



LAGOS STATE

# Spotlight Initiative

*To eliminate violence against women and girls*

## Interventions & Impacts

*Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations*





# Background



Lagos State, like other parts of Nigeria, experiences violence against women and girls which has become a challenge that significantly constrains women, especially those marginalized and facing intersecting forms of discrimination and multiple deprivation. To address this issue and reduce the impact of sexual and gender-based violence in the state, Lagos State Government has implemented various measures. One such measure is the establishment of the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team (DSVRT) in the Ministry of Justice. It serves as a one-stop shop for addressing domestic and sexual violence cases in Lagos State by providing a coordinated response. Additionally, the Office of the Public Defender (OPD) and the Lagos State Public Interest Law Partnership (LPILP) provide free legal representation to indigent survivors.

The Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA) received a total of 5,624 Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) cases from August 1, 2022, to July 2023, via the Virtual Referral and Response Service (VRRS) and physical reports. The agency receives an average of 250 clients monthly. For cases concerning adults, 91 percent of survivors are female, and nine percent are male, while for children, 45 percent of survivors are boys and 55 percent are girls.

Family courts are also available to speed up cases of these abuses. There also exists law enforcement agencies in Lagos state that are responsible for strengthening the response mechanism of GBVs such as the Neighbourhood Security and Safety Corps (LSNSC) which promotes peace, security, and safety at the neighbourhoods level; the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) which is a federal institution with a mandate on prevention and response in all the local government area of the state; and the Nigerian Police that cover the entire state with a gender unit specifically for the prevention and response responsibilities. Several officers of these institutions were relating with people in the communities, but there was a huge gap in understanding GBV /SGBV issues and the necessary capacity and skills necessary for addressing GBV /SGBV from a rights-based and survivor-based approach. Although laws and institutions have been created to address SGBV in Lagos State, women and girls still do not have adequate protection due to gaps in the legal provisions and implementation processes.

The EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, in collaboration with the Lagos State Government and the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), therefore, provided the right support and interventions including the review of existing laws to address gaps and improve their effectiveness; strengthening institutions; improving prevention mechanism; providing timely and effective services; supporting SGBV data collation, harmonization and management to ensure evidence-based decision making; and galvanizing women's movement across the state.

The launch of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative in Lagos State has led to increase in the awareness of reporting cases of GBV; and with the establishment of the GBV Situation Room, 3,503 cases have been reported from April 2020-Sept 2023 by 35 CSOs/SPs in the 20 local government areas of the State.

# Laws & Policies

## Key Interventions

# 135

- **Trained 135 law enforcement officers** equipped with increased knowledge and skills for effective response to cases of VAWG/SGBV and strengthened capacity to implement laws and policies on ending VAWG/SGBV/HP.
- Strengthened capacities of key officials on integrating services and providing legal services for PWDs on issues of SGBV/HP/SRHR.
- Developed a guidance note in support of persons with disabilities, and for survivors and translated into braille for use by PWDs who are visually impaired. This has further improved the availability of information to PWDs who are typically not effectively programmed for.
- Intervention in addressing cases of sexual and gender-based violence helped ensure that the victims received justice.



## Major Impact

### • Strengthened Capacity of LNSC & NSCDC

Strengthened capacities of the law enforcement agencies (Lagos State Neighborhood Corp (LNSC) and the Lagos State command of the NSCDC) within the State on how to prevent and respond to VAWG/SGBV/HP.

### • Developed a Service Guide

Developed a Service Guide for paramilitary agencies (NSCDC /LNSC) in Lagos State to handle reports of Domestic and Sexual Violence. This guide is also used by other Law enforcement agencies in the state such as Kick Against Indiscipline (KAI) and other agencies trained by the Lagos State Enforcement Training Institute.

- Produced a handbook for officials of the LNSC and NSCDC to enable an effective interagency response to survivors of SGBV within the State.
- Established a gender working team at LNSC headquarters. The operational procedure for addressing VAWG/SGBV/HP cases has been revised and is now the responsibility of a dedicated gender unit at LNSC.



