

"Giving Hope, Restoring Hope to Widows and Orphans"



**ROCK OF AGES  
EMPOWERMENT FOUNDATION**

**June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018**

**International Widows Day Celebration**

**@**

**National Centre for Women Development Central Area District Garki Abuja**

**Theme: "You Can"**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Rock of Ages Empowerment Foundation was founded in 2007 and registered as a corporate body on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2009 under the Companies and Allied Matter Act, (Part 'C') 1990 of the federal Republic of Nigeria. We carry out free medical treatment; free education support programs, youth and widows empowerment.

The Rock of Ages Empowerment Foundation believes in restoring hope, giving hope to the widows and orphans and in so doing, the foundation uses her yearly international widow's day celebration to empower widows who were trained on different skills and also provide scholarship to the orphans.

The foundation carries out research, training, outreaches and public educational campaigns about the needs for widow's empowerment, orphans and other vulnerable groups in the society. It is committed to its mission of transforming the lives of the underprivileged individuals through quality education, good medical treatments, and financial support, regardless of age, gender, race, religion or financial status.

During 2018 Widows Day Celebration Rock of Ages Empowerment Foundation, over 18 million naira was spent to empower widows in various service delivery areas, 1500 widows were empowered with 10kg bag of rice each, 800 widows received wrappers, about 70 widows were empowered with start up within the range of N50,000 and 30,00 naira only. 26 older widows were empowered with grinding machines. More so, 20 widows who were previously empowered gave testimonies and success stories on how the start up grants has been of great help to them and their families. The 20 others, were equally supported with ovum, grinding machines, cooking pot and cash donation as an encouragement to continue to support their families. To mark the year International Widows day, the Foundation visited various prisons within and around Abuja. During one of the visits, Mrs Blessing John was found and successfully freed by the Foundation. After her release from the prison, the Foundation empowered her with the sum of N100,000 naira to pick up her life again.

The medical component of the event of the 2018 International widows day celebration started with a health talk on various topics e.g hand wash, ebola control, HIV prevention messages by a trained nurse, involved the check of blood pressure, Clients were tested for malaria parasite, typhoid fever, arthritis, blood glucose, skin condition, dental cases, worm cases. There was free consultation and free drugs. There were free eye check, reading glasses were given to various people with eye defect, other health indicators were diagnosed and treated. Referrals were made to appropriate health facility if any. Out of 790 widows that access free medical diagnosis and treatment, 51% of them were diagnosed and treated for malaria, 6% were treated for hypertension, arthritis, and eye defect respectively. Moreover, 2% widows have diabetes and treated, 3% have skin condition and also treated. Furthermore, 10% widows were treated for worm cases, 9% were treated for dental cases, whereas 8% were diagnosed with typhoid, and were properly treated as well.

### **2.0 SPEECH FROM THE FOUNDER**

The founder RAEF reported that the Foundation had made a giant strides and tremendous progress in 2018. He appreciated RAEF dedicated friends and supporters who had stood by RAEF till date. For close to 9 years the Foundation have touched over 7,000 lives by way of empowerment and have paid the school fees of over 3,000 orphans. Presently our support also extended to youths and women prison inmates.

The Foundation has been consistent in the last 8 years in honoring widows by way of training them in business skills and giving them start-up grants for business yearly during International Widows Day celebration. He also shared some of RAEF challenges, achievements and way forward.

The major challenge before RAEF, is lack of funding. The Foundation has single handed funded its activities from inception till date. Despite the challenges before us, the foundation recorded a number of results in the year under review. This includes routine free medical outreach, prisons visits and release of a woman inmate. Others include; 2018 International Widows Day celebration where the widows received different types of empowerment and making of the 2018 International Youth Day, the first of its kind with the students of the University of Abuja, Gwagwalada Campus. Our achievements are growing everyday as we continually identify areas of need in the society. The Funder stated that he has a dream, which is to continually give hope and restore hope to widows, orphans and less privileged because supporting widows strengthens society and keeps family strong even in the face adversities such as death of a loved one, supporting orphans gives them the opportunity to have good education because they are the leaders of tomorrow. He encouraged widows and orphans to be strong in the faith, and hinted them that he lost his mother to the cold hands of death when he was very young as a result he suffered so much to get to the level he is in life. To this day, he resolved to support widows, orphans and less privilege in the society.

He thanked attendees who were witnesses to this historic event. However, his special thanks goes to the Hon. Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development, Hajiya Aisha Jummai Alhasan who was high represented, Other dignitaries include RAEF Partners, Supporters, Friends and well-wishers as well as over 1500 Widows under the umbrella of the Foundation from the 19 widows zone within and outside Abuja.

