

**Spotlight
Initiative**

*To eliminate violence
against women and girls*

EU-UN Spotlight Initiative Interventions and Impacts in Nigeria (2019 – 2023)

Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations



FOREWORD

Many women and girls in Nigeria are vulnerable to gender-based violence and harmful practices. A 2018 NDHS report revealed that 30% Nigerian women and girls aged 15 to 49 have been victims of sexual violence, 43% were married as children, and 20% have undergone female genital mutilation. Since then, there has been a worrying rapid increase in violence against women and girls during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite these alarming statistics, there is hope on the horizon. In 2020, the country saw a significant reduction in gender-based violence (GBV) cases, as well as an increase in the reporting of such cases. This progress is reflected in the Global Gender Gap 2020 report with Nigeria rising to 128 out of 153 countries.

The Spotlight Initiative, which began in 2019, has contributed to notable progress towards gender equality in Nigeria. The European Union has been an excellent partner and with its financial support Spotlight reached significant numbers of persons with disabilities, socio-economically disadvantaged, as well as adolescent girls and women. A strong basis for sustainability has been secured through the buy-in of the Government and critical stakeholders across the country.

Needs of survivors of violence are efficiently and effectively addressed through the One Stop Centres, the DNA forensic lab, the young mum's clinic, the maternity waiting homes, and the situation room.

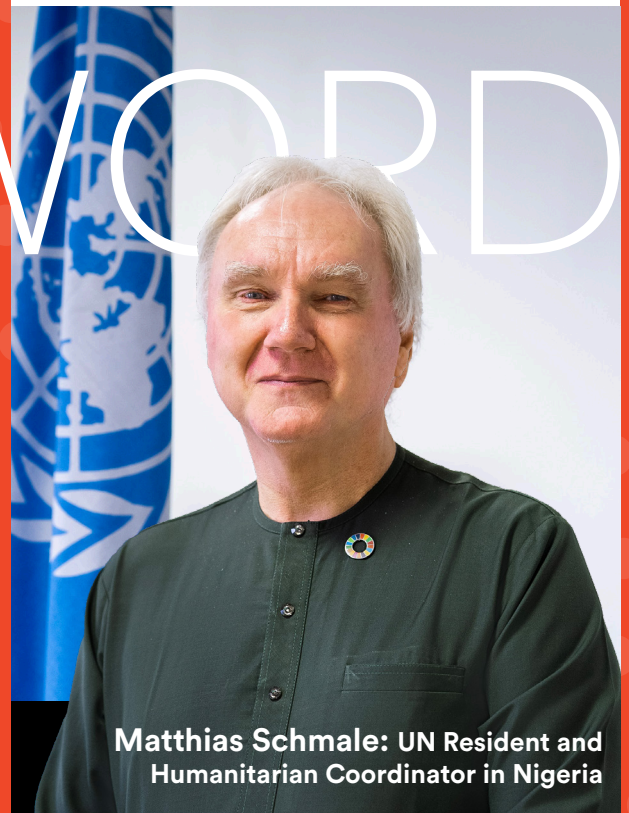
The Spotlight Initiative has contributed significantly to 35 out of 36 states domesticated and implementing the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act. In addition, we have seen the domestication of the Child Rights Act and the Persons with Disabilities Act. Many people now not only know the law, but they also better understand their rights and where to seek redress. Vibrant civil society partners have significantly contributed to this momentum and noteworthy results.

Traditional rulers and religious leaders have been critical allies in tackling SGBV and harmful practices. Some notable successes include the elimination of the 'money marriage' in the local government area of Obanliku in Cross River state and the abandonment of female genital mutilation in the Ndiebor Amadi community in Ebonyi state.

Another aspect of addressing gender-based violence is the strengthened capacities to collect prevalence and/or incidence data and the harmonization of data across different departments. Capturing solid and accessible data facilitates survivors having access to justice in a timely manner.

Furthermore, gender budget assessments and research are available in the six Spotlight States, (Adamawa, Cross River, Ebonyi, Federal Capital Territory, Lagos and Sokoto), providing insight into how to go about improved gender and GBV budget allocation at both state and national level..

It is our hope that Government will lead efforts to guarantee the sustainability of the described actions and their impact together with all partners involved. It is imperative that action plans for GBV are costed and funded and that eliminating all forms of GBV remains a top priority for leadership at all levels.

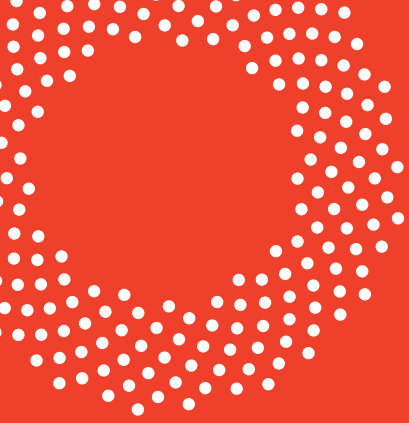


Matthias Schmale: UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria



ADAMAWA STATE

NORTH-EAST NIGERIA



Background

Adamawa State faces significant challenge of high prevalence of GBV, including domestic violence, sexual assault and harmful traditional practices like female genital mutilation (FGM). Resistance to gender equality and women's rights due to traditional and cultural norms has greatly hindered the women's movement efforts in Adamawa State.

Prior to the launch of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to end violence against women and girls in the state, many women and girls in Adamawa State had limited access to legal aid and with low level of awareness of their rights. There was a challenge of gender-sensitive legislation which further complicated the situation where laws and policies did not fully protect the rights of women and girls.

Additionally, cases of early marriages, poor-retention of the girl-child in school and increase in divorce cases and domestic violence due to harsh economic conditions, worsened the vulnerability of women, girls and children in Adamawa State. The situation was worsened by their limited access to essential support services, such as shelter, counselling, legal aid, and healthcare. In fact, availability and accessibility of these services also posed a great challenge.

Furthermore, GBV cases were rarely reported, and were largely being settled by the religious and traditional/community leaders, with no further action (punitive, medical or Psycho Social Support (PSS) given to the survivors) taken. Majority of the communities and many family members in Adamawa state were not aware that some of their behaviours and attitudes (towards their wives/children/family members constituted) the communities regarded as normal, were actually GBV.

To address these myriads of gender-related challenges in Adamawa State, the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative was launched in 2019. The high number of out of school young women and girls facing Intersecting marginalisation in the state was addressed holistically by Spotlight Initiative through second chance education programme. The Non- Government Association for Literacy Support Services (NOGALSS) in Association with the Adamawa State Agency for Mass Education (SAME) implemented the second chance education programme targeting 4,500 Learners with 90 Facilitators and 50 Skills Learners in the state.

The EU-UN Spotlight Initiative also provided some interventions improve GBV data availability though building the capacity of the state in collecting, analyzing, and reporting on GBV data.

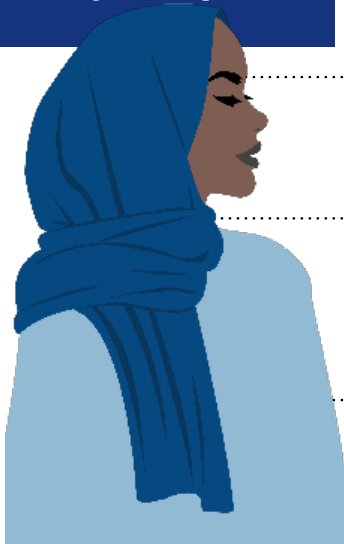
Laws & Policies

Key Interventions



- Sensitization and capacity building of stakeholders (mostly Traditional and Religious bodies) on the Child Protection bill.
- Developed a Policy Brief on the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Bill, reviewed the original draft produced by the State Government and produced a clause-by-clause analysis and a final draft. EU-UN Spotlight Initiative vigorously engaged the State House of Assembly through visits and discussions as well as providing drafts of model VAPPs to them. The Adamawa State VAPP Bill was passed by the State House of Assembly.
- Established the SGBV Forum a whatsapp listserv dedicated to disseminating information and exchanges on SGBV.
- Capacity building of **162** Law Enforcement Agents in Adamawa, on Prevention and Responses to SGBV/VAWG/HP and SRHR: The trained officers all came from their respective gender desks and as such, the knowledge impacted to them was practical and have been put to use in their day-to-day activities.
- Nigerian Police Force adopted the Spotlight Initiative recommendation on the development of a Standard Operating Procedure for SGBV cases.
- The Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) bill was signed into Law and gazetted
- The Child Protection bill was signed and gazetted equally.
- Increased awareness and the application of both the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) and the Child Protection laws among the people at all levels

Major Impacts



- The application of the law and massive sensitization of the public has reduced rate of violence against children compared to the period before the Spotlight Initiative.



- Conviction rates of GBV law violators have increased significantly with more than **80%** since the passage of the laws

- The law has made provision to regulate the Almajiri system in the state and will be transformed into a modern system of education. Parents of Almajiris must ensure provision of feeding and accommodation to their children before sending them out.
- The law provided that Skills Acquisition should be provided to such Almajiri instead of being exposed to hard labour that is beyond their ability.

- Provision of free basic primary and secondary school education for children.
- Improved Gender budgeting and release of funds



- More than **150 Police officers** and prosecutors improved their knowledge and the application of the Laws
- Public confidence in both the laws and the Criminal Justice System has improved by **20%**

Lessons Learned

- ✓ There is always a need for collaboration with relevant stakeholders to be on board in every activity, this is key to success as lack of collaboration can lead to failure.
- ✓ More commitment to duty from Government and other stakeholders is required.
- ✓ When people are acting in a manner contrary, it is because they have no understanding and there is no sensitization for them to understand the implication of what they are doing. The sensitizations in the intervention have made parents to appreciate the value of their children.
- ✓ A simplified version of the Laws translated into local languages enhances awareness and the use of the Laws



Training of **68 Police** and prosecutors on Forensics and improved access to Justice

Institutional Strengthening



Key Interventions

- Second Chance Education programme was implemented across 5 LGAs; Yola North, Girei, Numan, Guyuk and Gombi



- The establishment of two more learning centres in Gombi LGA which came about due to popular demand and brought about additional number of facilitators.



- The project has a PWD Centre in Yola North LGA with a Facilitator and **50 Learners**, all of whom are having hearing impairments.



- **Advocacy and sensitization:** Traditional leaders, opinion leaders, market women, youth, FBOs, CBOs were sensitized on issues of out of school, ending GBV, early marriage, unintended pregnancy, FGM, FLHE etc., in Yola and Mubi Local government areas of the state.
- Establishment of **150** Second Chance Education learning centers in collaboration with Adamawa State Mass Education Board.
- **84** communities across the focal LGAs, sensitised, and mobilised on ending violence against women and girls and on the need to acquire second chance education.
- **9,034** women and girls, including boys and men benefitted from the second chance education programme. However, 6269 of them completed the programme.
- **179** people with disabilities benefitted from the programme.
- The capacity of **150** Facilitators and Supervisors was strengthened to deliver and monitor the Radio literacy programmes and face-to-face contact sessions at the learning Centres. The Literacy by Radio Programme was carried out in collaboration with ABC Radio Yola, which also aired jingles to sensitize the public on GBV and Covid 19 prevention mechanisms.
- **15,000** branded writing materials (Notebooks & pens) were produced and distributed to the beneficiaries (enrolled learners)

- Six 'SGBV and the Budget' studies were conducted in Ebonyi, Cross River, Lagos, Adamawa, and Sokoto States and FCT which reviewed and analysed the budgets of relevant MDAs that have responsibilities related to SGBV/VAWG/HP and SRHR of women and girls. The preliminary findings were validated at stakeholders meetings and the studies have been published and disseminated to stakeholders. The studies established the baseline, identified gaps and challenges and made recommendations for reform of the budgeting system.
- Capacity building on Gender Responsive Budgeting: 66 Women Rights Groups, CSOs, Media groups and key population trained on from the focal states on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB).

Major Impacts

- The gaps, challenges, good and fit practices related to budgeting for SGBV have been identified and brought to the attention of relevant MDAs coupled with measures to turn around the performance of the MDAs for improved budgeting and value for money outcomes.
- Improved understanding of how to participate in budget formulation, analysis, monitoring and evaluation using the gender lens.
- 2 CSOs in Adamawa (Women and Youth Empowerment for Advancement and Health Initiative) and Sokoto (Centre for Peoples Health, Peace and Progress) have used the knowledge derived from the training to engage MDAs in their states through the production of 2021 Pre Budget Policy Briefs focussing on GBV.

80% 

Majority of the learners are female constituting 80% of the population. Out of the 5,678 persons enrolled under the Second chance education programme 4,542 are female and 1,136 are male.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ Young women and girls are very interested in second chance education owing to the fact that it accords them another opportunity to learn.
- ✓ It is possible to reduce illiteracy among young women and girls with proper and well-structured programmes/institutions.
- ✓ Certification of completed second chance education and proper placement of graduating students for further studies is paramount.





Prevention



Key Interventions

- Male engagement for prevention of Gender Based Violence.
- Community gatekeepers who are Traditional and Religious leaders were made champions on sensitizing the general public and their subjects on prevention and referral pathway for accessing services when GBV occurs.
- Community Based Organisations were mobilised and registered for the sustainability of the project

Major Impacts



- Improved synergy developed between the implementing partners to ensure coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of the project.



- Psychosocial Support for survivors strengthened and their mental health and wellbeing improved.

Lessons Learned



The Survivor-centred approach was a good lesson, and it is effective in tackling GBV.



Continuous Sensitisation of more girls and women will make more women and girls to speak up against GBV, and protect themselves where and when the need arises.



Informed consent of the survivor either directly or through a surrogate must be sought before any action is taken e.g legal actions.



Male Engagement on GBV Prevention



Advocacy and Sensitization/Community engagement Against GBV/HP

Key Interventions



Establishment of the One-Stop Centre and referral of survivors to cater for their needs

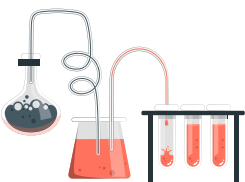
Provision of Free clinical care, PSS, feeding (three square meals) and shelter (maximum of three weeks accommodation) to all GBV survivors. These services are for survivors only.

Referral of survivors to Modibbo Adama University (MAU) Teaching hospital for further treatment and payment of the medical bills. to the ONE STOP CENTRE.



- Respect for Safety and confidentiality is highly observed in the centre where a Lawyer and Police officer are attached for legal services.
- Community Sensitisation about the services rendered at the Centre.
- Establishment of a Forensic Laboratory at the Modibbo Adama University of Technology to handle and analyse both survivor's and perpetrator's specimen samples received from the One-Stop Centre.
- **Development of an APP (SMART RR) and training on how to use the APP on real time reporting of GBV cases including sensitisation on referral pathway of GBV.**
- Establishment of a SAFE SPACE (Shelter) for survivors which opens from 8am - 4pm.

Major Impacts



- An average of **50 - 60** samples were analysed at the Forensic lab sent from the **ONE STOP CENTRE**.