## Lessons Learned



It is necessary to provide training and re-training for law enforcement officers regarding gender-based violence (GBV) issues and proper reporting procedures.



Collaboration and partnerships between CSOs, disability rights organizations, and relevant government agencies are needed to ensure a coordinated response to SGBV, VAWG, and HP cases. It is necessary to provide sign language training for law enforcement officers as first responders of SGBV survivors for PWDs GBV-related cases.



Dialogue and meeting with women groups on safe abortion law



1000 women groups marched to the Lagos State House of assembly in protest of the suspension of the Lagos state guidelines on safe termination of pregnancy.



Women groups such as WOWICAN, FOMWAN, FIWON AT the rally.



Harvesting meeting with coalitions, network of women's right groups as well as civil society working on ending violence against violence and girls.



One day interactive meeting with women's advocates on sectoral plan for ending violence against women and girls.



One day engagement with women coalitions, youths and persons with disabilities on domestication of SRHR/GBV laws and policies in Lagos State.





# Institutional Strengthening

## Key Interventions



Trained law enforcement officers equipped with increased knowledge and skills for effective response to cases of VAWG/SGBV and strengthened capacity to implement laws and policies on ending VAWG/SGBV/HP.

Strengthened capacities of key officials on integrating services and providing legal services for PWDs on issues of SGBV/HP/SRHR.



Improved capacity of justice sector partners to better integrate and develop plans and programmes on VAG/SGBV/HP and the inter-linkages with women's access to SRHR.

Strengthened referral pathways for persons with disabilities in Lagos State.



Strengthened partnership with CSOs to drive efforts at eliminating Gender-based violence in the society against persons with disabilities



Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for VAWG/SGBV/HP integrated service provision and strengthened referral pathways specifically for mainstreaming PWDs into the GBV response

## Major Impact



### INCLUSIVITY PWD

Developed a GBV response guidance note for survivors of GBV including persons with disabilities for reporting to the National Human Rights Commission. This guidance note was translated to Braille for use by PWDs who are visually impaired cluster. This has further improved the availability of information to PWDs who are typically not effectively programmed for.

- The training for law enforcement agencies led to the setup of the gender working team at the headquarters of LNSC. The operational procedure for handling VAWG/SGBV/HP cases have changed and are now being handled by a special gender unit within the LNSC”



- Engagement with the Lagos State Neighborhood Corp (LNSC) and the Lagos State command of the NSCDC resulted in strengthened capacities of these law enforcement agencies within the State on how to prevent and respond to VAWG/SGBV/HP. A handbook for officials of the agencies was produced to enable effective interagency response to survivors of SGBV within the State.

- Mainstreamed GBV into the curriculum of the Lagos State Law Enforcement training institute (LETI)

- Developed Service Guide on handling reports of Domestic and Sexual Violence in Lagos State for paramilitary agencies (NSCDC /LNSC) in Lagos State was. The service guide is used by other Law enforcement agencies in the state Kick Against Indiscipline (KAI) and other agencies trained by Lagos State enforcement training institute.



- Leaders of religious institutions through these engagements become more open to working collaboratively with women within their institutions to nurture platforms that allow women work within the institutions. For example, the existence of FOMWAM female wings and how they are being strengthened to manage reported cases of VAWG among members and in their communities. The engagements have also opened up further conversations for more awareness creation and sensitization activities even outside the project cycles within the religious institutions. Calls for further talks in mosques in Ikorodu project area were recorded, for instance.

## Lessons Learned

- ✓ The importance of enlarged trainings and re-trainings that cut across institutions in the state to cover all key offices and agencies in the referral pathways responding to VAWG and their relevant stakeholders
- ✓ The relevance and implications of continuous establishment and strengthening of networks, collaborations and partnerships between all stakeholders for more coordinated response to VAWG issues in Lagos State.
- ✓ The need for strengthening and building local initiatives that can aid in driving response and address the general lack of awareness at that level,



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**STOP  
VIOLENCE  
AGAINST  
WOMEN & GILS**

