable growth, cushion hardship in the society and enhance the financial capabilities among low-income earners, a rights and advocacy group, Kebetkache Women Development And Resource Centre, has given livelihood supports to at least forty people.

The beneficiaries, mostly young entrepreneurs who were some months past, empowered with cash to boost and revive their struggling businesses.

Speaking at an event where beneficiaries told their success stories on how the funds given to them were utilized, Executive Director of Kebetkache Women Development And Resource Centre, Dr. Emem Okon, reaffirmed the group's commitment to the development of less privileged, young entrepreneurs and innovations in Nigeria, especially in the Niger Delta region.

Emem Okon said the beneficiaries were selected as part of the "Dare to Trust Initiative", a financial support program launched by the Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action (GAGGA) and supervised by Kebtkache Women Development And Resource Centre.

She said the initiative was introduced in response to the declining standard of living and increase in youth restiveness in the country. Explaining that the initiative was named "Dare to Trust" because the funds were disbursed based on trust from GAGGA to Kebtkache, and from Kebtkache to the beneficiaries.

Okon, at a roundtable meeting in Port Harcourt with some of the beneficiaries, expressed satisfaction with the success of the program, noting that unlike traditional funding processes, there was no formal application process instead, Kebtkache used its discretion to identify those most in need to start and expand small businesses.

She further highlighted that the initiative has significantly empowered the recipients primarily low-income earners and individuals from impoverished households allowing them to improve their financial situations and establish sustainable sources of income.

She said, "Atleast, upto fourty persons have been supported through this initiative. But today, we were just able to get a handful of them together to share their experience.

"And because it is actually a very informal process, we didn't write a proposal before getting the fund from GAGGA. It was given on trust, that is why it was tagged 'Day to Trust.' We were charged to ensure that it helps people who are in need to do something that is meaningful in their lives.

"So, because it was given to us on trust, we also gave out to the beneficiaries on trust, we did not have a formal application process for people to apply to get the money. It was at my discretion in identifying need and confirming that somebody really has a need, and then we disburse.

"And through that process, many people actually benefited without actually knowing the source or applying. Some of them just expressed a need and then, myself and Kebetkache having a way to establish that that need is real and then we provided a support, without monitoring them.

"From what we have discussed, the initiative has gone a long way to assist all the beneficiaries to establish a business. It actually provided a lot of support to people who had no access loans or financial support for their businesses. Some were used to revive struggling businesses.

“Today is just to share experience of how the money was accessed and how it has been meaningful,” she said.

Some of the beneficiaries who shared their experiences, explained how the funds were invested in their businesses and how the initiative has significantly boosted their financial capabilities.

They hinted that their joy know no bound for Kebetkache and GAGGA, for the honour done them, even as they noted that the financial empowerment has helped them grow their businesses and expand the scope of their businesses.

They appreciated the gesture from Kebetkache, and also prayed God to continue to sustain the organisation in their quest to better the life of the less privilege ones in the society.

One of the beneficiaries, Dr. Ifeoma Sam Gabriel said the financial empowerment helped her to pay for her clearance during her doctorate degree programme, adding that the money came when she was in dire need of money for the programme.