In conclusion, he is determined to fill the gap created as a result of the lost of a parent or both parents in the lives of orphans/less privilege. He call upon people of like minds as he look forward to working with men and women of goodwill, Nigerians and International partners who will join us in challenging the ugly trend of poverty, diseases, marginalization, domestic abuses, illiteracy and neglect and give succor to the less privilege with your support and financial assistance.

Finally he thank all the participants for being part of RAEF's family and for their continued support, and wish you all the best of this year in good health. The event was well attended and covered by various media houses which includes the Catholic Television of Nigeria (CTV)



Picture Showing the Founder, Dignitaries and Widows

### **3.0 WORD FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

According to RAEF Program Director 2018 was the 8th edition of the International Widows Day celebration tagged "*YOU CAN*" by the Foundation and in so doing, the Foundation has succeeded in touching the lives of over 7,000 widows from inception. RAEF also succeeded in establishing about 19 widows zones in different communities within the federation where these widows come together on a monthly basis to share common values. In each of these zones, we have over 80 widows, giving an estimate of over 1,500 widows under the umbrella of the Foundation. The Foundation visited prisons and freed a woman who was imprisoned for no just cause and could not be bailed due to lack of funds. We have committed staff members, consultants and volunteers who work assiduously to achieve the vision of the Foundation. We have staff members in Enugu, Lagos, Port Harcourt, Ilorin, and Jos.

The sole aim of the foundation was to restore hope and give hope to widows, orphans and less privileged in the society as well as making impact in the lives of youths and girl child in particular. The Foundation had received external funding from inception but bent on actualizing its vision of empowering widows and give education support to orphans by way of paying their school fees.

The Foundation window is open to funding, support and partnership towards executing projects in any areas.

In conclusion, on behalf of RAEF, I appreciate all those who have been with us on this journey from inception, those who have supported us in one or another financially, materially and morally. We look forward to your continued support. The Program Director facilitated the empowerment aspects of the events. She presented cheques and grinding machines to the beneficiaries.



Cheques Presented to the beneficiaries by the Program Director



Cheques Presented to other beneficiaries by the Program Director



Grinding Machines Presented to beneficiaries by the Program Director



Other Beneficiaries at the Event

#### **4.0 SPECIAL INTERVENTION: PRISON VISIT & RELEASE OF PRISON INMATE: Blessing John**

Three months later, on 14th May, 2018 a few days after her story came to the ears of the founder of Rock of Ages Empowerment Foundation; Blessing John release from prison was secured by the foundation. The fine of N300, 000 was paid by the foundation. Her release was sudden and unexpected to Blessing and to her family. The foundation empowered her with the sum of N100, 000 after her release. The empowerment was done in 2018 International widows' day celebration. Blessing story was a pathetic one, just one month after her wedding, trouble came to her doorstep in the form of two fighting neighbors Blessing's attempt to stop the fighting was nipped to the bud. She spotted a pot of boiling water and without pausing to think, she grabbed it straight from the fire and flung its contents at the two fighters It worked like magic; they stopped fighting instantly. They yelp of pain and shocked disbelief quickly gave way to outrage. Before her very eyes, two enemies united against a new common enemy -Blessing John. A police complaint was made and in record time, a dazzled Blessing found herself in a dock answering to

criminal charges. Abject poverty and lack of information meant they had no lawyer to defend her during the trial and in shortly she was found guilty and sentenced to one year imprisonment with an option of fine of N300,000. If the family of Blessing had the funds to hire a lawyer or pay the fine, she might not have spent three months of her in traumatic and harrowing conditions. Poverty has destroyed and is still destroying several homes which is why we at Rock of Ages Empowerment Foundation are so passionate about empowerment of widows, orphans and the indigent. As Nelson Mandela said, when we fight against poverty, it's not charity rather it's justice because poverty is man-made. (See picture below)



## 2. Empowerment

Beneficiaries	Empowerment	Impact/Remark
1500 widows	10kg bags of rice each	✓ to fight hunger
70 widows	Cash -start up grants within the range of N50,000 and N30,000 naira = 1.9m	✓ business start up grant ✓ improve standard of living
27 older widows	Grinding machines	✓ small scale business ✓ improve standard of living
800 widows	Wrappers	✓ to fight nakedness
20 widows	Ovum, grinding machines, cooking pots	✓ small scale business ✓ improve standard of living
15 orphans	School fees -secondary school,N5000 each =N75,000 naira	✓ education support ✓ discovery of potential
25 widows	School fees -primary school, N3000 each = N75,000 naira	✓ education support ✓ discovery of potential

