

### LYDIA'S LIFELINE INITIATIVE FOR WELL-BEING

**Lydia Adza Ajayi**

Ewu-Ekiti, Nigeria

Community Volunteer: Gift Yuadoo Soho

**CONNECT**

Diverse sectors

**COLLABORATE**

Shared responsibility

**CREATE IMPACT**

Protect young people

**DISCLOSURE**

Conflict of interest: No conflict of interest to disclose.

# CONNECTING SECTORS, CREATING IMPACT:

## A Community-Driven Drug Abuse Prevention Model from Ewu-Ekiti, Nigeria

Lydia Adza Ajayi

Lydia's Lifeline Initiative for Well-Being

Community Volunteer: Gift Yuadoo Soho

Ewu-Ekiti, Nigeria

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The use of psychoactive substances by young people is a rising environmental health concern in many Nigerian communities. Prevention efforts can become fragmented across institutions, limiting their overall impact. Sustainable prevention therefore requires stronger cooperation, teamwork, partnership and alliances among different sectors of society.

This poster presents a community-driven drug abuse prevention initiative implemented in Ewu-Ekiti, Nigeria, by Lydia's Lifeline Initiative for Well-Being.

As an ISSUP-approved training provider, the initiative integrates evidence-informed prevention principles with culturally relevant community engagement strategies.

### 2. AIM / OBJECTIVE

To demonstrate how connecting diverse sectors of a local community can strengthen grassroots drug abuse prevention and create a more coordinated community response to protecting young people from substance use.

### 3. METHODS / COMMUNITY-DRIVEN APPROACH

The initiative used a community engagement and partnership approach, connecting multiple sectors and groups within Ewu-Ekiti.

- ✓ Awareness sessions and educational outreach
- ✓ Community consultations and stakeholder meetings
- ✓ Engagement with schools, faith communities, traditional leadership, associations and special-interest groups
- ✓ One-on-one support sessions for families experiencing challenges with children at risk of problematic behaviours
- ✓ Strengthening cooperation, partnership and shared action for sustainable prevention



### THE EWU-EKITI COMMUNITY PREVENTION MODEL

*This Model connects:*



### 4. COMMUNITY REACH

#### EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

**~300**  
SECONDARY SCHOOL  
STUDENTS REACHED

**250+**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL  
PUPILS REACHED

#### ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Church congregations
- Mosque congregations
- Youth associations
- Motor vehicle drivers
- Hunters' group
- Women's associations
- Paramount traditional ruler and community chiefs
- Families experiencing challenges with children at risk of problematic behaviours

### 5. RESULTS / EARLY OUTCOMES

**INCREASED AWARENESS**  
Greater awareness of drug abuse risks among community members and young people.

**STRONGER COLLABORATION**  
Stronger support and cooperation among diverse community stakeholders.

**GROWING INTEREST**  
Growing community interest in prevention education.

**GREATER COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP**  
Increasing recognition that drug abuse prevention is a shared community responsibility.

### 6. LESSONS LEARNED

1. Drug abuse prevention is more powerful when it is a shared responsibility.
2. Diverse community sectors can contribute diverse influence, access, knowledge and support.
3. Culturally relevant engagement helps prevent marginalization within existing structures.
4. Partnerships should move beyond events to continuous, sustained community action.

### 7. CONCLUSION

The experience from Ewu-Ekiti demonstrates that connecting diverse sectors of a community can strengthen grassroots drug abuse prevention. A united community response can create stronger systems for protecting young people from substance use and can provide a foundation for more sustainable prevention education.

*When sectors connect, prevention becomes a shared responsibility—and impact becomes lasting.*

### 8. KEY TAKE-HOME MESSAGES

**CONNECT**  
Bring diverse community sectors together.

**COLLABORATE**  
Build cooperation, partnerships and shared responsibility.

**CREATE IMPACT**  
Use collective community action to strengthen prevention and protect young people.



### KEYWORDS

Drug abuse prevention • Community collaboration • Youth wellbeing  
Grassroots prevention • Nigeria

# 1. Introduction — Why a community response?

## THE CHALLENGE

- Psychoactive substance use among young people is a growing environmental health concern in many Nigerian communities.
- Prevention efforts can become fragmented across institutions.
- Fragmentation can limit cooperation, shared learning and collective impact.
- Sustainable prevention requires stronger cooperation, teamwork, partnership and alliances.