- Over **200** cases reported to the **One-Stop Centre** due to the safe, central location and good/free services of the centre.



- Students' confidence improved. They are no longer timid after obtaining services at the Safe Space. They now prefer to report at the Centre rather than at the Guidance And Counselling unit of the school in which the Safe Space is located.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ **Cultural and Religious Exposure:** The programme broadens interactions with people from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds, expands knowledge and appreciates diversity. This exposure deepens understanding of how cultural and religious beliefs shape individuals' perspectives, fostering tolerance, empathy, and a broader comprehension of the world's complexities.
- ✓ **Deeper understanding Gender-Based Violence (GBV):** This journey has led to explore the intricate issue of GBV through research, discussions, and hands-on experiences. This deeper understanding equips staff with the tools needed to contribute effectively to prevention, support, and advocacy efforts against GBV. It highlights the significance of empathy and empowerment in addressing this widespread problem.
- ✓ **Managing and Integrating Survivors:** The programme exposes one to acquire valuable and hands on skills in managing and integrating survivors of various challenges, including those affected by GBV. This encompasses understanding survivors' psychosocial and emotional needs, navigating support systems intricately, and working towards their successful reintegration into society. These skills are essential for fostering healing, resilience, and the restoration of survivors' confidence as active members of their communities.



Stakeholders Sensitization at Yola North LGA, Adamawa State



Data

Key Interventions



- Established Adamawa State GBV Situation Room and Dashboard where data is collected and harmonised and evidence-based decisions are made, and service gap or data gap are tracked easily. The dashboard serves as a medium where policy makers, students and researchers can access credible data on GBV in the state

Major Impacts

- Increased data collection skills among Civil Society Organization as a result of capacity building training and technical support.
- Improved Communication tools through the use of the dashboard, situation room, and Quarterly fact-sheets. Advocacy, sensitization and informed decisions on GBV are made easily.
- Enhanced data services where Data Quality Assessment (DQA) verified and accurate data is correctly reported and captured.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ 1. Technical know-how on utilising data for advocacy to make change can promote sustainable outcomes and solutions.
- ✓ 2. Disaggregated data by sex, age, disability, disability type and Local government area (LGA) gives a clear view of who is involved, who benefits most and who is negatively affected, and this enhances evidence-based decision making.
- ✓ 3. Increased awareness creation has raised the level of knowledge and understanding on the part of on GBV data/statistics.



Women's Movement

Key Interventions

30 social workers/PWDs from 21 LGAs trained on sign-language by Ministry of Women Affairs and Social development

80 women trained in skills acquisition through National Council for Women Society

40 Social workers trained on GBV.

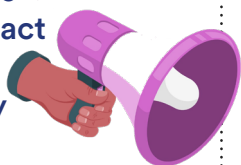
- High level advocacy visit led by the Commissioner of Women Affairs and Social Development, to the Commissioner of Police and House of Assembly on the passage of the VAPP law and discussion held about GBV and other matters related to women in the state
- Capacity building on advocacy and policy literacy, and engagement of Ten pillar partners (TPP) to step down GBV trainings. They were also trained on GBV case management and created desk officers within their organisations.

Major Impacts

- Increased awareness on Gender Based Violence as organisations with over 1000 beneficiaries got step-down trainings which trickled down to various communities.
- Continuous advocacy on GBV and its consequences through different media platforms among women and youth have reached wider audience up to the grassroots level.
- Sustainability plans developed by various organizations for continuity after the life span of the project.
- Mainstreaming Gender and Social Inclusion has led to Sensitivity, inclusivity, responsiveness and integration of vulnerable groups such as Persons with Disabilities reflected inclusion.

Lessons Learned

- Increased awareness on Gender Based Violence has had a positive impact as more people are becoming increasingly aware of GBV



- Using structured organisation like the Ten Pillar Partners/Organisations gives a broader coverage of beneficiaries and allows for easier implementation.
- Sustained synergy among partners promotes efficiency and effectiveness in implementation and that has yielded positive results



PLWDs during step down of policy literacy training



Joint activity on Gender responsive budget training



PLWDs during step down of policy literacy training



PLWDs during step down of policy literacy training



Permanent Secretary Ministry of Women Affairs with CSRG members, Adamawa State

Recommendations



- Sensitization and capacity building conducted was for the key stakeholders. There is need for such sensitization to be at the local level. There is also need for continuous awareness so that people can begin to demand for their rights.
- The Child Protection law should be translated into Hausa language
- Quality Assurance: More monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to be in place to maintain second chance educational standards and effectiveness.
- Adequate and timely funding to aid implementation of deliverables and milestones.
- More equipment for skills acquisition programmes
- Engaging more civil society organisations, especially the women-led, in gender programme implementation.
- A need assessment and an intervention strategy should be designed by implementing partners since they are the ones that directly engage with survivors.
- Adequate and timely release of funds to implementing partners should be incorporated into future programming design
- Creation of more Psycho-Social Support activities to promote the mental health and wellbeing of survivors.
- Proper synergy needs to be developed between the implementing partners to promote coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of the project.
- Startup kits for survivors should be provided before re-integration into the society and initiate more skills acquisition services by providing more equipments for better livelihood.
- Medical and legal unit including Police and NSCDC personnel should be trained from across all LGAs and also set up a mechanism to hold Police and NSCDC accountable for reported cases.
- More awareness creation on timelines for completion of cases in courts. Cases should be prosecuted swiftly. Logistics for transportation of survivors should be provided and more training for the police on handling suspects.
- Continuous system strengthening of processes is required through trainings and capacity building
- Provision of continuous Technical support and oversight to the GBV situation room for sustained service provision.
- Constant power supply to the situation room needs to be prioritised to always ensure unimpeded access to data.
- Continuous advocacy engagements on data services
- Timely and adequate release of funds is required for effective implementation as late release of funds slows progress and delays implementation.
- Considering that this is the budget preparation season, it is imperative to engage the five states and FCT or pilot Adamawa and Sokoto in their budget preparation to ensure that available resources are optimally programmed for reduction of GBV. Specifically, we can target the Ministries of Women and Children Affairs, Education, Health and Justice with low-cost budget activities/projects that will facilitate meeting the minimum core obligations of the state.



CROSS RIVER STATE

SOUTH-SOUTH NIGERIA

Background

CROSS
RIVER
STATE



According to UNICEF (2022), an estimated 44% of girls in Nigeria are married before their 18th birthday and the country also records the 11th highest rate of child marriage in the world. Cross River State like other States in Nigeria experiences various forms of gender-based violence including child, early and forced marriage (CEFM), human trafficking, sexual harassment, female genital mutilation, and other harmful traditional practices (HTP).

According to a UNFPA publication on GBV in Cross River State, 5.7% of children aged 15-19 years are currently married. 1 in 3 children aged 15-19 got married before age 15. Prevalence of child marriage is slightly higher than the rest of the South-south region. Prevalence of FGM among women and girls aged 15-19 years in CRS is 11.9%. One in 3 women between 15-49 years has experienced physical violence and 1.2 % of women have experienced physical and sexual violence.

The Cross River State 2019 Gender Policy indicates that the state has a high prevalence rate (41.4%) of the practice of female circumcision. The practice is slightly higher in the rural areas (43.1%) than in the urban areas (40.8%). The state records challenges with some harmful traditional and cultural practices relating to girl-child marriage and widowhood rites. 17% of girls between the ages of 10-18 years have experienced physical violence, while 3.2% of women aged 15 – 49 have experienced sexual violence.

Disparity in cultural practices of the Northern and Southern parts of the State has implications for women's enjoyment of the right to ownership of property. Although both men and women can acquire land through inheritance, lease and purchase in the Southern senatorial district of the State, this is not the situation of women from the central and Northern districts of the State as they are only able to use or hold land in trust for other family members, but cannot claim ownership of family land even when such devolves to them by way of inheritance.

To promote, safeguard and protect the rights of women and girls, Cross River State government enacted laws such as the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Law No.10 2021; Disability Rights Law, 2021; CRS Child's Rights Law, 2009 and 2023; CRS Female Persons Inheritance of Property Law, 2007; and The Girl Child Marriages and Female Circumcision (Prohibition) Law, 2000.

However, there still exists widespread discrimination against women and girls because of a combination of cultural and structural challenges. Some communities in CRS are notable for the practice of the money woman (money wives), a culture which started hundreds of years ago. This practice of money wives robs girls of their childhood, opportunity to go to school and threatens their lives and health. These girls are also more likely to experience domestic violence and less likely to remain in school. They have worse economic and health outcomes than their unmarried peers, which are eventually passed down to their own children.

Prior to the intervention of EU-UN Spotlight Initiative in Cross River, there was no GBV information management system in place, data coordination was challenging and information on SRHR issues including access to family planning services was not readily available.

The launch of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to end violence against women and girls in Cross River State therefore, has improved GBV data collation and coordination in the state. Some harmful practices have been abolished in some communities while women's movement and advocacy for women and girls have improved.

Laws & Policies

Key Interventions



- Advocacy visits to the Cross River State House of Assembly, the Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice and the Commissioner for Justice. These visits facilitated the enactment of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law, 2021, The Disability Rights Law, 2021 and the review of the Child Rights Law, 2009 now 2023 and the Citizens Rights Law, 2023;

- Development of standard operating procedure (SOP) for GBV (VAWG) response in the state for gender focal persons in MDAs

- Capacity-building workshops on developing guidelines and reporting tools for monitoring and reviewing relevant policies, including the State's gender policy for Gender focal persons in MDAs.

- Monthly review meetings with MDAs and CSO partners to provide timely feedbacks, policy guidance and ensure delivery of activities on issues related to VAWG in line with approved policies and SOP.

- Facilitation and recovery of a 4-bedroom flat belonging to a widow from family members and purported buyers.

- Provision of professional psycho-social support to GBV survivors/victims

- Established a coalition in the state and trained members of the coalition on GBV and women's rights

- Conducted training on Gender Responsive budgeting
Conducted Awareness raising and capacity building for members of the CRS House of Assembly

- Development and Government validation of a VAPP Costed Action Plans for both the State and the Local Government



Major Impact

Improved capacity of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, and other non-state actors on the development and review of policies.

● Enhanced knowledge of the VAPP Law

Enhanced knowledge of the (VAPP) Law (2021); the Disability Rights Law (2021) and the review of the Child Rights Law (2023) amongst the following: Heads of Gender Desks in MDAs, Police Officers, Judges and Magistrates, Law officers of the Ministry of Justice, Medical Officers from Government health institutions and CSOs as well as established inter-agency collaboration among VAWG stakeholders



● Developed and validated a costed VAWG Response Workplan

Developed and validated a costed VAWG Response Workplan and a Sustainability Plan

- Increased the knowledge of **64 Law Enforcement Officers** (Police, NSDC and Immigration) on standard operational procedures and effective approaches for GBV cases management.

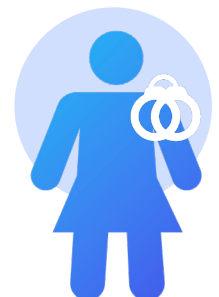
- Capacities of **58 Government officials** strengthened on Human Rights Standards to facilitate the reviews, reforms or developing new gender friendly laws, policies and administrative procedures.

- Brokered/instituted a strong and currently working partnership for improved collaboration, networking and synergy of actions among.

● 83 Justice Sector stakeholders working partnerships improved.

- Strengthened capacity of **30 Judges and Magistrates** now adjudicating over SGV and VAWG related cases.

- Empowered and built capacities of **30 State Law Officers** (SMOJ) and Police Prosecutors for effective and supportive response to victims of Sexual Violence and Gender Based Crimes.



Lessons Learned

- ✓ MDAs are willing to implement the new laws and policies when educated on the new provisions. The knowledge enhances appropriate budgeting and planning.
- ✓ Strengthening existing systems and structures in MDAs is more productive and sustainable when conducting interventions.
- ✓ Networking and collaboration among stakeholders enhance service delivery and build trust among VAWG service providers.



Capacity Building Workshop For MDAs and CSOs on the Practical Steps to Implement VAPP LAW, 2021



Participants during capacity building training on the development of guidelines and reporting tools



Training of paralegals in Akpabuyo



Training of paralegals in Akpabuyo

Institutional Strengthening



Key Interventions



Organised a high-level advocacy visit to the Governor of Cross River State (CRS), the Chief Judge, the Speaker of the House of Assembly and the Commissioner of Police. Consultative meetings were also held with community leaders.

Developed State Action Plan



Developed a State Action Plan (SAP) on preventing and responding to VAWG. The SAP which was developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Women Affairs holds the potential to be a valuable tool in the state and is aiding the mitigation of violence against women and girls

Designed training manuals

Designed and published a comprehensive training manual on SRHR for CSOs/CBOs/networks/groups and coalitions to use for training on ending VAWG



Strengthened the capacity of over **140 Child Protection** Duty Bearers, including school teachers.



CSOs training

Training of CSOs for effective monitoring, tracking, release, utilization, and implementation of Gender Responsive Budgets.

Major Impact



Networking & Synergy

Established networks that have enhanced interagency collaboration, networking and synergy of actions in the Justice Sector towards the effective implementation of laws and policies designed to end all forms of VAWG. Stakeholders engaged were the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Women Affairs, The Judiciary, Nigerian Immigration Service, Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps, National Human Rights Commission, Federal Road Safety Corps, Nigerian Police Force, Correctional Centre, NAPTIP, Media, Budget office; NGOs and PWDs.

65%

of CSOs/CBOs/networks/groups and coalitions, have used the training module. They have been part of the project design and implementation from 2020 to date.

- The Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law and the Disability Rights Law were passed in December 2021. The CRS VAPP law specifically provides security for women marriages contracted under native law and custom to co-own property acquired during the marriage.
- Also, the multi-sectoral costed action plan for VAPP was adopted by the Governor of Cross River State
- **The Cross River One Stop Centre is completed.**
- The Child Rights Law, 2023 has also been passed with extensive innovations that will enhance access to justice for girls

Lessons Learned

- ✓ State partners on VAWG should capture in their 2024 budget proposals their commitment to the State Sustainability plans and the costed plans
- ✓ There is a need to follow up on Commissions and Data management provisions in the Disability Rights Law and the VAPP Law. Also, ensure the full implementation of the amendments in the Child Rights Law, 2023. Develop an SOP on adoption and fostering. Activate the Child Rights Implementations Committees at both the State and LG levels as provided by the law
- ✓ Sustain CSO engagement to track the implementation of all the laws and policies on VAWG



CSOs on an advocacy visit to the Speaker of Cross River State House of Assembly, here represented by the Chairman Judiciary Committee, Hon. Barr. Chris Mbu-Ogar



Capacity building workshop for women's rights advocates/CSOs on tools for effective monitoring, tracking releases, utilization, and implementation of gender-responsive budgeting in Cross River State.