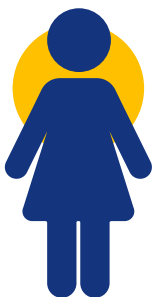
GBV TOLL FREE HELPLINE : **08000-333-333**

# Prevention

## Key Interventions

- Engagement with religious leaders in Ikorodu which led to the establishment of a women's wing in the mosque with the sole responsibility of addressing VAWGs in the mosque with onward referral to appropriate agencies.
- Training of GBV survivors and empowering them in modern self-employability and creative entrepreneurial business.
- Utilizing an integrated approach to life skills and 21st century entrepreneurship training for young vulnerable women and girls called STEM flagship program. This 5 months training program focused on the use of information technology, business management, networking with access to export market, confidence building, SHRH information and strategies to prevent SGBV and harmful practices for SGBV survivors.
- Preventing GBV in and around targeted institutions centered around adequate dissemination of information, awareness raising and facilitating the adoption/implementation of policies that promotes non-threatening interpersonal relationships.
- Building capacity and strengthening the Child Protection System in the State to improve skills of Stakeholders in the delivery of essential services towards ending Violence against Women and Girls (EVAWG). Effective collaboration with the Surveillance Team, Child Protection Network and CDAs in selected communities played a key role in addressing the root cause of GBV in the state.
- Prevention of VAWG and provision of services to survivors focusing especially on intimate partner violence, harmful traditional practices, Child and early forced marriage, female genital mutilation, abuse of people with disability.
- Baseline assessment in Lagos which informed the implementation of the GBV program in communities by providing livelihood support, strengthening national down to community GBV actors, establishing a National GBV coordination mechanism, raising awareness and encouraging community action to fight against GBV, and reporting GBV.
- Establishment of **12 functional Community Response Action Committees (CRAC) in 4 project LGAs**, in Lagos, constituting 15 members in each community, comprising traditional leaders, religious leaders, women leaders, youths, vigilantes, Nigerian Police Force, etc.

## Major Impact



# 337

● Empowerment and Improved financial capacity of **337 women and girl's** survivors of gender-based violence through the Livelihood Pathway program in Nigeria. The empowered beneficiaries of livelihood programs are now running their businesses and act as trainers for other women.

● Gender mainstreamed into the operations of LNSC. The training for Law Enforcement Agencies led to the set-up of the Gender Working Team at the headquarters of LNSC and ongoing discussion on instituting gender units in their LGA/LCDA offices. This has led to the development of a workplan and the call from the LNSC for the Centre to support with training of the gender officers on gender mainstreaming and SGBV.

● The coordination of stakeholders working in the child protection space has shown a more defined synergy, whereby MDAs/Organizations leverage on capabilities of each sector in providing services needed on cases of Child Protection concerns.

## Lessons Learned

- ✓ Teamwork, interaction and group assignment incorporated in all practical training sessions gave room for cross fertilization of ideas;
- ✓ Mainstreaming GBV knowledge into Women and Girls empowerment and training program was a valuable and sustainable approach to providing enhanced knowledge and capacity;
- ✓ Collection of disaggregated GBV data in its various components and according to variables like age, gender, geography, and type of violence, can be utilised to pinpoint treatments more precisely and identify the most vulnerable groups.

DID YOU KNOW?



**Spotlight Initiative**  
To eliminate violence  
against women and girls



**OVER 40 MILLION REACHED ON GBV INTERVENTIONS IN 2021**





# Services



## Key Interventions



• In order to bridge the widening gap of existing complex approaches and response to the problems of (SGBV) and VAWGs, the project strengthened the capacity of Mirabel Centre, a one-stop Centre to provide five free essential services to women and girls affected by violence. These services included psychosocial counselling, legal assistance, police facilitation, medical care, and referral for temporary shelter free of charge. The Centre supported women affected by violence, in private and public spaces, within the family, community and at the workplace. Women facing physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and economic abuse, irrespective of age, class, status, education status, marital status and culture are provided with free support.

• **337 people benefited** from the Women Empowerment project under a Livelihood Pathway program in Lagos. These beneficiaries were selected and trained with different skill areas, and provided with start-up items from 2020-2023 in both FCT and Lagos (**2020 - 87 Women and girls; 2021 - 150 Women and girls; 2022 - 50 women and girls; 2023 - 50 women and girls**).