## THE QUESTION THAT GUIDED THE INITIATIVE

**What if the different sectors of the community could be connected and encouraged to see drug abuse prevention as a shared responsibility?**

**This question became the foundation of the Ewu-Ekiti community-driven prevention approach.**

## 2. Aim / Objective

### AIM

**To demonstrate how connecting diverse sectors of a local community can strengthen grassroots drug abuse prevention and create a more coordinated community response to protecting young people from substance use.**

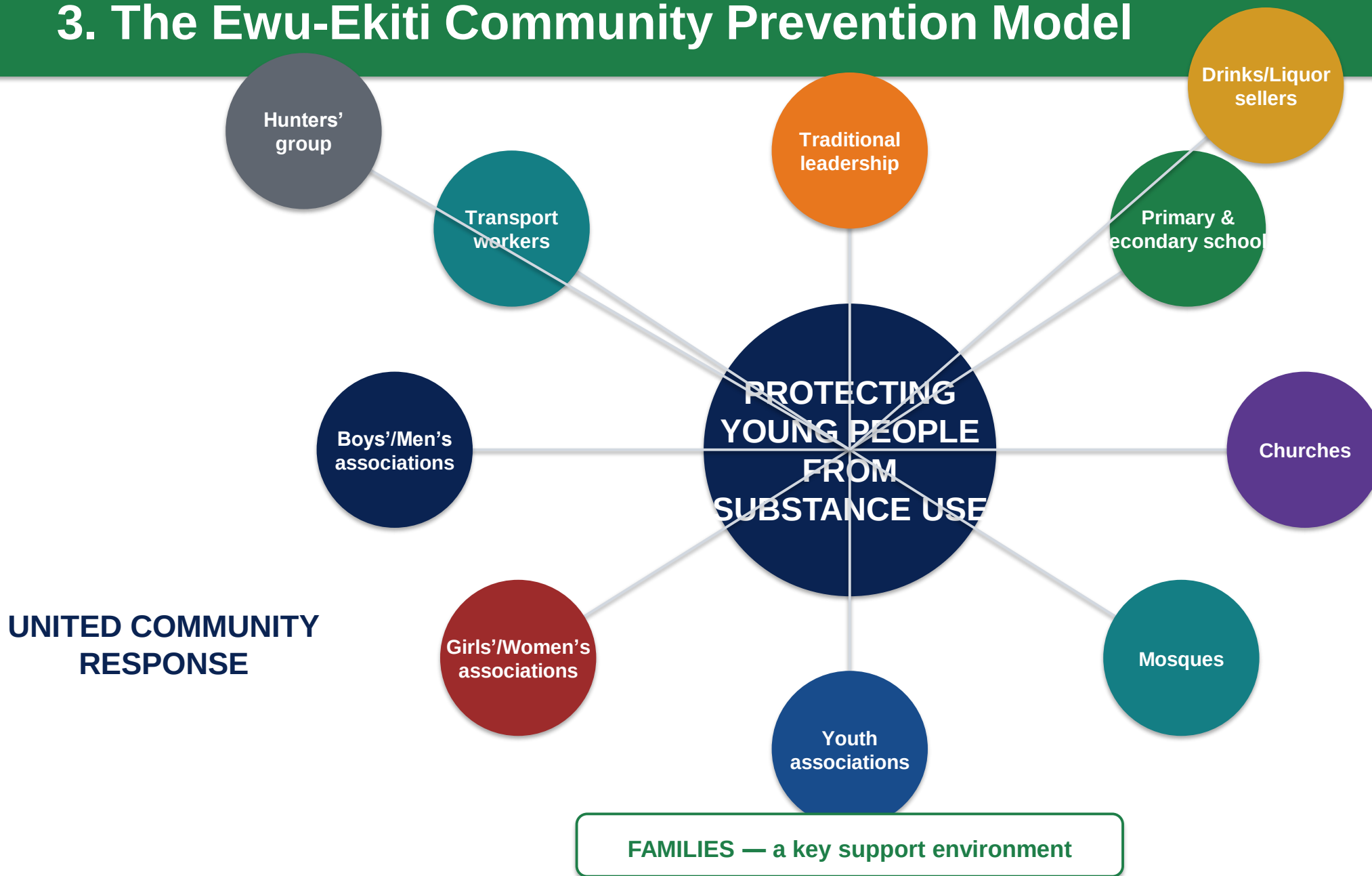
### LYDIA'S LIFELINE INITIATIVE

A community-based organisation dedicated to promoting youth wellbeing and substance use prevention.

### OUR APPROACH

Evidence-informed prevention principles + culturally relevant community engagement strategies.

### 3. The Ewu-Ekiti Community Prevention Model



## 4. Methods / Community Engagement

### HOW WE ENGAGED

- 1 Awareness sessions and educational outreach
- 2 Community consultations and stakeholder meetings
- 3 Engagement with schools, faith communities, traditional leadership, associations and special-interest groups
- 4 One-on-one support sessions for families experiencing challenges with children at risk of problematic behaviours

### EDUCATIONAL REACH

~300

Secondary-school students

Churches

Youth associations

Hunters' group

Traditional ruler & chiefs

250+

Primary-school pupils

Mosques

Motor vehicle drivers

Women's associations

Families

## 5. Results / Early Outcomes



### INCREASED AWARENESS

Greater awareness of drug abuse risks among community members and young people.



### STRONGER COLLABORATION

Stronger support and cooperation among diverse community stakeholders.



### GROWING INTEREST

Growing community interest in prevention education.



### GREATER COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

Increasing recognition that drug abuse prevention is a shared responsibility.

**These are described as EARLY OUTCOMES in the accepted abstract.**

## 6. Lessons Learned

1

### Shared responsibility

Drug abuse prevention is more powerful when it becomes a shared community responsibility.

2

