

The Future of Kids & Adolescent Clubs:

AIHA's Abdullahi Abubakar Shares His Thoughts on Maintaining Momentum After ICHSSA 3 Wraps Up



Abdullahi Abubakar, AIHA's ICHSSA 3 Project Social Work Advisor, attends a Kids Club meeting in Jigawa.

What would you say are three remaining challenges in your work as the project comes to a close?

The project would benefit greatly from increased governmental and political will to support the enrollment of government social workers into Kano State Polytechnic to enable them to undergo the ASW certificate course. There just aren't sufficient funds to enable AIHA to replicate our success in Kano to other states of implementation, particularly as related to the ASW institutionalization process in Niger, Borno, Jigawa, and Yobe States. Insecurity is also a challenge across most states where we implement our project.

Do you think Kids & Adolescent Clubs could be sustainable after project completion?

The Kids & Adolescent Clubs are community driven. They are run by community members under the Community Child Protection Committees (CCPC). They focus on building children's resilience and ensuring their safety against all forms of abuse. To ensure sustainability of the Kids Clubs, from the beginning of the project, we paid particular attention to the advocacy component of the project with relevant stakeholders, including community and religious leaders, policy makers, gatekeepers, and caregivers, to obtain their buy-in. We also selected community facilitators who have the interest of children at heart and trained them as facilitators. This community ownership structure will continue to exist even after the project funding ends.

What is most rewarding in your work?

The most rewarding aspect of my work has been the institutionalization of the ASW curriculum in Kano State Polytechnic after a long struggle. Not only will this strengthen the Social Workforce in Kano and the neighboring states, but also it will improve the wellbeing of the most vulnerable in our society. This is a huge success for USAID, the ICHSSA 3 Project, AIHA, and myself.