Key Interventions

Prevention

Several interventions were conducted by various implementing partners under the spotlight project to address the challenge of VAWG occasioned by social norms and lack of awareness. These included,

- Prevention activities: Dissemination of information on ending VAWG, raising awareness and facilitating the adoption/implementation of policies that promote non-threatening interpersonal relationships within the educational institutions.
- Sensitization workshops, town hall meetings, and community awareness campaigns were conducted in communities, to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours.
- Men's networks were formed to provide men a platform to advocate and provide guidance and direction to ending violence against women and girls within their communities. Male leaders who are members of the network were involved in advocacy, providing guidance and direction, and highlighting good practices and deploring bad examples.
- Existing community structures such as the traditional council of chiefs were strengthened through capacity building to serve as advocacy platforms for promoting gender equitable norms, attitudes, and behaviours in the focal communities.
- Trainings were conducted for guidance and Counselling Teachers in schools on information around GBV/VAWG/SGBV/SRHR, establishing peer clubs and ensuring its sustainability.
- 5 short films on the roles and responsibilities expected of men and boys in the fight against violence towards women and girls were produced to challenge the harmful social norms and gender stereotypes common among Nigerian men.
- Other On-line Campaigns with hashtag #WetinBeYourOwn Campaign was conducted
- Advocacy visits were conducted to community leaders, policy actors, school authority and other significant stakeholders on the use and sustainability of the safe spaces provided in schools in Calabar South and Calabar Municipality.
- Monthly peer education sessions were conducted by trained peer educators in communities in Calabar South, Calabar Municipality and Obanliku LGAs.
- Activation workshops were conducted for the School Response Team (SRGBVT) members comprising of school management staff, students group representatives and students' union
- In-person training of students to promote the prevention of SRGBV, create awareness. and promote behavioural change in tertiary institutions such as the University of Calabar
- Establishment of school safe spaces in 3 secondary schools in Calabar to promote safe discussions around ending violence against women and girls while also supporting survivors of GBV.

208

in and out-of-school adolescent girls (including girls with disability and survivors of violence) across **35 communities in 5 LGAs** of Cross River state (Akamkpa, Calabar Municipal, Calabar South, Obanliku & Odukpani) have their capacities developed on Life Skills, and knowledge enhanced on SGBV, ASRHR, FGM and HIV/AIDS prevention and response



- **180 Religious and Faith-based Leaders** and Executives across 5 LGAs made commitments towards supporting the elimination of VAWG/VAC.



- **16** service providers trained to reach out to schools and accept referral.



84

Teachers trained on Sexual and Gender Based Violence Prevention, Training of secondary school girls and boys on life skills and Peer Education.

- Established **45** surveillance teams and strengthened the capacity of 87 community-based groups across 5 LGAs



● Existence of a SRGBVT

Existence of a School-Related Gender-Based Violence Team (SRGBVT) and improved capacity of response team on VAWG to sustain response activities at the university of Calabar after the project phase out. The University of Calabar is currently reviewing its sexual harassment policy in consultation with the protocol guideline developed during the intervention in the school.



● Abolishment of the age-long practice of money wives

Public declaration by the traditional institution on Abolishment of the age-long practice of money wives (a form of child marriage) and use of female children for repayment of debts owed by their parents in Obanlikwu



● Stiffer penalties for perpetrators

Enactment of a bye law by the Obanlikwu Local Government Legislative Council for the prohibition of obnoxious cultural practice of forced/child marriage in the LGA as well as review of some community by-laws with stiffer penalties for perpetrators of HTP such as FGM and fattening room.



● Increase in state wide advocacy

Increased number of traditional, religious and youth leaders advocating for gender justice in Cross river state.

● **Three Hundred and Ninety-Nine (399) (W:245 and M:154) students** have accessed counselling services at the safe spaces in schools.

Lessons Learned



Working with already existing structures in communities is more productive and sustainable when conducting interventions on social norms change.



Harmful traditional practices can be changed if the right stakeholders are engaged in a manner and language that makes them own the process. Community ownership of both the process and outcome of interventions is key to obtaining sustainable results.



Security and safety of material and equipment should be well thought out, planned, and adequately budgeted for when interventions such as school safe space are to be conducted. The need to engage the host community and leadership is critical from the onset of project



Session with men's network in communities



Road walk public sensitization activity



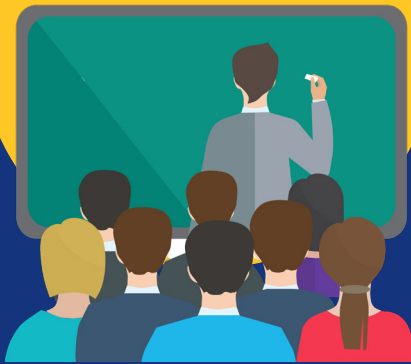
Advocacy sessions in schools

Services



Key Interventions

Trainings



- Trainings on Literacy/numeracy skills, including Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) - **20,000 beneficiaries were provided basic literacy** and numeracy skills and information on SRHR.

Beneficiaries were girls and women between the ages of 10 to 65 years who are SGBV/HTP survivors; those with disabilities; living with HIV/AIDS; CEFM survivors; and those who dropped out of school due to teenage pregnancy or economic reasons; as well as widows with children but with no means of livelihood. The lessons were delivered three times a week for three hours a session, for 6 months.

- **3,685 beneficiaries** trained in Business Development and Entrepreneurship.

Focus was on financial literacy, record keeping, formation and managing cooperatives, time and stress management, managing conflict, customer relations, packaging and branding, etc.

4,705
Beneficiaries
in vocational
skills training

Trainings lasted for between 4 months and 12 months, and focused on vocations such as aluminium windows & fabrication, shoe making, polythene bags making, phone repairs, tailoring, graphic and printing, hair dressing, catering and confectionery, poultry farming, fish farming, computer skills, soap making, detergent and washing agents, and electricals among others.

- Formation and registration of Cooperatives and Linkages to Finance - 30 cooperatives were formed by some beneficiaries to support further linkages to finance through partnership with the private sector such as micro finance banks. Mentoring and coaching sessions were also conducted for the cooperatives

- Transition to formal school - A total of **162 beneficiaries of Second Chance Education (SCE)** who indicated interest to transit and be mainstreamed into formal school or register and write the FSLC examination were registered for transition examinations in May 2023.

- **282 basic literacy beneficiaries were mainstreamed into formal school.**

- A Mainstreaming Guideline was developed to support the transition of SCE learners from non-formal to formal school. The mainstreaming guidelines which have the support of the state agency for adult and non formal education provides a smooth, simple and flexible guide to enable girls and women especially survivors of SGBV and harmful practices to enter or re-enter formal schools from SCE or accelerated education programs.

- Rescue, Rehabilitation and Reintegration/psychosocial support to SGBV/HP survivors. Some survivors of child marriage were rescued and provided educational support in Obanlikwu LGA. Payments were made for fees and other charges as well as support to enable relocation of one of the survivors to attend school outside of the community.

- A GBV Referral Protocol was developed in close collaboration with the CRS Ministry of Women Affairs and other relevant stakeholders.

- **40 Service Providers trained** on effective integration of VAWG response into sexual and reproductive health, and education. The training helped broaden participants knowledge on embracing an integral response to Survivors across all Sectors and in a coordinated manner that would administer services to Women and Girls' survivors of VAW.

- Community sensitization/community dialogues were conducted to provide information on existing VAWG response/services in the state



Through the Second Chance Education Program, the following impact were recorded:

- Increased literacy and numeracy skills of beneficiaries. Over 90% of beneficiaries are now able to read and write.
- Strengthened household economy and improved finances - Some **vocational skills beneficiaries** shared improved finances and reduced dependency in the last one year.
- At the inception of the project, only 2% of the beneficiaries had bank accounts. A huge majority, especially members of the Cooperatives, now have bank accounts and began savings
- **Increased resistance of Harmful Cultural Practices** such as Child, Early and Forced Marriage - Following knowledge and skills gained from the literacy classes as well as the public declaration on ending child marriage in Obanlikwu, some girls who were given out in child marriage began resisting the practice. Some mothers who had betrothed their daughters supported their daughters to resist being taken away by their proposed husbands.
- Women and girls who benefited from the SCE have either developed or improved self-esteem, assertiveness, goal setting through life skills training; Survivors and persons with disability have been empowered to be self-reliant and can now relate effectively as functional members of the society.



50 women and girls benefitted from various skill acquisition programme

Lessons Learned

- ✓ Having the Project Support Committees (PSCs) in place in communities is very critical to monitoring project activities as they provide timely feedback on project activities, safety and security.
- ✓ Holding mentoring and coaching sessions for cooperatives will help in identifying potential challenges and proffer timely mitigation strategies to ensure viability of the cooperatives.
- ✓ Follow up/support provided for SCE graduates to transit back to formal education is very critical in an intervention like this. Also, the need to provide starter packs after training of beneficiaries on vocational skills will further increase the number of beneficiaries who are able to start up their businesses.
- ✓ Working with the agency for adult and non formal education is strategic when conducting SCE interventions. This will support sustainability and revive some centers that were dormant



Beneficiaries undergoing training on shoe making and baking



SCE beneficiaries during graduation and in SCE class



Capacity building trainings for beneficiaries and certification of cooperatives

Data

Key Interventions

- Training was conducted for Data Entry Officers (DEOs) and Supervisors (SUPs) from the SMOWA, NGOs/CSOs/CBOs and other VAWG prevention and response actors on VAWG data collection, collation, entry and validation on the national dashboard through the State Situation Room
- Establishment of a functional Situation Room hosted at the CRS GBV response Centre of the SMOWA
- Training of trainers on the reporting process to develop a pool that can be drawn upon to sustain the capacity-building process across the state
- Building the capacity of the SMOWA to conduct Data Quality Assessment (DQA) on the reporting entities



Major Impact

The availability and access to quality data has helped in planning intervention for specific group of persons

- Improved GBV information management as there exists a central database in the State Ministry of Women Affairs (SMOWA) GBV Response Centre.
- Improved capacity of MoWA to track GBV situation in the State.
- Availability of data on VAWG/GBV for policy actions, program planning and budgeting.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ Attachment of a Technical Support staff to the SMOWA ensured that the dashboard challenges were immediately resolved
- ✓ Effective collaboration with IPs will further support the training of more NGOs/CSOs to report on the dashboard.



Data Quality Exercise at the Youth-Friendly Centre, General Hospital, Calabar



Cross Session of Trainees at the Catholic Maternity Hospital, Ogoja.



Women's Movement

Key Interventions



- Conducted advocacy visits and sensitization to community leaders, policy actors, school authority and other significant stakeholders on the use and sustainability of the safe spaces in Calabar South and Calabar Municipality.
- Developed a State Action Plan (SAP) on preventing and responding to VAWG. The SAP, developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Women Affairs holds the potential to be a valuable tool, aiding the mitigation of violence against women in both the short and long term, once it receives endorsement.
- Consultative Dialogue and round table discussion with stakeholders towards EAWG. The stakeholder's dialogue was an opportunity to identify emerging issues in the state, identify areas of advocacy and the opportunity to get more information to feed into the draft SAP on preventing VAWG in the state.
- Capacity building training for service providers on better integration of VAWG response into sexual and reproductive health, and education. The training helped broaden participants knowledge on embracing an integral response to survivors across all sectors and in a coordinated manner that would administer services to Women and Girls' survivors of VAW.
- Built capacities of **800 CSOs/CBOs, women groups** and networks, individual advocates design, implement/manage interventions to end violence against women and girls (EAWG) and promote SRHRs for women and girls.
- Strengthened capacity of beneficiaries to implement their programs based on our engagement with them especially on the importance of having a concept note for each project activity.

Major Impact

Following the training of traditional rulers, male perpetrators of rape have **been arrested and three charged to court.**



Some of the survivors have been catered for by the community chiefs and Spotlight Initiative. One of the survivors said, "No more shame. Spotlight Initiative and our chiefs in Uwanse saved me from shame." It also brought a new life and hope to many girls in communities because the chiefs worked in communities saving girls that hitherto had been violated by men. Some were sent for anti-natal care, some back to school.

- The Spotlight Initiative built some organisations to add more fire to the dying glow of women's movement in the state which was grossly under-sourced. In Cross River State, we had five great strides made by various organisation for the women's liberation movement in the pilot phase of the spotlight initiate project.
- Strengthened the capacity of **500 women's rights groups** on advocacy and the use of social accountability tools in ending VAWG.



Lessons Learned

- ✔ Strengthening women's groups and effective engagement with men's group is important in addressing GBV.
- ✔ The importance of synergy with MDAs and IPs made implementation easier and more impactful. Knowledge sharing has also been an importance benefit of synergy.



Section of participants during a capacity building training on designing, implementing and evaluation of programmes on EVAWG.



Capacity building training of stakeholders on relevant skillset on the abolition of 'Money Woman' practice and child marriage.

Recommendations



- There is a need for accountability mechanisms to ensure coordinated implementation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law, 2021; Disability Rights Law, 2021 and the reviewed Child Rights Law, 2023.
- Develop an SOP on adoption and fostering. Activate the Child Rights Implementations Committees at both the State and LG levels as provided by the law
- Simplify the laws and translate them into local languages for massive public awareness on social, print, electronic and socio-cultural media
- Sustain CSO engagement to track the implementation of all the laws and policies on VAWG
- Establish a sustainable CSO monitoring and reporting hub for tracking the implementation of the workplan
- State partners on VAWG should capture in their 2024 budget proposals their commitment to the State Sustainability plan and the costed plan
- There is a need to follow up on Commissions and Data management provisions in the Disability Rights Law and the VAPP Law.
- The virtual classroom program should be scaled up to afford more Nigerian tertiary institution students the opportunity to participate and acquire knowledge on prevention and response for VAWG.
- There is a need for follow up activities to ensure the operationalization of the provisions of the by-laws by the various communities. This is because a public declaration to end a HTP will usually need a follow up to ensure compliance.
- There is a need to work with the Ministry of Humanity and Social Welfare to enrol identified VAWG survivors into the state livelihood support programs such as the Cash transfer for improved household economic strengthening. This can be done through the office of the WDO at the local government council to ensure sustainability.
- Budgetary provisions need to be made by the state to support cases of rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration of survivors of child marriage and further support (starter packs)/linkages for graduates of skills training

- Increased budget allocation for the gender unit of various MDAs and other bodies handling issues of GBV
- Advocacy for budgetary provisions for adult centers that were revived by the Spotlight project for sustainability
- There is a need to scale up digital literacy programs as an additional component to the Second Chance Education Program for survivors and persons with disabilities.
- More collaboration among stakeholders including the media to reduce the incidence of GBV
- More reporting entities should be identified and trained to report GBV cases on the dashboard
- Refresher training should be organized for already reporting entities to sustain reporting
- Data validation meetings and data quality assessment processes should be held regularly
- Both community and popular media should be adequately involved in amplifying the voices of women and men by engaged in working for women's rights
- Expand the pool of local organisations who are already conversant with the community structures in order to build sustainable and more functional women's movements at the grassroots
- Women's movement must get to the grassroots for voices of marginalised groups like women with disabilities, living with HIV, and the poorest of the poor to be heard.