### Different strengths

Different sectors bring different forms of influence, access, knowledge and support.

3

### Cultural relevance

Prevention messages can reach people through existing community structures and relationships.

4

### Connected action

Partnerships between formal and informal community institutions can strengthen grassroots prevention.

5

### Sustained prevention

Prevention should move beyond isolated awareness activities toward connected, sustained community action.

## 7. Practical / Professional Relevance

### WHAT CAN OTHER COMMUNITIES TAKE FROM THIS? A PRACTICAL STARTING QUESTION

- Start with the community structures that already exist.
- Clarify the contribution each sector can make.
- Create opportunities for cooperation and shared learning.
- Use prevention professionals to support coordination and evidence-informed practice.
- Build prevention as a network of shared responsibility.

**Who are the people and groups within our community who can contribute to prevention — and how can we connect them?**

**The Ewu-Ekiti experience suggests that connection itself can be a starting point for stronger prevention.**

## 8. Conclusion

**Connecting diverse community sectors can strengthen grassroots prevention systems.**



Schools • Families • Faith • Leadership • Groups



Shared purpose • Partnership • Support



Young people • Community wellbeing

**A united community response can create stronger systems for protecting young people from substance use.**

**When sectors connect, prevention becomes a shared responsibility—and communities become stronger.**

## 9. Take-Home Messages & Disclosure

### CONNECT

Bring diverse community sectors together.

### COLLABORATE

Build partnerships and shared responsibility.

### CREATE IMPACT

Use collective action to strengthen prevention and protect young people.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Lydia's Lifeline Initiative for Well-Being; community stakeholders and groups in Ewu-Ekiti who participated in the prevention initiative.

**Community Volunteer: Gift Yuadoo Soho.**

# Thank you.

Lydia Adza Ajayi • Lydia's Lifeline Initiative for Well-Being • Ewu-Ekiti, Nigeria