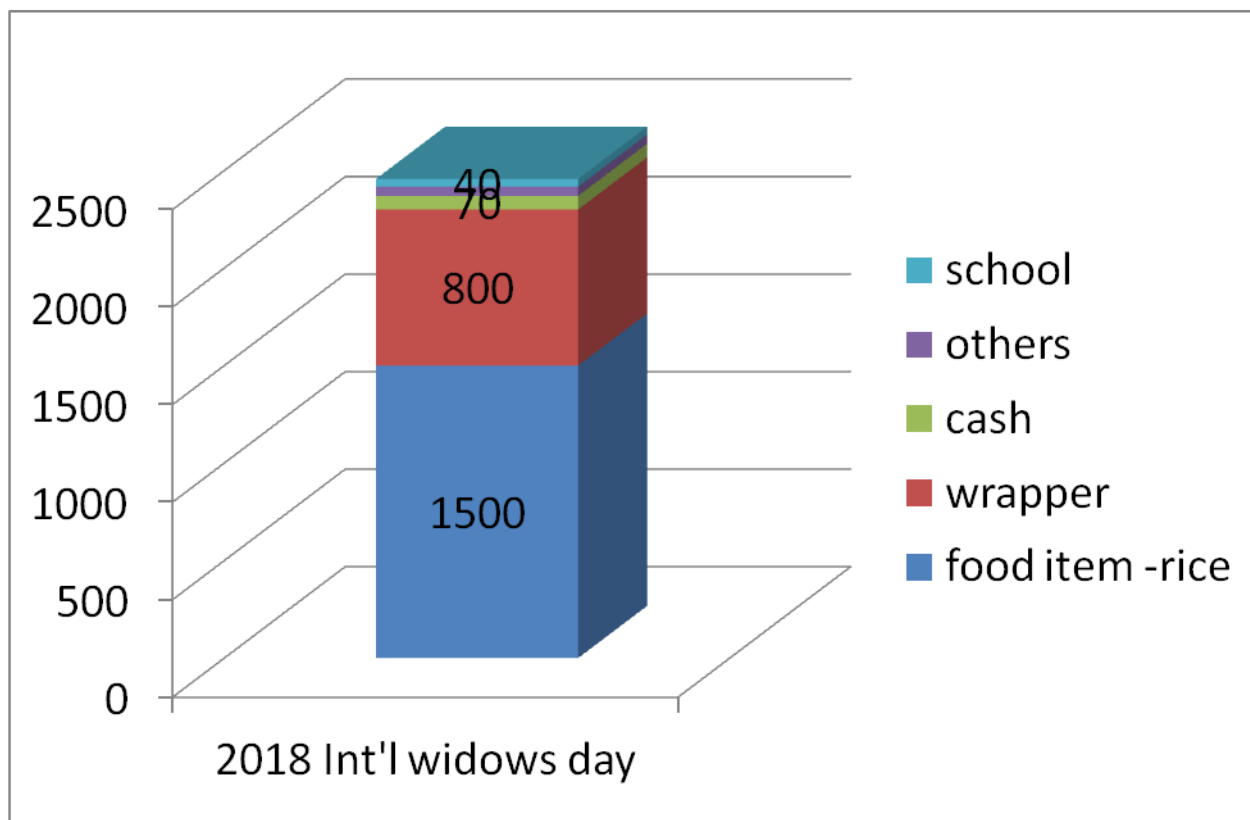


Figure 1, 2018 International Widows Day empowerment

From the figure above, 1500 widows were empowered with 10kg bag of rice each, 800 widows received wrappers, about 70 widows were empowered with start up within the range of N50,000 and 30,00 naira only. 26 older widows were empowered with grinding machines. More so, 20 widows who were previously empowered gave testimonies and success stories on how the start up grants has been of great help t them and their families. The 20 others, were equally supported with ovum, grinding machines, cooking pot and cash donation as an encouragement to continue to support their families.