Spotlight Initiative

To eliminate violence against women and girls



EBONYI STATE

SOUTH-EAST NIGERIA



Background

Ebonyi State is one of the states in Nigeria with high prevalence of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Harmful Practices. In particular, Female Genital mutilation (FGM) has a high prevalence of 74% (NDHS 2018) and 43.2% (MICS 2016/17). Most survivors are from the lower class who live in silence and have accepted violence against women (especially intimate partner violence) and girls as social and community norms.

Similarly, prior to the intervention of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to end violence against women and girls in Ebonyi State, there was high incidence of negative social norms which encouraged violence against women and girls (VAWG). Gaps existed in access to services for most primary and secondary school adolescents especially girls, because of various reasons ranging from user fees, stigma, lack of confidence, parental/caregiver influence, and peer pressure, among others. Limited knowledge of the consequences and how to handle GBV such as FGM, rape, early and child marriage, money marriage, teenage pregnancy was among the factors fuelling the spread of the menace which most time was rooted in culture and tradition.

Following the launch of EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to end violence against women and girls, Ebonyi State recorded a reduced FGM prevalence from 43.2% (MICS 2016/17) to 20.4 (MICS 2021) among women aged 15-49. This could be credited to Spotlight Initiative stepping in to support implementation of the State's VAPP law, Ebonyi State Child Rights Law and other related interventions and projects to end the practice. Furthermore, the project supported the establishment of a fully furnished Sexual Assault Reference Centre (SARC) also known as the 'One-stop-centre for GBV issues'; Safe spaces and shelter for survivors; and second chance education, among other contributory services.

With the Spotlight Initiative Project, most Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and Service Providers (SPs) began focused engagements with the women groups to strengthen their capacity on women action towards ending GBV in the state. As at present, a good number of groups are now registered with the state's Ministry of Women Affairs, in the state and consequently educate and engage their members on ending GBV in the state.

Laws & Policies

Key Interventions

Knowledge of relevant laws and policies aimed at protecting women and girls was strengthened amongst stakeholders mainly from supply side of justice - government officials, judges and prosecutors, women's rights advocates, and human rights institutions. Similarly, entrenched negative attitudes among personnel within the formal and informal justice systems was changed, making them more gender sensitive and render decisions in consonance with women's rights as recognized nationally (Ebonyi state VAPP Law 2018; Ebonyi state Child Right Act 2010; National Gender Policy; Abolition of Harmful Traditional Practices Against Women and Children Law No. 10 of 2001; Protection Against Domestic Violence and Related Matters Law No. 003 of 2005; Nigeria 1999 Constitution), regionally (African Charter's Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa) and internationally (as proclaimed in Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women - CEDAW, and Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action).

Capacity building



Spotlight Initiative supported training of key government officials for increased awareness of human rights standards and obligations; including strengthened capacities to develop laws and policies that guarantee the ability of women's rights groups, CSOs and women human rights defenders to advance the SRHR and women human rights agenda. Participants were also exposed to the concepts of VAWG/GBV/HP, especially as related to MDA sector mandates; the use of Project/ Programme Design, inclusive/responsive budgeting, project planning and implementation, monitoring and evaluation; as well as performance analysis, documentation and reporting.

The mass media were efficiently and effectively deployed to create public awareness and enlightenment on SGBV and support services available. Traditional and religious leaders, including other influential stakeholders were engaged and mobilized towards zero tolerance to SGBV. Billboards and Information, Education and Communication materials were developed and printed as part of awareness raising campaigns. These contained information about prevention measures and actions to take in case violence occurs.



Media Engagement

Development of State Action Plans

On VAWG/HP/SGBV and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for service provision; while strengthening referral pathways. Real-time legal support was also provided for lots of female victim of domestic violence through virtual and e-based platforms/spaces all through COVID-19 lock-down, globally acknowledged to have contributed to skyrocketed incidences of VAWG.

Development of a 5-year Strategic Plan for the Ministry of Women Affairs



Major Impact



• Shelter and other social protection services provided

The spotlight project created a space for institutionalization and effective implementation of relevant legal instruments in the state that led to the establishment of Safe spaces in schools; Nduru Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC); and Ebonyi state GBV Taskforce.



• Increased number of convictions

Testimonies from the legal personnels trained showed that they engaged more GBV cases and recorded more convictions since the spotlight intervention opened the opportunity to reviews of the laws and policies applicable.



• Effective delivery of Justice

The review of the extant laws – VAPP Law 2022; Administration of Criminal Justice Law in Ebonyi state and domesticated international legal instruments aided effective and broader range of justice administration on GBV cases.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ There is need for implementing partners to synergize actions to influence political will in order to genuinely support legal reforms with regard to GBV cases.
- ✓ Scaling up colloquium with the judges and magistrates in response to GBV services will go a long way in getting justice for victims/survivors to obtain justice.
- ✓ Financial interest/benefit expectations drives stakeholders' response to making commitments, taking and sustaining actions for change.



Institutional Strengthening



Key Interventions



Capacity building over 1000 Women Groups

Built capacities of over 1000 women groups, CSOs, men groups, traditional and religious gatekeepers, individual advocates on VAWG/SGBV/SRHR.

Designed & Published New Training Manual



Designed and published a comprehensive training manual on **SRHR in 2020**. This manual was co designed with the beneficiaries in supporting an inclusive process and also reflecting the key areas the beneficiaries require strengthening.

65% of CSOs/CBOs/networks/groups and coalitions have used the training module.

Established GBV Network



Established a GBV network/coalition in the state in 2020 which have been strengthened to receive six months grants in the first year.

Developed a model SAP

& GBV Referral Protocol



Developed a model State Action Plan (SAP) on preventing VAWG in 2021. From the mapping conducted in the state and outputs from several consultative dialogues, saw the importance of having a framework in the state that addresses VAWG. Currently, the SAP have been endorsed in Ebonyi state and working towards integration into the state government framework.

Developed a draft GBV Referral Protocol in the year 2020 in close collaboration with the Ministry of Women Affairs and other relevant stakeholders. This document is a key document in the draft budgeted SAP on preventing VAWG.

Established support groups

in Odukpani and Akamkpa LGA of Cross River State and Onicha and Ohaozara LGA of Ebonyi State LGA to respond to issues of GBV 2023.



500 women's rights groups, CSOs/NGOs, networks capacities were built in social accountability tools and mechanisms, understanding the importance of social accountability tools in ending VAWG.



Built capacities of **30** lawmakers, women's rights groups, CSOs/NGOs, networks capacities on relevant skillset in the design of policies and laws on EVAWG 2023. Also Built capacities of 30 service providers in both states on integrating VAWG response into sexual and reproductive issues 2023.

Strengthened capacities of **300** stakeholders on advocacy, leadership and monitoring skills to hold MDAs accountable on sustainable response and prevention of VAWG/SGBV/HP and promote SRHR in the state.



Strengthened Capacity

300

Stakeholders

120 WOMEN GROUPS

Built capacities of 120 women groups on generating shadow report and monitoring the government's execution of its obligation in relation to human rights for VAWG/SGBV/HP SRHR.

- ✓ Built capacities of **800** CSOs/CBOs, women groups and networks, individual advocates design, implement/manage interventions to end violence against women and girls (EVAWG) and promote SRHRs for women and girls.
- ✓ Built capacities of 150 women organizations, Media and Women right defenders on advocacy and demanding accountability for budget allocations and monitor utilization.
- ✓ Built capacities of 40 women groups/networks, CSOs in fund raising, proposal writing and monitoring and evaluation.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ There should be improved data collection and statistics of reported cases. This is to help keep track of progress and also monitor cases and offenders.
- ✓ Continuous engagement of Judges and Magistrates. Scaling up colloquium with the Judges and Magistrates in response to GBV services will go a long way in getting justice for victims/survivors to obtain justice.
- ✓ There is need for implementing partners to synergize actions to influence political will in order to genuinely support reforms.



Training session for Ebonyi State police force and Civil Defence



Prevention

Key Interventions



Advocacy

High level interactive meetings with relevant state; LGA and Community Stake Holders.

Community Mobilisation & Awareness Creation:

Periodic (Weekly and Monthly) Assembly Talk in project Schools on GBV prevention and the Standard operating procedures (SOP) of the safe spaces established. Parents-Child Communication Talk during school's PTA meetings. Use of co-curricular activities such as games and inter-schools competition on School Related Gender Based Violations.

- **Peer Education:** Outreach by trained peer educators, Edutainment by Peer educators during club activities in school, Referral of cases by peer educators.
- **Capacity Building:** Identification and engagement of 16 health facilities for linkage and referral, Training of 143 Teachers in 21 schools (in four LGAs) on Sexual and Gender Based Violence Prevention, Training of secondary school girls and boys on life skills and Peer Education, Training of 18 service providers to reach out to schools and accept referral.
- **Linkage and Referral:** Referral of vulnerable girls to health facilities and CSOs, Referral of abused boys, girls and women for services, Linkage of schools to health facilities
- **Production and distribution of IEC materials:** Production of T-Shirts with SGBV prevention Messages.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Baseline and end-term surveys were conducted.

- **Established One-Stop centre for GBV Survivors**

Major Impact

- **Creation of enabling environment and safe spaces**

The project established platforms that encouraged the prevention of GBV prevalence. At risk persons (Girls, boys, etc) liable to any form of sexual violations were given the opportunity to feel empowered to rise against any form of abuse.



119 Safe Spaces established in educational institutions and non-formal spaces

- **Behavioral change among gatekeepers**

The project saw a buy-in from the community gate keepers and even religious stalwarts who had jointly enacted some local laws and by-laws to institutionalize the fight against GBV in these local settings.



20,365 women, men, girls and boys who regularly attend community programmes to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including in relation to women's and girls' sexuality and reproduction.

- **Skill acquisition and development**

it was recorded that the prevalence of GBV cases dropped drastically due the fact that the women and girls were enrolled in one form of skill acquisition exercise or the other.

1328 young women and women (SGBV survivors) acquired vocational skills



Lessons Learned

- ✓ If students are to be encouraged to access referral services in health facilities, such facilities must be youth-friendly with service providers trained in youth friendly service provision.
- ✓ With proper training and support, teachers are ready and capable to deliver programme interventions on school-related gender-based violence that have direct impact on their students. This is irrespective of the culture and tradition.



Peer Educators of Modern Girls High School, Ndiofutu after an outreach activity to the school neighbourhood

Spotlight Initiative
Initiated by the European Union and the UN

Spotlight Initiative: ARFH – Activity 4.1.12

ACTIVITY SUMMARY FORM

State _____ LGA _____ Month/Year _____

Name of School _____

ACTIVITY REPORT	NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE REACHED						Total number reached
	Age Range (M)			Age Range (F)			
	≤7-13yrs	14-19	≥19 yrs	≤7-13yrs	14-19	≥19 yrs	
Total Number Reached:							
School-Based Approach (Classroom teaching or delivery by teacher)							
Awareness (Assembly Talk, outreach)							
Peer Education (Drama, Songs & Sporting Activities, IPC, counselling)							
Referral							

One of the reporting tools on the project



Group photograph of Dignities with some peer educators at the Abakali and Ezza South Inter-schools competition site

Services

Key Interventions

Spotlight Initiative in 19 communities Across 4 LGAs



Spotlight Initiative was implemented in 33 communities out of the 34 communities of the 4 SI project LGAs (Abakaliki, Ezza South, Onicha and Ohozara) namely: Obegu-Omege, Azuofia-Edda, Ndumbam, Ameji, Enyadilogu, Ndi Okenyi (All in Abkaliki LGA). and Amana, Ezzama, Idembia, Ameka, Amuzu in Ezza South LGA; Akanu, Oshiri, Igboeze, and Enouguruguru, Amakporo, Amanato Isu, Ikwuano in Onicha L.G.A; Ugwulangwu central, Mgbom in Ohozara L.G.A.



The major interventions include:

- ✓ Mapping of Second Chance Education (SCE) centres across the 4 target LGAs
- ✓ Trained 168 SCE facilitators
- ✓ Conducted 6 months basic/post literacy and numeracy trainings across 19 SCE centres reaching 25,583 beneficiaries for SCEs.
- ✓ Trained 596 beneficiaries on vocational skills ranging from shoe making, fashion design, Beading, polythene bag making, hair dressing, make up, gele tying, confectionary, soap making, photography etc.
- ✓ Conducted Financial literacy trainings for 526 beneficiaries.
- ✓ Held 3 mentoring and coaching sessions with 19 cooperatives as well linkages with micro finance banks and non-bank micro finance institutions.
- ✓ Facilitated the development of a mainstreaming guidelines to support transitioning of SCE learners from non-formal to formal school.
- ✓ Registered 103 SCE learners for the transitioning examination just concluded in May 2023.
- ✓ Conducted graduation for the SCE beneficiaries

Major Impact

- Improved literacy and SRHR knowledge and skills for 1620 Second Chance Education (SCE) beneficiaries.
- 1328 young women and girls (SGBV survivors) acquired vocational skills
- 1296 women and young women and women gained Business Development and Entrepreneurial skills
- 18 multipurpose cooperatives were formally registered for beneficiaries in Ebonyi through the Ebonyi state Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ezzama, Idembia and Ameka, Amuzu in Ezza South LGA.
- Collaborative partnership built between Second Chance Education (SCE) facilitators and the Ebonyi state agency for mass education (SAME). The facilitators now have improved knowledge and skills to facilitate SCE sessions utilising the National Literacy and Numeracy curriculum while main-streaming sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and VAWG/HP.

■ Learners can now identify and read the English alphabets, write words such as two letter words, four letter words etc. learners can now write the 26 English alphabets, form two, three, and 4 letter words as well as the days of the week.

- 8 Project support and advocacy committees, with a total of 40 members (5 members per community) were formed. They supported monitoring of SCE sessions and provided feedback/reports on progress and challenges in their various communities to GPI.

Lessons Learned

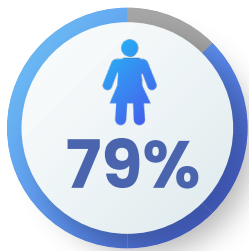
- ✔ Working with and building on existing community structures is very critical for interventions on ending SGBV especially when these are hinged on cultural practices.
- ✔ Collaborating with other partners was very helpful for rescue and reintegration
- ✔ Having SCE facilitators who are domiciled within communities and working with PSC increased project ownership and participation.
- ✔ Having trainers from within communities also reduced the level of attrition during the vocational skills training.
- ✔ Formation of project support committees were very helpful for monitoring of project activities and dealing with challenges that arose in good time.
- ✔ Provision of nannies during trainings also help to keep trainees in attendance.
- ✔ Development and adherence to selection checklist and progression charts for SCE supported monitoring of progression of beneficiaries
- ✔ Having the PSCs in place is very critical to monitor project activities in communities as they provide timely feedback on project activities. Mentoring Sessions with the cooperatives brought out challenges the cooperatives are having and this will help them be more active and sustained.