• Establishment of the Community surveillance teams in different communities

## Major Impact



• **Establishment of a women's wing in a mosque in Ikorodu Local Government Area.** This is unprecedented and innovative strategy in encouraging victims of VAWGs to speak out and seek redress by providing referral services to one-stop Centres in the state;



• **A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for VAWGs was developed** and integrated service provision and strengthening referral pathways in the state especially mainstreaming PWDs into the GBV response in collaboration with the Lagos State Office for Disability Affairs (LASODA)

• **50 GBV survivors and PWDs** identified and enrolled in vocational skill training. Assessment conducted at the end of 6 months with 167 successful graduates in Lagos state.



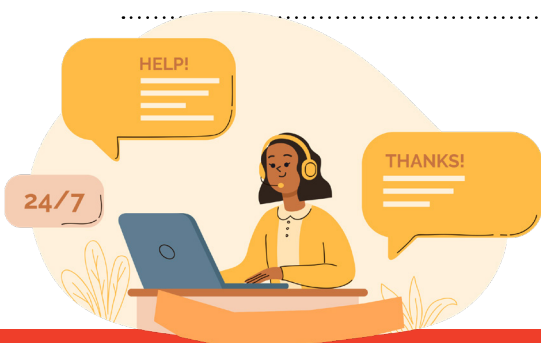
• **Community based Community response action team established** and embedded in the community is one of the huge impacts of the project. It provided a platform for vulnerable women and girls to report cases, with the ultimate goal of reducing GBV prevalence in targeted communities.

• Over **25,000**

young people reached under 'Hello Lagos', a transformative initiative focused on providing Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services and information to adolescents.



Over **1,500** young mothers served, under the Young Mums Clinic which addresses the healthcare needs of pregnant adolescents, a critical demographic in Lagos State. Its focus on reducing health risks for adolescent mothers and their children has markedly improved maternal and neonatal health outcomes.



Over **5,000** clients served by Gender-Based Violence Virtual Response and Referral Services (GBV-VRRS), offering vital services such as psychosocial support, legal aid, health care, and security. It also facilitates the safe transfer of survivors to appropriate service points, demonstrating a significant advancement in GBV intervention strategies.

## Lessons Learned

- ✔ Effective collaboration and partnership with state agencies is crucial in achieving set goal as this reduces mutual mistrust among state agencies and civil society;
- ✔ In order to be truly inclusive, programmes design should recruit a diverse range of community members, researchers and advocates with disabilities so as to co-create knowledge and learning that is representative to the wider population of people living with disabilities
- ✔ The concept of multiple discrimination recognizes that discrimination can occur on the basis of more than one perceived characteristic. For instance, a person facing discrimination on the grounds of their ethnicity may be also discriminated on the ground of gender, sexual orientation, age, and so on. Therefore, by recognizing intersectional gender inequality, an organization or institution can aim to address discrimination, disadvantage and inequity;
- ✔ While it is important to provide response support to survivors of SGBV, it is also important to engage in prevention interventions to help nip SGBV in the bud;
- ✔ The involvement of the various stakeholders, especially at the LGA level, from the initial planning of activities to a large extent helped in mitigating challenges the project would have experienced at the entry point and during implementation in the communities

# Data

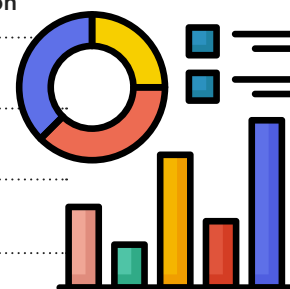
## Key Interventions

1. Mapping, identifying and profiling of GBV CSOs and Service Providers
2. Stakeholders' engagements and coordination meetings
3. Capacity strengthening of State Statistical Officers, Service Providers and Women Rights Advocates.
4. Quarterly Data Quality Assessment and Data validation
5. Advocacy Visits and Monitoring Exercise