Table 2; Multi diseases Medical care and treatment

S/N	Indicators	Diagnosis	Treated	% treated
1	Malaria cases	400	400	51%
2	Hypertension cases	48	48	6%
3	Diabetes Mellitus cases	16	16	2%
4	Arthritis symptom cases	45	45	6%
5	Eye problem cases	50	50	6%
6	Skin condition cases	21	21	3%
7	Worm cases	79	79	10%
8	Dental cases	75	75	9%
9	Typhoid fever	66	66	8%
10	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>100</b>



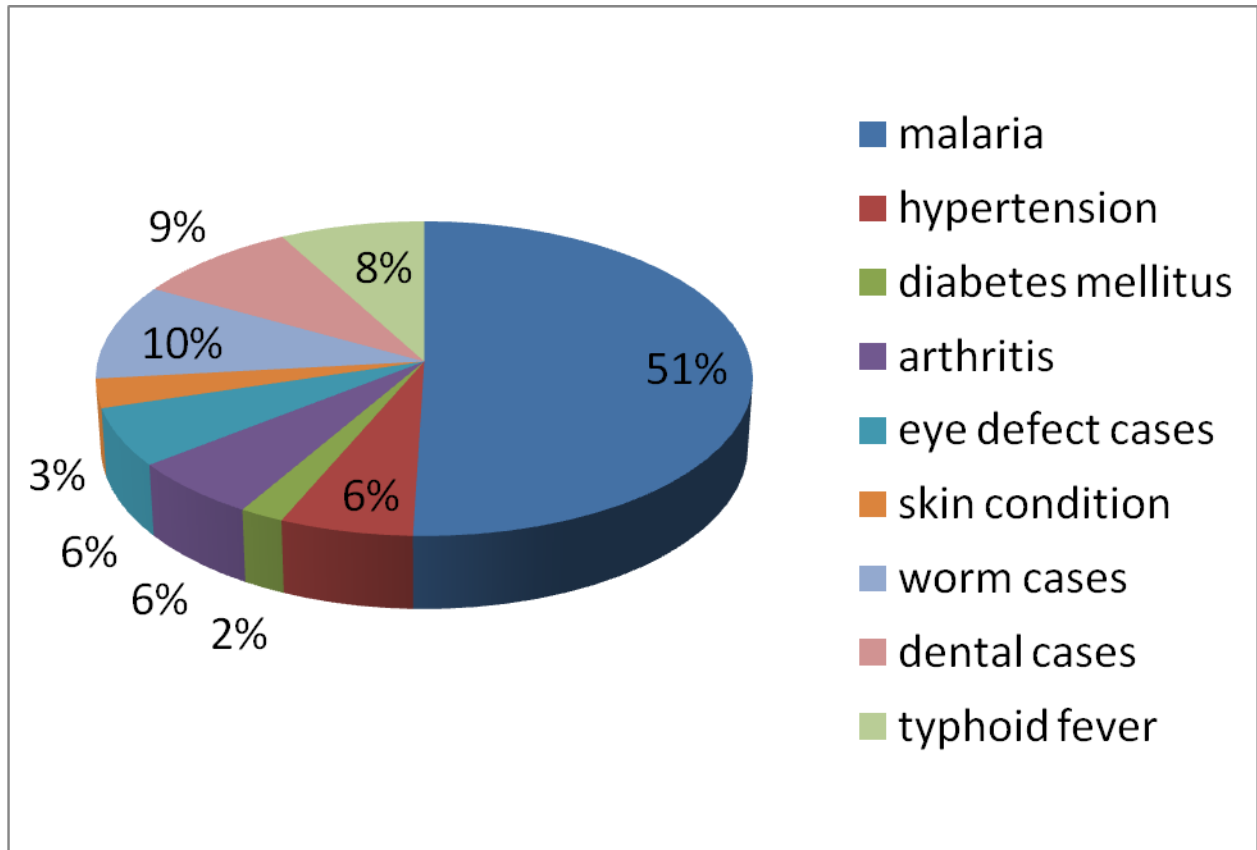


Figure 2; 2018 International Widows Day Free Medical diagnosis and treatment

From the figure above, out of 790 widows that access free medical diagnosis and treatment, 51% of them were diagnosed and treated for malaria, 6% were treated for hypertension, arthritis, and eye defect respectively. Moreover, 2% widows have diabetes and they treated, 3% have skin condition and also treated. Furthermore, 10% widows were treated for worm cases, 9% were treated for dental cases, whereas 8% were diagnosed with typhoid, and were properly treated as well.

## 5.0 ACHIEVEMENTS

RAEF has singlehandedly transformed the lives of over 7000 widows and their children, through skill acquisition trainings, financial empowerment, free monthly medical check-up and payment of school fees for their children without any external sources of income. We are moved by passion, and plight of these vulnerable groups and we are committed to pulling resources together towards giving a helping hand.