Data

Before the commencement of Spotlight Initiative Project in Ebonyi State, there was no sufficient disaggregated GBV data for the state; and no detailed data of GBV incidents. Similarly, few organizations that kept minimal records, had little information of perpetrators and their relationship with survivors of GBV.

The GBV data from the National report GBV dashboard of the federal Ministry of Women Affairs have shown that Ebonyi State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and other GBV responders have uploaded a total of 3,376 cases since April 2020 to September 2023:



Out of **3,376** cases since 2020 **2,613** of the respondents are women and girls.



There were **68** fatal cases, but there have been only 18 convictions.



1,324 (40.1%) are minors.

Some survivors experienced and reported more than 1 violence. The 5 most prevalent violence according to reported cases are:



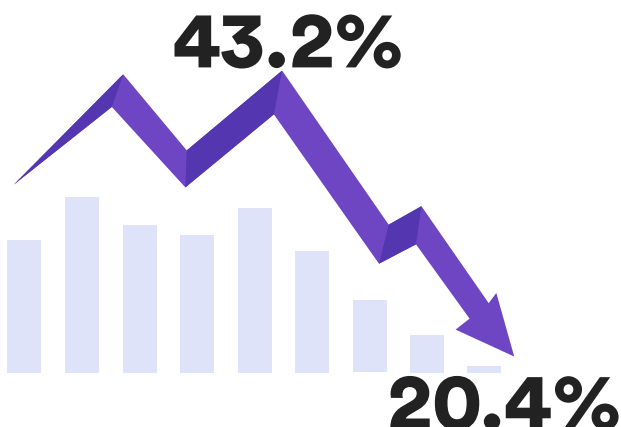
- Physical violence **1,388 (42%)**
- Emotional Violence **1,299 (39%)**
- Child abuse and neglect **942 (29%)**
- Denial of resources and services **762 (23%)**
- Defilement – **365 (11%)**

It is important to note that FGM and forced marriage are also among the reported GBV that goes on in the state.

The 10 MDAs/CSOs/SPs that reported most of the cases are:

Human Right and Conflict Resolution Centre (HRCRC)	505	15.40%
Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (MOWA-SD)	470	14.33%
National Obstetrics Fistula Centre (NOFIC)	378	11.53%
Mother-Child Care Development (M-CCAD) Forum	349	10.64%
National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)	325	9.91%
Ebonyi Gender Based Violence Taskforce	248	7.56%
Abakaliki Local Government, Education/Social Welfare Department	160	4.98%
CIVIL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & DOCUMENTATION CENTER (CIRDOC)	143	4.36%
Community Health and Development Initiative (CHAD)	113	3.45%
FAMILY SUCCOUR AND UPLIFTMENT FOUNDATION	101	3.08%
Other 35 MDAs/CSOs/SPs		14.86%
TOTAL	3296	100%

Ebonyi State recorded a reduced FGM prevalence from 43.2% (MICS 2016/17) to 20.4% (MICS 2021) among women aged 15-49.



Key Interventions

The intervention successfully built the capacities of 141 individuals from 71 MDAs/CSOs/SPs in the state. Some of the results of the Spotlight Project data intervention in Ebonyi State are these:

- The state can now comfortably and have consistently produce(d) provable disaggregated GBV data from the service providers that respond to GBV in the State.
- The project has built the capacities of relevant MDAs/CSO/SPs on GBV data documentation and upload.
- Some select Staff of Ebonyi State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development now have the capacity, like never before, to document and upload GBV data to the national report GBV dashboard.
- The HOD, Planning, Research and Statistics (PRS) of Ebonyi State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development now has the capacity to review and validate uploaded data without any support.

Major Impact

- Ebonyi State GBV data is on **2nd position** in terms of cases that have been reported on the National report GBV dashboard of the Federal Ministry of Women affairs. Since 2020, the Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Budget and Planning, and other IPs usually requested for and made references to the State's GBV data. These are proofs of the reliability of the data from the state, and the impact of the Spotlight Intervention in the state.
- The Spotlight Initiative Project was able to set up and inaugurated a GBV Stakeholders' Technical Working Group (TWG) Meeting in the State. Up to 10 MDAs/CSOs/SPs in Ebonyi State are currently up and doing in GBV data documentation and upload with or without follow-up/technical support from FRED staff and State DPRS.
- The reported services on the dashboard have clearly explained how lack of shelter homes in the state has contributed to case destruction and poor convictions in the state. This attracted USAID/Jhpiego through Momentum Country and Global Leadership (MCGL) to set up and inaugurate a shelter home for GBV survivors in the state.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ Collaborating with government owned institutions like Ministry of Women Affairs and different coalitions like State GBV Taskforce, was a very big boost in coordinating the GBV response teams in the state.
- ✓ Having existing structure(s) and staff in the state is the best way to achieve success while implementing any project.
- ✓ Proper documentation and constant data upload keep service providers on track on what they do. These enable them to assess themselves and report progress or failure.



Practical session of the capacity-building of GBV responders in Ebonyi State, on 28th March 2023, at the Conference Hall of Ebonyi State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development.



Inauguration of member of Ebonyi State Gender based Violence Technical Working group Meeting on 27th March 2023, at the Conference Hall of Ebonyi State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development.



Women's Movement

Key Interventions

Consultative Dialogues on the GBV



• High level interactive meetings with relevant state LGA and Community Stake Holders meetings, Capacity enhancements, , group formation. awareness creations and sensitizations in schools, villages and communities of the selected LGAS.

• Established a GBV network/coalition in the state in 2020 which have been strengthened to receive six months grants in the first year of establishment and currently implementing a three-year project with the FCDO on supporting women's rights organizations programmatic interventions on GBV and women issues.

• Consultative dialogues with stakeholders on the GBV referral protocol and the SAP on PVAWG. The dialogue also afforded us the opportunity to get more information to feed into the draft SAP on preventing VAWG in both states. 2020-2023.

Major Impact

500 women's rights groups, CSOs/NGOs

• 500 women's rights groups, CSOs/NGOs, networks now engage with social accountability tools and mechanisms, understanding the importance of social accountability tools in ending VAWG. Some of the social accountability tools include community score cards, citizens charter, social audit and participatory output monitoring. **45% of the participants who participated in the trainings took advocacy action in commemoration of 16 days of activism campaign to end violence against women and girls in 2020, 2021, 2022.**



• Women's groups participate in the universal periodic review report writing in Nigeria following their capacities built on generating shadow report and monitoring the government's execution of its obligation in relation to human rights for VAWG/SGBV/HP SRHR.

• Women groups participated and supported the Development of a model State Action Plan on preventing VAWG in 2021.

• Established support groups as community champions to authenticate EVAW in Onicha and Ohaozara LGA of Ebonyi State in 2023 to respond to issues of GBV which has led to reduction in GBV cases.

• Women right defenders and Media participate in advocacy to demand accountability for budget allocations and monitoring utilization to the state's Legislature on budgeting for women and girls in the state during the international day for rural women.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ Continuous Collaboration with government owned institutions like Ministry of Women Affairs
- ✓ Establishing and strengthening women led network/coalition will strengthen the end to GBV in the state.
- ✓ Proffering sustainability measures and funding alternatives, for women movements at all levels will help them support some emancipation processes for example Litigation.



Students displays placards of end GBV and End female genital cutting.



Traditional Leaders & Elders also participated in Spotlight Initiative in Ebonyi State

Recommendations



- Work with the Chief Judges in all the implementing states on protection order under VAPP Law.
- Facilitate development, adoption and publication of practice directions for SGBV and guidelines for the implementation of Protection orders.
- Expand Advocacy and implementation of extant Laws and Policies prohibiting SGBV/VAWG/HP to traditional and religious leaders, especially their roles in curbing rising incidences of /and protecting victims of SGBVs and encouraging them to take action.
- Spotlight Consortium Partners to coordinate better the relationship between the Implementing Partners to ensure a more streamlined stakeholders' engagement, for more sustainable impact of project interventions.
- Future projects to provide for private sector-government partnership to enable leveraging on the social responsibility packages of private businesses, also support the review and implementation of their policies to contribute to ending VAAGs.
- Capacity building training should not be made a one-off AND one-day activity in the future programmes for better impact.
- An ecological model is required in addressing gender based issues among in-school young people. As students are being reached in schools, parents need to be reached in the community, policy makers reached to provide policies & systems that provide enabling environment, teachers trained to provide information & enforce the policies in schools while health facilities must be equipped to be youth friendly to take referral from schools.
- Proper coordination mechanism must be established among different implementers of the grant in order for them to be able to leverage on the strength of one another.
- Work closely with Mass Literacy and other IPs implementing Second Chance Education (SCE)
- Utilise adult literacy centres and facilitators for the SCE sessions
- Working with Ministry of Women Affairs on data collection and identification of SGBV survivors
- Working with Cooperative unit in the ministry of commerce and industry on mentoring and coaching for cooperatives
- Ebonyi State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development to include Monitoring and Evaluation of ongoing projects in their yearly budget. This will aid their ability to be accountable to funders on what implementing partners are doing in the state.
- The Office of the PRS to organize and conduct monthly GBV data review and validation meeting for GBV response teams in the state.
- Quarterly meetings with Judges and Prosecutors to be held to review and monitor issues that affect prosecution of perpetrators of GBV.
- Check-ins/mentoring sessions to be grafted into the CSRG mandate to uphold the group's viability as formed.
- The cooperative holds their meetings at least once a month, do weekly savings. The CSRG member assigned may be supported to attend these meetings and provide technical support when needed.



FEDERAL CAPITAL
TERRITORY (FCT)



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

Interventions & Impacts

Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations



FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY

NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIA



Background



FCT

Prior to the launch of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), negative social norms which support violence against women and girls (VAWG) and harmful practices (HP) remained pervasive, and gender-based violence (GBV) was widespread. According to the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2018, the FCT had more women who had experienced physical violence than the national average. A proportion of men and women also still justified domestic violence. Although the FCT had less percentage of women circumcised than the national average, it is noteworthy that among those circumcised in the FCT, more proportion of women had their flesh cut and removed than the national average. The rate of teenage pregnancy in the FCT was higher than the national average. More women in FCT had unmet need for family planning in terms of limiting the number of children they gave birth to when compared to the national average. Over 35 percent of women gave birth at home which reduced the chance of being attended by a skilled health worker and as such increased the risk of child and maternal mortality; and girl child education attainment in the FCT was in dire need of improvement.

The Boko Haram insurgency, the rise of violent extremism and the humanitarian crisis also exacerbated the occurrence of GBV in the North-Central States particularly the FCT, Abuja as these conflicts led to mammoth displacements and movement of women and girls into the Territory. The FCT therefore, recorded very high cases and reports of gender-based violence, forced and early marriages, kidnapping, physical, mental or sexual assault and sexual slavery.

In the educational sector, there was limited knowledge and access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) information and services, and poor knowledge of the consequences and how to handle GBV such as rape, sexual assault, teenage pregnancy, child and early marriage, and FGM, among other factors fueling the spread of VAWG. There is also a huge gap in the linkages and intergenerational engagements between the older CSOs and the upcoming CSOs, which hinders effective collaboration, mentoring and cross learning and sharing of knowledge and skills.

However, the FCT Administration made efforts through the establishment of the FCT Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Response Team (FCTSGVVRT) which brought together a team of agencies and civil society organizations that were in the forefront of providing holistic support to survivors of SGBV in the territory. To address the challenges of VAWG in the FCT, the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative since 2019 when it was launched has implemented high impact interventions, including bridging gaps in educational access and access to GBV services for women and girls with disabilities; strategic engagement with key Ministries and stakeholders on gender-responsive budgeting; strengthening the National GBV Accountability Framework; as well as building capacity of CSOs/women rights advocates in the FCT.

- In collaboration with Federal Ministry of Justice developed SOP for the Legal Pathway for the prosecution of perpetrators of school related gender based violence.
- Monthly Coordination of GBV Stakeholders in FCT.
- Capacity Building of Gender Desk Officers, Teachers, Social Workers, Judges on State Action on the Implementation of VAPP ACT 2015 and others.
- Capacity strengthening for women and girls' rights advocates and Civil Society Organizations on gender-responsive budgeting.
- Capacity building of civil society actors, Women Rights Advocates, government agencies, and departments on Gender Responsive Budgeting, Budget Audit, Monitoring, and demand for accountability for the elimination of VAWG & SGBV in the state.
- Quarterly review meetings on Eliminating Sexual and Gender-Based Violence against Women and Girls and the implementation of Gender Responsive Budgeting.

Major Impact

- Strengthened stakeholders' response to GBV cases which has improved the coordination for referral services for GBV in the FCT. More partners are using the Referral Directory for increased uptake of GBV services. Other tools were used to improve the visibility of the center and as a result, more survivors are interacting with the center.
- Improved transparency and accountability of state actors on the budgeting process relating to VAWG.
- Creation of SGBV specialized courts in FCT (4), which has aided speedy dispensation of justice on VAWG cases.
- Remarkable improvement in SGBV case reporting and management as a result of increased strategic engagement of citizens on SGBV and basic human rights.
- Improved legal aid service delivery to **70%** of survivors whose cases were recorded stemming from the effective prevention and service delivery structures (linkages, referral pathways, SARCs, etc) put in place.
- Improved synergy amongst Stakeholders through the establishment of a platform where all stakeholders can effectively communicate in real time thus improving the overall multi-sectoral collaboration between Government and NGOs thus enhanced the Coordinated Response of SGBV Cases in FCT.
- Strong inter-agency collaboration – the SDS holds monthly co-ordination meeting every month with all the relevant SGBV stakeholders hence profiled more than 80 NGOs that currently reports cases to GBV National Dashboard thus strengthened the oversight function of the Government.

Lessons Learned

- ✔ Coordination is a very good strategy in project implementation. It has strengthened Government oversight function hence improved strong synergy between NGOs, Donor Agencies and the Gate Keepers.
- ✔ An organization cannot work around GBV response and prevention alone. Hence, strong referral pathway is key.
- ✔ One crucial lesson learned is that proper engagement/partnership is sacrosanct to finding key solutions to issues critical to achieving project outputs and meeting deliverables.
- ✔ Need for the production of Advocacy Booklets to serve as concrete documentation for visibility for the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative on gender-responsive budgeting across the various ministries in the state.
- ✔ More engagements with ministries, departments, and agencies on the need to properly defend the budget lines that are gender related.