## Major Impact

- Establishment of the Situation Room
- Enhanced skill of Data Officers in the State Ministry, CSO/SPs, Women Right Advocate Organization
- Harmonization of data reporting platforms
- Implementation of IMPACT Model for coordination and collaboration
- Development and distribution of Factsheet to inform program decisions
- Establishment of State Technical Working Group



## Lessons Learned

- ✓ GBV Stakeholders coordination and collaboration is the key to successful reduction or eradication of the menace as it cannot be done in isolation.
- ✓ It would be challenging to sustain the project without funding support

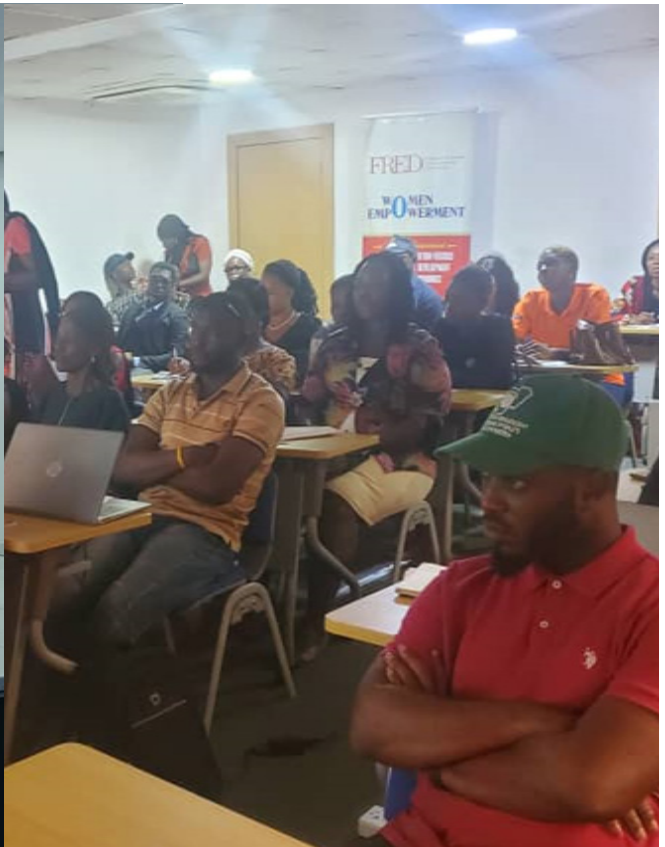
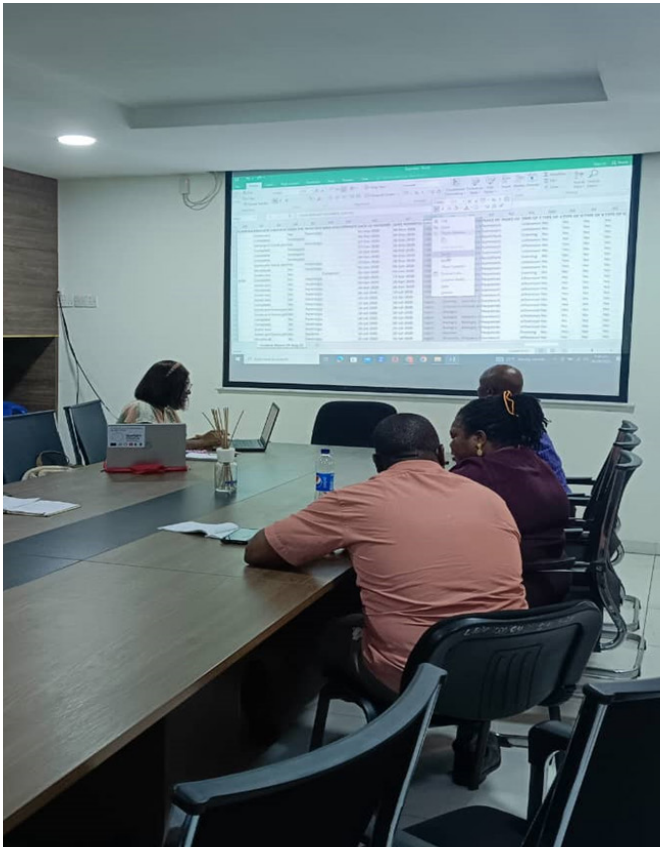


Pictures during monitoring exercise at Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency and Women At Risk International Foundation



Cross-sectional of the SMWA Permanent Secretary, Director Domestic Violence Unit and Director Planning Research and Statistics, CIHP representative and Lagos State during Stakeholders Engagement and Establishment of the State Technical Working Group.





