

# House of Mercy Children's Home (HOM)

Lagos, Nigeria

## Annual Report 2011

Charity No CAC/IT/No 21690



As a children's non-profit organisation, House of Mercy Children's Home (HOM) strives to enhance the lives of children, one child at a time.

### This Year in Review

2011 was a challenging year for HOM. We were pushed to find new ways of working with limited resources and respond to new crises in our midst.

### Summary of Activities

#### Homeless Street Children Programme

• **Family-based Residential Home.** HOM opened a family-based residential home for homeless street boys in March 2011. While some of the children have been reconciled with their families, those who are not able to return to their families remain in our care. The children are cared for by a live-in staff, and receive academic help after school-hours as well. From primary school right up to finding a job, we want to do everything possible to discover and develop the children's talents. Our goal for the children is that they be given ample opportunity to develop into healthy adults without the scars of child abuse.

#### Child Street Beggar Programme

• **Literacy.** The informal classes organised by HOM at the Oko Baba Destitute Camp paved the way for more children to attend school this year. The remarkable academic progress shown by the children motivated many more parents in the community to want their children to be educated.

• **Educational Support.** HOM sponsored 19 children to local schools during the academic session 2010-2011. During the academic session 2011-2012,

HOM is sponsoring 20 additional children whose families cannot afford to send them to school. This year like in other years the children studied hard and they all passed their annual exams and were promoted to the next class.

• **Basic Assistance.** HOM distributed food, clothes, shoes and toys to needy children on a regular basis this year. We assist many children in need as often as funds permit, in whatever ways we can, as and when we come across them.

### Network with other NGOs

We networked with other NGOs to expand our reach and troubleshoot problems.

### Horn of Africa Crisis

During the International Solidarity Week from November 14-19 2011, HOM participated in the events organised by the students of the University of Haute Alsace (UHA) in France to show solidarity with the people of the Horn of Africa who have been hit by the worst drought in 60 years.

### Challenges Encountered

**Homeless Street Children Programme.** Our efforts to give street children shelter and education often face stiff resistance from the children themselves. The attachment to the sense of freedom among many street children is one of the major obstacles HOM faces.

**Runaway Syndrome.** When children who have settled down off the streets at HOM are mixed with newly arrived boys who are testing the boundaries, the new boys often take settled boys out back to the street setting back the whole process of reintegration.

**Limited Resources.** We are arguably doing far too much with limited resources. This creates significant concern about ensuring the right balance in resource distribution.

## Objectives for 2012

**Informal School for child street beggars.** HOM will continue to run projects at the Oko Baba Destitute Camp in 2012 and the emphasis will be on education. Our aim is to enable as many children as possible to enrol in the formal education system.

**Homeless Street Children Programme.** In 2012 we will focus on tailored prevention programmes to stop children from ever finding the street. For those who are already there, we will provide the best possible rehabilitation services to ensure that family reunification and return to school or entry into skills training is long term, durable and effective.

### **Transitional Home for Street Children**

We plan to set up a transitional Home for street children with the aim of isolating them from those who have already settled down off the streets at HOM so they do not influence them and lure them back to street life.

**Home for Homeless Street Girls.** Homeless girls quickly get drawn into the sex industry. They spend less time on the streets and are not so noticeable. Few advocates speak up for these girls, and few street girls have family members or concerned individuals willing and able to intervene on their behalf. Our goal is to give these girls back their childhood so they can thrive and graduate into adulthood with good education, employable skills and a sense of self-worth.

We look forward to being of further service to homeless street children, child street beggars and needy children over the coming year.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our gratitude to all those who have donated to support HOM's programmes in 2011. Our achievements are made possible because of you.

- A friend of our NGO from Ghana for her donation of ₦1 000 000.
- Ms. N. Dike for her donation of ₦400 000.
- Mrs. B. Abatan for her donation of ₦34 500

- Church of Pentecost Anglican Church, Festac for awarding HOM a grant of ₦30 000.
- Surestart Limited for its donation of ₦6 000.
- Bristol Rentals UK for its online donation of £100.
- Mr. and Mrs. M. Nebdal for their donation of €150.
- Mr. & Mrs Ajibodu of Royal Choice School for offering scholarships to 3 of our children.
- Mrs. Oluyemi of Toyinson School for offering a scholarship to 1 of our children.
- Ashmart for its donation of groceries.
- Ms. Sobayo for her donation of foodstuff.
- Mrs. A. Babington-Ashaye for her donation of boxes of clothes and shoes.
- Mrs. Adhiambo for her donation of boxes of clothes.
- Ms. T. Fajusigbe for her donation of toys and educational materials.

Several individuals and groups have made donations to us, both large and small, and we would especially like to extend our heartfelt thanks to them both for their support and kind wishes, which we very much appreciate. In these difficult economic times, we are especially grateful for your support.

HOM is a small organisation and workers play a crucial role in assisting us in carrying out our duties so a big thank you goes to all our dedicated and hard-working staff for their hard work in 2011.

There are those individuals, like our HOM coordinator, who will always stand out. We are very grateful for her dedication, commitment, passion and determination that each and every child HOM comes into contact with has a chance at a decent future.

Thank you for giving former street children and child beggars a genuine chance at education and real hope for the future.

With sincere gratitude,

Bunmi Awoyinfa