GBV Cohort Training on Budget Tracking and accountability Joint Advocacy to Min. Budget Planning on Gender Budgeting



Institutional Strengthening

Key Interventions

- 1** Strengthen inter-agency collaboration and co-ordination of monthly meeting among SGBV stakeholders, which has resulted in synergy among stakeholders under a common platform of the FCTSGBVRT. This has led to increase in reportage and data capturing of incidence of SGBV cases to the National GBV Dashboard from 80 NGOs in the FCT
- 2** Strengthening government institutions by advocating and pressing for the establishment of an Inter-Ministerial Management Committee (IMMC) on SGBV for a coordinated response to SGBV at National level which has resulted into a common coordination platform for GBV prevention and response at National and Sub- National level with transformational impact.
- 3** Liaised and formed partnership with the Nigeria Governors Forum NGF for maximum corporation and partnership that resulted into advocacies to sub-national level
- 4** Developed and launched a GBV milestones tracker “The GBV Barometer. The Barometer was integrated with the national GBV Dashboard in second phase of the programme and relaunched with collaboration with the Nigeria Governors’ Wives Forum’s as the Sexual and Gender Based Violence Accountability Tracker (SGBVAT), now domiciled with the NIGWF for sustainability.
- 5** Established a GBV coordination mechanism for MDAs in the FCT and inaugurated a sub-committee under it, the National GBV Technical Working Group.
- 6** Developed and launched the National GBV Accountability Framework
- 7** Strengthen the National Human Rights Commission by creating a unit with a toll-free number (6472) for GBV Case Response Management (CRM)
- 8** Conduct quarterly training for Social Development Secretariat (SDS)/FCTSGBVRT, NHRC staff responsible in managing GBV cases

Major Impact

- Enhanced Coordinated Response to SGBV Cases in FCT.
- Strong inter-agency collaboration – the SDS holds monthly co-ordination meeting every month with all the relevant SGBV stakeholders hence profiled more than 80 NGOs that currently reports cases to GBV National Dashboard thus strengthened the oversight function of the Government.

- A stronger Institutional Response to Gender-based Violence in the FCT with four results: 1) improved practices of service providers to strengthen responses to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV); 2) establishment of Sexual Assault Referral Center (SARC) for survivors and improve psychosocial and health services for women and girls; 3) improve multi-sectoral cooperation to enhance responses to SGBV; and 4) involvement of women and girls, community stakeholders and the general public and professionals in the protection system against VAWG in the FCT.

- Improved transparency and accountability of state actors on the budgeting process relating to VAWG.

- Remarkable improvement in SGBV case reporting and management as a result of increased strategic engagement of citizens on SGBV and human rights.

Lessons Learned



Coordination is a very good strategy in project implementation. It has strengthened Government oversight function hence improved strong synergy between NGOs, Donor Agencies and the Gate Keepers.



The significance of utilizing data to support change: Using Data to inform policy choices, increase public awareness of the issue of GBV, and hold governments responsible for their commitments to putting an end to violence against women and girls.



Proper coordination/partnership is sacrosanct to finding key solutions to issues critical to achieving elimination of VAWG.



CRAC meetings in FCT

● Safe Spaces

Creation of Safe Spaces in educational institutions to provide remedial lessons and life skills such as leadership, self-esteem, communication, negotiation, assertiveness, and refusal skills to girls at risk of dropping out of school to prevent VAWG/SGBV/HP and access SRHR in FCT.

● Advocacy

High level Advocacy to FCT Education and Health Secretariat, Social Development secretariat, Basic Education Board, Secondary School Education Board among others. Health facilities were also visited in order to facilitate smooth linkage of schools to health facilities for referral purposes.

● Community Mobilization

Weekly Assembly Talk in project Primary Schools, Weekly Assembly Talk in project Secondary schools, Monthly Assembly Talk in project Primary and Secondary Schools. Parents-Child Communication Talk during school's PTA meetings. Use of co-curricular activities such as games and inter-schools' competition on School Related Gender Based Violence.

● SRGBVT

Establishment of School-Related Gender-Based Violence Teams (SRGBVT) in Tertiary institutions

● GBV Virtual Classroom

Introduction of the first-ever online virtual classroom on the Prevention of Campus Sexual Violence Program during the lockdown.

● Peer Education

Outreach & Interpersonal communication by peer educators, Edutainment by Peer educators during club activities in school, Referral of peers by peer educators.

● Capacity Building

- 8 health facilities engaged for linkage and referral,
- 72 Teachers in 11 schools (in four LGAs) trained on Sexual and Gender Based Violence Prevention, Training of secondary school girls and boys on life skills and Peer Education. The service providers reached out to schools and accepted referral.

● Health Education & Training on SGBV for Youth Corp Members:

929 young Nigerian women and men in the National Youth Service Scheme (NYSC), FCT camp empowered with information on gender equality, Sexual and Gender Based Violence, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and dangers of Harmful Practices. Among these, 96 volunteers were trained for four days to enable them interact with in and out of school adolescents and adults in their community of primary assignments on SGBV issues. The 96 volunteers were part of those who eventually joined the anti-HIV community development service (CDS).

● Linkage and Referral

Referral of vulnerable girls to health facilities and CSOs, Referral of abused boys, girls and women for services, Linkage of schools to health facilities

● Production and distribution of materials

Production of T-Shirts with SGBV prevention Messages, Production of Training Manuals for training Peer Educators, Production and distribution of hand wrist bands for Peer Educators, Production and distribution of branded promotional materials

Major Impact

- Strengthened response to GBV in higher institutions by working directly with student- based organisations and facilitating mechanisms that provided quality care and support to survivors of all forms of gender-based violence.
- Reduction in the abuse of boys and boys touching their female classmates in sensitive areas reduced drastically as reported in the final evaluation. This is because the female students became empowered enough to report unsolicited touches by their male classmates to school authorities.
- More teachers became knowledgeable on what constitutes gender-based violence and were able to take this knowledge even outside the schools to places like their town's union and religious meetings.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ If students are to be encouraged to access referral services in health facilities, such facilities must be youth friendly with service providers trained in youth friendly service provision.
- ✓ With the right information and environment, students undergoing abuse are very likely to open up on their experiences.
- ✓ Awareness on SGBV/VAWG/HP should have been carried out in classrooms to enhance efficient dissemination of information. However, this would have required engaging a higher number of volunteers.



Students were trained to reach out to their peers with information on SGBV and refer those that may be requiring attention to aligned health facilities or trained teachers. The picture below is that of a student responding to a question during the training of peer educators.



Leaving no one behind, cross section of corps members during the sensitisation of 929 corps members on SGBV at the NYSC Orientation camp in the FCT.

Services



Key Interventions

- Engaged **35** state commissioners of police and directors' public prosecutions in the in a high-level event in the FCT on approaches and ways of enhancing access to justice for SGBV survivors in all state, and also developed an action plan after the engagement for effective investigation and prosecution of SGBV cases for state MDAs

• Implemented the livelihood pathway program in FCT and collaborated with the inter- ministerial Management committee on SGBV, where 337 beneficiaries were selected and empowered economically, beneficiaries who graduated from different skill areas, are provided with start-up items from 2020-2023 in both FCT

• Collaborated with FCT Agency for Mass Education and Ministry of Women and Children Affairs Implemented Accelerated Second Chance Education program in FCT, leveraging and strengthening the Institutional framework of Non-Formal Education (NFE) existing structure.

• **150** Second Chance Education learning centers were established across the spotlight area councils (Kuje, Gwagwalada, Abaji, Bwari, Kwali, AMAC) in FCT.

• **6,042** Women and children (beneficiaries) enrolled including twenty-five (25) GBV Survivors and thirty-one (31) persons with disability

• **5535** beneficiaries successfully graduated from the second chance education program in FCT.

• **150** facilitators and supervisors trained on key approaches to the Second Chance Education program implementation tagged, key emphasis for GBV, Life skills, Health Education, its communication strategies and Literacy teaching methods.

• Production of GBV manual on life skills and health education for the training of selected facilitators and teaching of learners at their learning centers.

• 15,000 writing and learning materials including literacy and numeracy primers and instructional guides produced for effective teaching and learning outcomes.

• Produced Communication and publicity materials for visibility and media representation to enhance advocacy, sensitization and stakeholder engagement were developed and published.

• During the COVID-19 pandemic radio literacy program was organized for enrolled

• Some of the basic literacy beneficiaries were mainstreamed to the formal education system in FCT Agency for mass education.

• Creation of Safe Spaces in educational institutions that provide remedial lessons and life skills such as leadership, self-esteem, communication, negotiation, assertiveness, and refusal skills to girls at risk of dropping out of school to prevent VAWG/SGBV/ HP and access SRHR in FCT

• Fifty-Eight (58) women rights organisations/advocates have conducted evidence driven strategic advocacy to relevant Ministry, Department & Agencies and Legislative houses at both the National and Sub-National Level towards ensuring that state actors on the relevance of budgets being gender responsive in state appropriation bills.

• Community Mobilization: Weekly Assembly Talk in project Primary and Secondary schools, Monthly Assembly Talk in project Primary and Secondary Schools. Parents-Communication Talk during school's PTA meetings. Use of co-curricular activities such as games and inter-schools' competition on School Related Gender Based Violence.

• Peer Education: Outreach & Interpersonal communication by peer educators, Edutainment by Peer educators during club activities in school, Referral of peers by peer educators.

• Establishment of The KURUDU Physical Safe Space.

- Health Education & Training on SGBV for Youth Corps members: 929 young Nigerian women and men in the National Youth Service Scheme (NYSC), FCT camp were empowered with information on gender equality, Sexual and Gender Based Violence, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and dangers of Harmful Practices.

- Sensitization campaign was carried out through radio programs and distribution of advocacy brief, and IEC materials

- Production and distribution of IEC materials: Production of T-Shirts with SGBV prevention Messages, Production of Training Manuals for training Peer Educators, Production and distribution of hand wrist bands for Peer Educators, Production and distribution of branded promotional material.

Analysis and Imaging of Response to School Related Gender Based Violence (AnImRS TOOL) to collect GBV Data from basic and secondary school in Nigeria.

Major Impact

- Empowered and Improved financial capacity of 337 women and girl's survivors of gender-based violence through the Livelihood Pathway program and empowered SGBV survivors now have a means of livelihood through the start-up given to them and can now earn a living.
- Increased uptake of service delivery as a result of the GBV toll-free numbers.
- Improved legal aid service delivery to 70% of survivors whose cases were recorded stemming from the effective prevention and service delivery structures (linkages, referral pathways, SARCs, etc.) put in place.
- Improved synergy amongst stakeholders
- Attitudinal behavioral changes and improved levels of GBV Awareness among women and girls on how to seek justice, report cases and access services through the Accelerated Second Chance Education Program.
- Improved level of literacy / SRHR among women and girls in project communities, Women and girls are now empowered on how to identify and protect themselves against advancing perpetrators.
- Women and girls have developed self-esteem, assertiveness, goal setting through life skills training; Survivors and persons with disability have been empowered to be self-reliant and can now relate effectively as functional members of the society.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ To ensure an effective service delivery for survivors in the FCT, there is a need to coordinate the operation of service provision through a one-stop-shop approach that is private, safe and easy to access in the FCT, like the model one in Lagos state where the Mirabel Center offers sexual assault referral services offer services that include medical, psychosocial, forensic and counselling) in a safe hospital environment.
- ✓ Another key lesson learned is the need for developing and using standard operating procedures and protocols including FGM/C, case management form, framework and the integration of FGM/C indicators into the National Health Management Information Systems (NHMIS).
- ✓ It was observed that with the involvement of stakeholders in the Livelihood Pathway Empowerment program, the right beneficiaries were enrolled because of their true vulnerability status. And it was easier to monitor and track results/ impacts/success stories.
- ✓ Periodic provision of updates and activities, both in operational and field work with the Area Councils and SMWA authorities, helps drive GBV messages across the State towards the sustainability of the project.

Key Interventions

- Developed a SGBV Accountability tracker (Barometer), for GBV case management information and commitments of state actors on GBV response. The dashboard provides updates on the following indicators including Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Laws, Child Rights Laws, Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities Laws and gender protection laws and policies across the country. It also provides information on the number of cases recorded, as well as information on available hotlines for GBV response, specialized courts, sexual assault referral centers, shelters, sexual offence Registers and SGBV Response Teams and GBV technical working groups or Committees across the states.
- GBV National Data Situation Room (<https://reportgbv.ng/>) established for the collection and presentation of incidence of violence against women and girls.
- The high- level launch of the National GBV Barometer, with the participation of the Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari at the state house
- Relaunch and handover of the Barometer as SGBV Accountability Tracker to the Nigeria Governors Wives Forum (NIGWF) and for sustainability.
- The integrate the National GBV Barometer(<https://gbvinfo.ng/>) with the GBV situation room (<https://reportgbv.ng/>) for a harmonized national platform for GBV related information in Nigeria
- Presentation of the Barometer to the Inter-Ministerial Management Committee on SGBV.
- Inauguration of an M&E Strategic Knowledge Management - National Technical Working Group (SKM-NTWG) in June 2021
- Training of Trainers (ToT) for 34 national statistical offices across the 36+1
- The Implementing Partner Assistance Concept (IMPACT) Model was introduced in 2021 as a strategy to expand reporting on GBV incidents and services to non-SI States and has expanded the reporting of GBV incidents and services to 31 states and the FCT
- Capacity Building: Training of MDAs, State ministries, Ips, CSO/SP
- Conducted quarterly Data Quality Assessment (DQA) for the Situation Room in spotlight states

Major Impact

- All stakeholders; CSOs/Women women’s Advocates/MDAs, IPs, have enhanced capacity to report validated incidence of VAWG into the GBV National Dashboard.
- GBV data from the State Situation Room is analyzed quarterly on factsheets to show GBV trends and service flow, which is now being used for evidence-based programming on VAWG for enhanced multi-sectoral response on GBV.
- Having a central and unified source of GBV related data for Nigeria from the SGBV Accountability Tracker and the GBV Situation Room.
- Sustainability of the GBV platform by the government after Spotlight programme cycle is a big win, because we have seen project failure as result of no ownership from the government.
- The presentation of data for high-level advocacies has led to the transformational passage of the VAPP and CRA laws in the country.



Lessons Learned

- ✓ In the past two years, the laws and policy environment of Nigeria in relation to violence against women and girls (VAW/G) has provided a positive picture of contributions from various stakeholders both from the government and non-governmental side. The EU-UN Spotlight Initiative has been in the forefront of these efforts in the fight against SGBV in collaboration with various partners by supporting the implementation of innovative programs on the elimination of sexual and gender-based violence.
- ✓ The government of Nigeria at both the federal and state level also, did not just make commitments to promoting and safeguarding women and girl’s rights but have also gone ahead to fulfill these commitments through the acceleration of the enactment of state laws particularly the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Laws from twelve states in June 2020 to thirty-four states in December 2022.
- ✓ Internet based ‘virtual’ safe space to which women and girls (and boys and men) can report cases of VAWG to be encouraged





Women’s Movement

Key Interventions

- The strategic partnerships through the adopted Ten Pillar Strategy (TPP) increased partners from 60 groups in phase I to 318 groups in phase II in the FCT. They form a community of practice to jointly advocate for the abolition of harmful practices and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls. The intervention focused on building capacity of both individuals and institutions, to “influence and act”, across state and non-state actors.
- Staging a one-week protest at the National assembly to endorse 3 reject out of the 5 gender bills which sought to promote opportunities for women in politics, governance and the society at large.
- Capacity strengthening for women’s and girls’ rights advocates and Civil Society Organizations on gender-responsive budgeting
- Sensitization to eradicate harmful traditional practices in FCT communities
- Conducted a stepdown training for community women heads on harmful traditional practices, policy training and also sensitized the community on prevention and response to SGBV and harmful practices.
- Established 48 Gender Desk across the markets in the FCT through the “SPEAK OUT & FIGHT DA ROOT” campaign with the Association of Women in Trade and Agriculture (AWITA) with membership across the 36 states.
- Trained and strengthened the capacity the Association of Wives of Traditional Rulers in the FCT, on programming and GBV case management, Gender Responsive Budgeting and Case Management Training.
- Partnered with 17 chiefdoms in the FCT to open Case Management books in each Palace that the Secretary handles. 46 cases from Nov-Aug2023 have been recorded and handled, while the serious cases were referred to NAPTIP.