Capacity building of the GBV Stakeholders on the National GBV Dashboard and Capacity Strengthening of PRS officers on data analysis





# Women's Movement

## Key Interventions



- **Established a movement of approximately 700 women's groups, consisting of CSOs, BMOs, FBOs, PWDs, artisans, market women, female traditional rulers, and professional bodies**

- Coordinated the movement and dialogue with over **312** women's rights organizations, autonomous social movements and civil society organizations, including those representing youth and groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization increase their coordinated efforts to jointly advocate for EVAWG.

- **1000 Women's** right groups jointly held a rally to the Lagos State House of assembly in protest against the suspension of the termination of safe pregnancy guideline.



- **300** trained women's right groups and relevant CSOs to raise campaigns, promoting advocacy to support equal rights for women and girls with relevant agencies and stakeholders as well as building synergies and demanding accountability

- **300 women's rights groups and relevant CSOs representing** groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization with strengthened capacities and support to design, implement, monitor and evaluate their own programmes on ending VAWG

- **10 jointly agreed recommendations** on ending VAWG produced as a result of multi-stakeholder dialogues that include representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, within the last year.

• **8 Official dialogues** about ending VAWG with relevant government authorities that include the full participation of women's rights groups and relevant CSOs, including representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, within the last year.

• **300 CSOs representing youth and other groups** facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that are integrated with coalitions and networks of women's rights groups and civil society working on ending VAWG, within the last year.

• **312 women's rights groups, networks and relevant CSOs** with strengthened capacities to network, partner and jointly advocate for progress on ending VAWG at local, national, regional and global levels, within the last year.

• **15% of increased** use of social accountability mechanisms by 10 civil society trained in order to monitor and engage in EVAWG efforts.

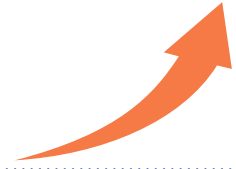


## Major Impact

**Over 700** women's rights organizations, autonomous social movements and civil society organizations, including those representing youth and groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization increase their coordinated efforts to jointly advocate for EAWG.



**15%** of increased use of social accountability mechanisms by civil society trained in order to monitor and engage in EAWG efforts with an established database was established to their capacity was strengthened to demand accountability from the government. Which led to key steps taken by government on ending SGBV



**8 official dialogues about ending VAWG** with relevant government authorities that include the full participation of women's rights groups and relevant CSOs, including representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, within the last year. The dialogue mobilized 100 participants each and this led to more knowledge building and awareness in religious and public spaces like market, mosque public places reaching over **5000 women and men indirectly in those places.**



## Lessons Learned

- ✓ Women's movement's is critical to sustainability of the campaign and advocacy on ending gender-based violence.
- ✓ Unifying voices are critical tools for addressing women's SRHR, increasing awareness of decriminalizing abortion laws and advocacy for SRHR and gender equality in Lagos and other places. Ogun state a neighbouring state took que from Lagos women's movements and passed the termination of pregnancy law.
- ✓ Collaboration, networking, and the formation of coalitions among women's rights groups, CSOs, and other relevant stakeholders strengthened advocacy efforts at various levels.  
4.Grassroots movements are key to ending SGBV



Capacity building of the GBV Stakeholders on the National GBV Dashboard and Capacity Strengthening of PRS officers on data analysis