Major Impact

- Through the Womanifesto movement women in the FCT have collaboratively compelled the national assembly to rescind the 3 gender bills that was rejected for review in the next constitutional amendment.



- Empowered communities to take ownership of initiatives which have yielded remarkable results. When community members, especially women, youth, and persons with disabilities, are given resources, trust, and guidance, they become agents of change, addressing gender-based violence and harmful practices from within.
- Enhanced collaborations among diverse stakeholders, including civil society organizations, religious and traditional leaders, and government bodies, create a united front against gender-based violence and harmful practices. Working together maximizes impact, improves resource utilization, and strengthens community-based initiatives.
- Empowered and enhanced capacity of heads of communities and women groups on gender responsive budgeting.

Lessons Learned

- ✔ If women groups and professional bodies are provided with more support and empowerment, they will transform the political arena and holding office holders accountable in Abuja and Nigeria at large. Learnt that major impact can be achieved when advocacies are collectively made.
- ✔ Enhanced collaborations among diverse stakeholders, including civil society organizations, religious and traditional leaders, and government bodies, create a united front against gender-based violence and harmful practices. Working together maximizes impact, improves resource utilization, and strengthens community-based initiatives.
- ✔ If women groups and professional bodies are provided with more support and empowerment, they will transform the political arena and holding office holders accountable in Abuja and Nigeria at large.



Recommendations



- Strategic and technical engagement with key Ministries and the legislature on gender-responsive budgeting, strategic budget implementation plans, and accountability mechanisms
- Technical support to the judicial actors for effective implementation of the Violence Against Persons Act/Laws in project focal states of Nigeria.
- Legal interventions for specific groups of SGBV survivors (SGBV survivors of Trafficked Women and Girls, Rape/Traditional Harmful Practices, and PWDs)
- Establishment of Sexual Assault Referral Centers in the six Area councils of FCT
- To strengthen the National GBV Accountability Framework that outlines in detail the roles of GBV actors; and as well strengthen the SGBV accountability tracker, to complement the GBV situation room with related information that the national dashboard is not capturing
- More engagements with ministries, departments, and agencies on the need to properly defend the budget lines that are gender-related
- To improve on toll free and harmonize it into a single central line for easy reporting of GBV cases, for an effective response and service delivery.
- An ecological model is required in addressing gender-based issues among in-school young people. As students are being reached in schools, parents need to be reached in the community, policy makers reached to provide policies & systems that provide enabling environment, teachers trained to provide information & enforce the policies in schools while health facilities must be equipped to be youth friendly to take referral from schools.
- Proper coordination mechanism must be established among different implementers of the grant for them to be able to leverage on the strength of one another.
- Strengthen the Community Response Action Committees (CRACs for increased GBV activity implementation/results in the communities.
- Strengthen the response to GBV in educational institutions by working directly with student-based organizations and facilitating mechanisms that would provide quality care and support to survivors of all forms of gender-based violence.
- Address gaps in educational access and access to GBV services for women and girls with special needs by providing disability friendly tools, resources, safe learning environment, supportive aid equipment for the blind, deaf, physical and intellectual disabilities.
- Increase GBV service points across hard-to-reach communities in the FCT should be
- There is need for the creation of a budget line in the ministry of justice for court proceeding expense to ease the burden off the shoulders of survivors
- Establish a digital space in the courtrooms to aid with testimonies from victims and also for survivors to testify without being traumatized by the presence of their perpetrators.
- Build capacity of CSOs/women's rights advocates for intergenerational dialogues and strong referral networks, while scaling up capacity building and reporting across the FCT as a measure to enhance interventions and strengthen multisectoral responses to mitigate GBV in the country.
- Leverage more on media platforms and technology for sustained advocacy.
- Document best practices by collecting success stories, challenges, and innovative approaches from different communities. These insights can guide future initiatives and contribute to evidence-based strategies.
- Support women child protection organizations and groups to advocate for the implementation of the VAPP laws and the CRA in the FCT and other states as well.



LAGOS STATE

SOUTH-WEST NIGERIA



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,



Spotlight Initiative

To eliminate violence against women and girls



**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?



OVER 4 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 statuses, marital status and culture are provided with free support.

- **337 beneficiaries 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.

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



**Achieve gender
equality and
empower all
women and girls**

Data

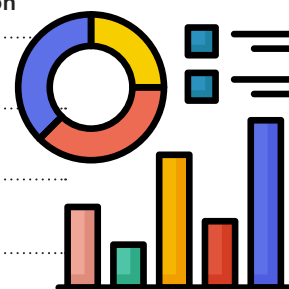
Key Interventions

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



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.

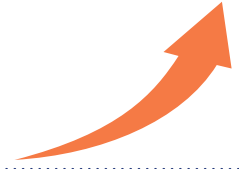
• **15% of increased** use of social accountability mechanisms by 10 civil society trained in order to monitor and engage in EVAWG efforts.

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 EVAWG.



15% of increased use of social accountability mechanisms by civil society trained in order to monitor and engage in EVAWG 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

.....

- 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.

.....

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

.....

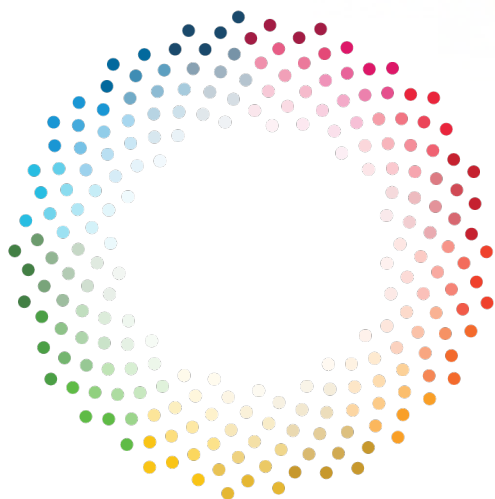
- Continuous Engagement and Dialogue with Stakeholders to address differences and achieve consensus on broader support for SRHR initiatives.

.....

- 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.

.....

- 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



SOKOTO STATE

NORTH-WEST NIGERIA

Background

SOKOTO
STATE



Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) represents a critical barrier to development globally. It is the most extreme manifestation of gender inequality and the most prevalent form of violence worldwide, affecting the well-being and productivity of individual survivors, families and communities, often across generations. Globally 1 in 3 woman have experienced violence from an intimate or non-intimate partner.

Sokoto, the seat of the Caliphate is in the Northwest of Nigeria, and it experiences Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in both the urban and rural areas. The prevalent violence against women and girls are intimate partner violence, rape, sexual violence, while harmful practices are child sexual abuse, child marriage, forced marriage, intimate partner violence, and trafficking.

The incidence of child marriage including girls under the age of 15 years is high and educational achievement is very low. For instance, the cases of girls married before ages 15 and 18 in the state is 43.4 percent and 68.6 percent respectively and Sokoto literacy rate is 20.1 percent and 47.7 percent respectively for female and male aged 15 to 24 years. This has increased violence against women and girls, aided by the culture of silence and religious beliefs.

According to according to the National Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) 2018, at least 32.8 per cent of every married woman, aged 15-49 years experienced emotional, physical or sexual violence committed by their current or most recent husband/partner in Sokoto State. It also noted that 8.6 per cent of women aged 15-49, experienced physical violence since age 15, while 5.4 per cent of women 15-49, experienced genital mutilation, and 0.7 per cent per cent of women experienced violence during pregnancy.

Sokoto state has domesticated the VAPP law and the Child Rights Acts (CRA) but is yet to domesticate the Women Peace Action Plan; and women also do not play prominent roles in policy decision making in the state. Women groups and women-led civil society organisations in Sokoto are working mostly in silos. Access to SRHR services is very low. Similarly, state-wide data on VAWG prevalence was inadequate. However, community-level programs, such as the STEER initiative, have shown promise in promoting gender equity and challenging harmful norms.

To address the negative social norms that drive VAWG and other harmful practices in Sokoto State, the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative launched various campaigns and interventions involving Ministries, Departments and Agencies of government, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and traditional leaders in 2019.

The GBV Situation Room was established with the support of the Spotlight project and a total of 1,556 GBV incidents were reported on the Dashboard. These reported cases included a range of GBV types, such as sexual assault, physical assault, financial and economic abuse, rape, defilement, forced marriage, denial of resources, psychological and emotional abuse, female genital mutilation, violation of property rights, child abuse, and neglect. Sokoto State is the location of Nana Khadija Centre, the first GBV One-Stop Centre in North-West Nigeria.

Radio broadcasts have been effective in disseminating messages against VAWG, harmful practices, gender stereotypes, and violent masculinities, to majority of the population.

Laws & Policies

Key Interventions

Capacity building for about 59

Law Enforcement Agents in the state including the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), the Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), NAAPTIP, and HISBAH Commission on Prevention and Responses to SGBV/VAWG/HP and SRHR.

1. Retreat on the review and validation for the passage of the Sokoto state VAPP bill with Sokoto House of Assembly (SoHA)

Conducted a study on SGBV and the Budget Gender Responsive Budgeting in the state's budgeting system.

It reviewed and analysed the budgets of relevant MDAs that have responsibilities related to SGBV/VAWG/HP and SRHR of women and girls. The preliminary findings were validated at stakeholders meetings and the studies was published and disseminated to stakeholders.

2. Development of costed action plans and M&E Framework to facilitate the implementation of the VAPP Law.

3. Capacity Building on Gender Responsive Budgeting: Women's Rights Groups, CSOs, media groups and key populations in the state were trained on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB).

4. Advocacy to relevant stakeholders in the state for buy-in and collaboration. Some of the stakeholders include media houses, Legislature, Executive, Law Enforcement Agencies, Traditional and Religious leaders using policy briefs.

5. Secondly, need for full implementation of the compulsory and free universal basic education Act which will ensure that all boys and girls have access to basic education.

Major Impact

Through a multi-sectoral interventions, the Sokoto State VAPP Bill was reviewed, updated and passed by the State House of Assembly and assented to by the Governor and has become the Sokoto state VAPP Law being a legal framework based on evidence and international human rights standards prohibiting all forms of violence against women.

• The development of a SOP for SGBV cases

The development of a Standard Operating Procedure for SGBV cases, one of the project's key recommendations has been adopted by the Nigerian Police Force.



• Knowledge from training on gender responsive budgeting

CSOs in the state leverage knowledge from training on gender responsive budgeting to engage relevant MDAs in the state For example, the Centre for Peoples Health, Peace and Progress engaged the state through the production of 2021 Pre Budget Policy Briefs focussing on GBV.

• Child protection law was successfully passed

Sokoto State Violence Against Persons Prohibition - VAPP law and Child protection law were successfully passed by the Sokoto State House of Assembly 7th July and 11th November 2021 respectively and assented by His Excellency, the Governor of Sokoto State on the 13th July and 22nd of November 2021 respectively. These laws have aided the prosecution of over 25 cases on violence against women and girls and release of children in correctional facilities.



Lessons Learned

- ✓ Threading with caution and respecting local values and norms, using culturally appropriate language and ensuring that local spokes-persons are used as lead faces for advocacy for change on sensitive issues.
- ✓ The need for continuity of actions and interventions by different stakeholders including Civil Society, Media, Law Enforcement and the Judiciary beyond the project period to ensure that project gains are sustained.
- ✓ Early collaboration with official stakeholders, especially in activity planning is imperative for successful engagement and implementation



Inspector Salamatu Sulaiman speaking at the training for law enforcement agents.



Group discussion during the 2-day capacity building workshop of Justice sector partners



The CSJ Lead Director and his team on advocacy visit to the NSCDC

An illustration featuring a traditional hut with a thatched roof and three speech bubbles saying "HELP!". To the right, a person wearing a helmet and a face mask is riding a bicycle. The background is a simple landscape with green hills and a blue sky. In the top right corner, there is the Spotlight Initiative logo and the text "Spotlight Initiative To eliminate violence against women and girls", along with the logos of the European Union, the United Nations, and Nigeria.

150-Member
community-based surveillance
committee were trained in Sokoto

Institutional Strengthening



Key Interventions



97

Lawyers, Magistrate and Judges, CSOs and security agencies trained and acquired skills on Administration of Criminal Justice and Child Protection;



70

government stakeholders trained on designing and implementing laws and policies to address VAWG/ SGBV.

Training of Journalists



37

Journalists acquired skills on ethical reporting, media advocacy and solutions journalism to ending violence against Women and girls

138

NHRC, Security Agencies strengthened with capacity to support the Litigation, Integrating and Implementing Plans and Programmes on SGBV/VAWG/HP and their Inter-linkages with Women's Access to SRHR.



Capacity building

Provide capacity building to Sokoto State Ministry of Women and Children Affairs on Coordination and system

280



Social workers/Security /Para Security Agencies acquired Skills to provide Professional Case management services to survivors (Girls and Women)



Provision of laptops, Desktop computers to Nigerian Police, Nigeria security and Civil Defense Corps, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of women and children Affairs to improve quality of data and program reports

49

Over 49 Convictions on Child Justice achieved, and perpetrators remanded in correctional centers



CPC

Functional One single coordination platform meeting, led by the Community Surveillance Child Protection Committee (CPC) for all the advocacy work at the community level has promoted Joint integrated responses to VAWGs at community levels.

Major Impact

Efficient and Effective State Gender based and Child Protection Response Team (SGBV/CP)- Chaired by the Sultanate Council- responding to cases of Violence Against women and Children- this has strengthened integrated case management services to over

800

survivors

40



staff of Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWAS), CSOs and Response Team on SGBV/CP trained on data management, collation has improved monthly reporting and collation of incidences of violence against women and girl for action.

70

government stakeholders strenghtened to design and implement laws and policies to address VAWG/SGBV.

Key Interventions



Skill acquisition



460 survivors trained in various essential skills to prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG), sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), harmful practices (HP), sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and vesicovaginal fistula (VVF). Each survivor was provided with startup grants, enabling them to kickstart their own ventures and endeavors. These 460 individuals are now poised to make a lasting impact, not only by transforming their own lives but also by becoming advocates and champions for gender equality and the eradication of GBV within their communities.

• Sensitization and awareness on issues linked to gender norms and violence against women and children/girls during town hall meetings and dialogues

• Empowerment of survivors/vulnerable adolescent girls with SRHR knowledge, life skill and access to services:

Monthly Mentorship and interactive forum established for survivors at 6 focal Spotlight LGAs Supporting over 812 survivors of violence with different services including psychosocial support, medical services, educational support, legal assistance, life skills support, health education, provision of re-usable pads and Nutrition education/counselling.