# Recommendations



- Continuous high-level advocacy is needed to rapidly disseminate knowledge on handling SGBV cases to key government stakeholders at the national and state levels.  
.....
- There is a need to build technological capacity to track the prevalence and dimensions of SGBV through a digital application  
.....
- Proper gender budgeting is urgently needed for the effective implementation of laws and policies in the response and prevention mechanisms.  
.....
- There is need to actively train and engage more women and girls as advocates and leaders to champion efforts to end violence, abuses, and rights violation against peers.  
.....
- Virtual classroom project should be replicated in educational institutions to enable more students to participate and acquire knowledge on prevention and response to SGBV  
.....
- There is a need to collaborate with private institutions on the fight against SGBV as they are a core sector with lots of GBV perpetrators and this needs to be tackled too.  
.....
- For SGBV survivors to get speedy and timely justice there is a need for retraining of magistrates who preside over VAWG cases in courts  
.....
- Greater consideration for disability access during program implementations. There are little benefits to seeking input from people with disabilities if venues are not accessible to wheelchair users, or if organizers do not provide sign language interpreters and visually accessible versions of project materials for groups with different needs;  
.....
- There is a need for continuous high-level advocacy to key Government Stakeholders both at National and State levels to ensure rapid dissemination of the knowledge in handling cases of SGBV.  
.....
- Increase support for needs assessment, mental health, psychosocial and referral services for service providers  
.....
- Capacity building programme for stakeholders including the police, judicial officers, prosecutors, judges to understand the impact of trauma on survivors for a comprehensive care and support to survivors, especially as they seek justice.



- Multi-year funding for service providers for continuous support to survivors

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- State government to ensure adequate budgeting, appropriation and effective utilization of funds for GBV data management

.....

- State government to promote community and local government participation in curbing the menace of SGBV by taking ownership and continuously creating awareness and conducting monitoring exercise to ensure all forms of GBV are reported to the National Dashboard so as to inform policies and decision making.

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- Continuous collaboration with IPs in the State for better coordination of GBV reporting

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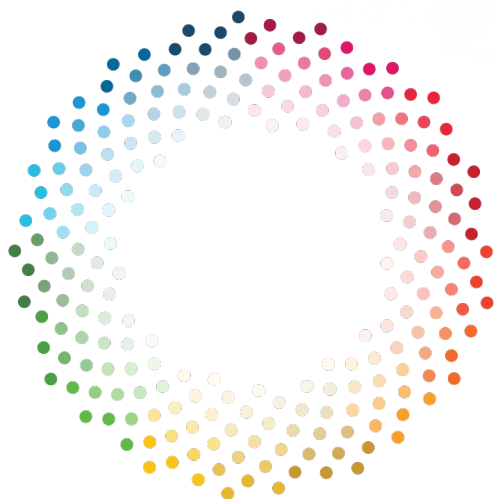
- Continuous Engagement and Dialogue with Stakeholders to address differences and achieve consensus on broader support for SRHR initiatives.

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- Expand Capacity-Building Efforts: The success of strengthening the capacity of MDAs, CSOs, and other stakeholders to integrate the VAPP Law into their operations demonstrates the importance of capacity-building. It is recommended to be expanded both in terms of the number of participants and the range of skills developed.

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- To ensure the effectiveness of GBV initiatives and to track progress accurately, it is essential to continuously improve M&E frameworks. This includes regular reviews, updates, and the establishment of clear indicators to measure the impact of policies and actions related to VAWG, SRHR, and gender equality.



# Spotlight Initiative

*To eliminate violence against women and girls*

# Acronym List

CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEFM	Child Early and Forced Marriage
CPIMS	Child Protection Information Management System
CRA	Child Rights Act
CRM	Case Response Management
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSRG	Civil Society Reference Group
EU	European Union
EVAW	Ending Violence Against Women
EVAWG	Ending Violence Against Women and Girls
FRED	Foundation for Resilient Empowerment and Development
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HP	Harmful Practices
IP	Implementing Partner
LGAs	Local Government Areas
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
NDHS	Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OSC	One-Stop Centre
PME	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
PME	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
PVAWG	Preventing Violence against Women and Girls
SARC	Sexual Assault Reference Centre
SCE	Second Chance Education
SPs	Service Providers
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
VAC	Violence Against Children
VAPP	Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAWG	Violence against Women and Girls



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