• 538 Imams, Religious/Traditional Leaders, Modibbos (Female Religious Leaders), Youths, women groups, Women and Male Champions strengthened to promote Maternal and Child Health (MNCH), Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), Family Planning (FP), Antenatal Care (ANC), Facility Delivery, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs), behavioral change and prevention of Gender based Violence during social and religious gatherings such as child naming ceremony, wedding Fatiha and public preaching. in all 52 Wards/Communities across 6 Spotlight LGAs

• **100,000** copies of crucial messages about MNCH, SRHR, FP, ANC, Facility Delivery, and the prevention of GBV, FGM, and HTPs were produced and distributed. These materials were provided to the trained Imams of Juma'at Mosques, youth advocates, traditional leaders, and religious figures. They serve as guides for religious sermons and were shared within their respective communities

• Over **1,000,000** listeners, including women, girls, men, and youth reached across all 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs) through a weekly Hausa Radio Drama Series on Rima Radio, Sokoto, promoting MNCH, SRHR, FP, ANC, Facility Delivery and raising awareness about the prevention of GBV, FGM, HTPs, and the importance of women's empowerment



84

Teachers trained on Sexual and Gender Based Violence Prevention, Training of secondary school girls and boys on life skills and Peer Education.

• 16 service providers trained to reach out to schools and accept referral.



• **6 Community Based Surveillance Committee (CBSC)** with **125** members trained to identify and report cases of Violence Against women and Children (VAW/C) in all **6** focal LGAs (Binji, Sokoto South, Sokoto North, Tangaza and Bodinga)

7 Community Surveillance Groups established.

• Improved capacities of community prevention and response structures: Community structures such as the LGA Surveillance Teams are better coordinated and able to identify, report and refer cases of violence to appropriate service providers.



Improved levels of GBV Awareness among community members and change in their general attitudes towards GBV: Now, individuals in Sokoto State feel empowered to speak up and seek justice when confronted with GBV.



• **Increased access to GBV Services for survivors:** As a result of the Spotlight Intervention, survivors received diverse range of services including psychosocial support, medical services, life skills and justice. **29** cases have received legal services with 1 conviction so far in both LGAs

• **207** survivors provided with life skills, counselling, health, educational support during monthly mentorship and interactive forum.



• **1620** girls were enrolled in Safe Spaces and empowered with literacy, numeracy and life skills to enhance their core academic performance and increase retention and transition rates into Secondary schools, and have gained knowledge and information on GBV, SRH, Communication Negotiation skills etc.



40 Youths in Sokoto State trained on SGBV/GBV, SRHR, and HP, including FGM and CM, to spread and create awareness across the state.



800 Religious/Traditional leaders youths' Women groups, male champions strengthened to promote behavioral change and prevention of gender-based violence.

• **75** religious leaders trained on Stepping Stones and advocating against VAG and for implementation of legislation and policies on VAWG and for gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and women and girls' rights.



• **5720** persons reached by campaigns and interventions transforming negative social norms and gender stereotyping that promotes VAWG/HP/SGBV

• **55** communities with advocacy platforms established and/or strengthened to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including about women and girls' sexuality and reproduction.

• Cases of teenage marriage prevented as three junior secondary school students that had been betrothed and were supposed to leave school after their JS 3 exam continued their education. This was after a lot of engagement with their parents by trained teachers.

• Elimination of the Culture of Silence as there is an overwhelming Increase in the number of cases reported due to awareness and sensitization in expectation of case management services and justice.

Lessons Learned

- ✔ • Community members are more likely to accept change when the messages come from their leaders and influencers. Thus, the involvement of community stakeholders especially community leaders boosted the rate of acceptance by the visited communities.
- ✔ • Leveraging of the existing community structures such as networks and associations eased the community sensitization and engagement processes.
- ✔ • Continued, consistent psychosocial support for survivors is needed to enable them fully recover and reintegrate into society.
- ✔ • Community sensitization for behavioral change is an essential prerequisite for tracking and reporting GBV cases, ensuring that individuals are equipped with the knowledge and awareness needed to address and report such incidents effectively.
- ✔ • Community-based sensitization and awareness is an effective tool to changing the narrative of Violence Against Women, Girls and Children.
- ✔ • Partnership with the government is key and essential to achieving results and ensuring sustainability.
- ✔ • If students are to be encouraged to access referral services in health facilities, such facilities must be youth friendly with service providers trained in youth friendly service provision.
- ✔ • With proper training and support, teachers are ready and capable to deliver programme interventions on school related gender-based violence that have direct impact on their students. This is irrespective of the culture and tradition.
- ✔ • It is better to use the language that participants are more comfortable with in conducting trainings.



Services

Key Interventions



The Second Chance Education and Vocational Learning for Survivors:

- Established **45** new learning centers across spotlight focal LGAs (Sokoto north & south, Tangaza, Dange shuni, Binji & Bodinga) in Sokoto state.
- Enrolled **2,731** learners into the **45** new Spotlight Initiative second chance education learning centers. Among those enrolled in Sokoto State are **1,411** women and **974** girls, **346** boys, **199** GBV Survivors and **51** persons with disability.
- Selected and trained 51 facilitators and supervisors on key approaches for the Second Chance Education program implementation tagged, key emphasis for GBV, Life skills, Health Education, its communication strategies and Literacy teaching methods.
- Developed the Second Chance Education Facilitator's guide on GBV, Life Skills and Health Education. Carried out need assessment, Community sensitization and enrollment drive in 41 communities within the six LGAs.

6000
instructional
learning
materials

and tools produced for effective teaching and learning outcomes of the second chance education learners. Communication tools for online visibility and media representation to enhance advocacy, sensitization and stakeholder's engagement developed and published.



51 **GBV**

survivors and persons with disability were identified, selected and enrolled to vocational skills training, entrepreneurship and Digital literacy components of the second chance education program.

- The beneficiaries of the Vocational skills program are further provided with Start-up kits for their small-scale businesses.

Accelerated Access to Obstetric Fistula Repair in Sokoto State:

- Mobilised fistula women to treatment centre
- Conducted of Free Fistula repair treatment and care



Major Impact



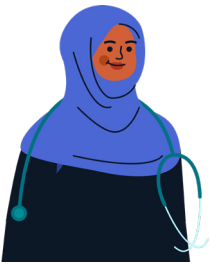
- **Established a One-stop Centre (Nana Khadija)**

Established a One-stop Centre for survivors of Gender based violence in Sokoto (Nana Khadija) Nana Khadija Centre is a sexual assault referral centre established under the EU UN Spotlight initiative. The centre offers counselling and medical services to survivors of Gender Based Violence. The centre has served as a key stakeholder in offering services to survivors of GBV in Sokoto State, **with over 1,292 clients provided with services.**

- **Established 4 new maternal waiting rooms**

4 Maternal Waiting homes established to reduce maternal and Prenatal deaths in 4 LGAs (Sokoto North, Bodinga, Binji and Tangaza)

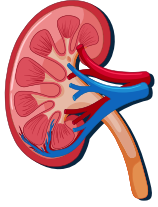




- **60** Health workers, (Community Midwives, Chews and Volunteers) equipped with skills to manage the Maternity waiting homes in Bagarawa PHC, Bodinga and Kofar Rini PHC, Sokoto North LGA

- 9,310 Out of School learners Successfully graduated from the Accelerated Second Chance Education Program scheme (Binji and Sokoto North LGAs).

- Attitudinal behavioral changes and improved levels of GBV Awareness among women and girls on how to seek justice, report cases and access services.



- Improved levels of literacy / SRHR among women and girls in project communities, Women and girls are now empowered on how to identify and protect themselves against advancing perpetrators.

- Women and girls have developed self-esteem, assertiveness, goal setting through the life skills training; Survivors and persons with disability have been empowered to be self-reliant. and can now relate effectively as functional members of the society



- A total of **372** eligible women and Girls who underwent Free Fistula Surgery in Sokoto State (overall healing rate of fistula repairs at **90%** their dignity was restored following our improved quality of perioperative care and engaged competent local surgeons, resulting in reduced repeat surgeries and more survivors are carrying on with their lives, fistula free!

- Over **500,000** men and women were educated on causes of obstetric fistula and preventive measures

Lessons Learned

- ✓ Community Based Sensitisation and awareness is an effective tool to changing the narrative of Violence Against Women, Girls and Children.
- ✓ Engagement of religious/Traditional Leaders has been instrumental in mitigating Violence Against Women Girls and Children
- ✓ The need to increase community level advocacy and the inclusion of local media, capacity development for community actors, facilitators, Centre based Management Committees [CBMC], SBMCs, FBOs, CBOs and the Mothers Associations.
- ✓ Increase support structure for needs assessment, mental health psychosocial support and referral services at the Second Chance Education Learning Centers



Data



Key Interventions



Equipping the central data coordination room with laptop, Desktop computers, Printer, Photocopier, Inverter and Solar panel, cabinet for case files, Samsung curve television.

55

Training Data Entry Officers (DEOs) and Supervisors from MOWCA, NGOs/CSOs/CBOs and other willing stakeholders on how to report on the national dashboard, through the State Situation Room

- Establishment of a functional Situation Room hosted at the GBV Centered at the MOWCA
- Training of training of trainers on the reporting process to develop a pool that can be drawn upon to sustain the capacity-building process across the state.
- Institutionalisation of the impact model requiring Implementing Partners (IPs) to support the training of NGOs/CSOs to report GBV cases in their areas of operation across the state Building the capacity of the MOWCA to conduct Data Quality Assessment (DQA).
- Building the capacity of MOWCA to provide Technical Support to CSOs/Service providers in reporting and validating cases; and facilitation of usernames and passwords to DEC's Supervisors newly trained.

Major Impact

The availability and access to quality data has helped in planning intervention for specific group of persons

- **Enhanced Skills Data Officers:** Skills and capabilities of data officers in reporting, documentation, analysis, and information sharing among implementing CSOs have improved.
- Facilitated Collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, leading to effective addressing of GBV-related issues.
- **Data Quality Assurance:** Data Quality Assessments (DQA) were conducted with a view to ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the provided information.

Lessons Learned

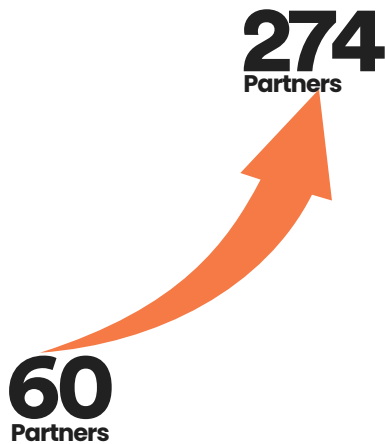
- ✔ One cannot successfully fight the issues of GBV without a strong engagement and coordination with relevant stakeholders.
- ✔ Continuous capacity building is key in a rapidly changing world as ours.
- ✔ Extension of technical support to the MOWCA GBV technical working group (GBV-TWG) and the specialized M&E TWG improved the ministry's capacity to coordinate the reporting entities in Sokoto state





Women's Movement

Key Interventions

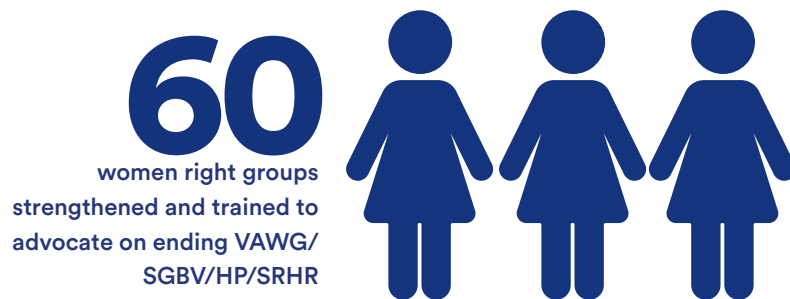


• **The strategic partnerships through the adopted Ten Pillar Strategy (TPP) increased partners from 60 groups in phase I to 274 groups in phase II in Sokoto.**

They formed a community of practice to jointly advocate for the abolition of harmful practices and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls. The intervention focused on building capacity of both individuals and institutions, to “influence and act”, across state and non-state actors.

• Key interventions include enhancement of project management skills, facilitating constructive and result based dialogue and convening, communicating for impact and advocacy, adapting in alternative solutions, and effective coordination, which led to establishment of gender desks in TPPs organization which improved reportage and access to justice for survivors of GBV.

Major Impact



Lessons Learned

- ✓ **Community Ownership and Engagement:** Empowering communities to take ownership of initiatives has yielded remarkable results. When community members, especially women, youth, and persons with disabilities, are given resources, trust, and guidance, they become agents of change, addressing gender-based violence and harmful practices from within.
- ✓ **Collaborative Approaches:** Collaborations among diverse stakeholders, including civil society organisations, religious and traditional leaders, and government bodies, create a united front against gender-based violence and harmful practices. Working together maximises impact, improves resource utilisation, and strengthens community-based initiatives.
- ✓ **Leveraging on existing groups:** Ten Pillar Partners (TPP) model collaborated with existing organisations and leveraged on their coordinated meetings and other programmes to implement activities. The strategy adopts partnerships and “Do It Yourself (DIY)” principles to encourage learning by taking a more hands-on approach to learning.



Sokoto Sac Stepdown Gurori Community Initiative Dialogue Session



Gurori Community Dialogue Session



Gurori Community Dialogue Session



Joint Association of Persons with Disability (JONAPWD) Sokoto Sensitization Meeting



Group photo of participant at the capacity building in Sokoto State



Supporting the state during a 2 days training on report writing for MDAs and response team members.

Success Stories



Hadiza's Story

Hadiza is a 17-year-old survivor of female genital mutilation and domestic violence. She was diagnosed with fistula at age seven after she was badly injured by the blades of the traditional bed attendants who performed the genital mutilation. Life became unbearable for Hadiza who faced discrimination and neglect from her family and friends. Her condition greatly affected her performance in school as she was constantly despised by her school mates. She decried that going to school became a nightmare for her so much that she cherished isolation.

In her words: "I was doing so well in school, but my classmates complained bitterly that I was smelling urine and they won't sit with me.

Being a product of a broken home, Hadiza was neglected in her condition by her father and stepmother who constantly tortured her physically and mentally.

The narrative changed when Hadiza's mother took her to the hospital to seek medical help where she received free repair by fistula foundation with support from the EU-UN Spotlight initiative.

Like many survivors who were successfully repaired, Hadiza now has a second chance to life. Her dream is to go back to school and study to become a medical doctor to repair fistula patients for free.

In Hadiza's words; "My greatest wish is to go back to school, I want to become a doctor in future, I want to be part of the people who provide help for women and girls especially fistula survivors. I want to also take good care of my parents. All thanks to EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, I now have my life back".

EU-UN Spotlight Initiative brought back life to a survivor and restored her health through the timely delivery of emergency medical services.

Hauwa, an orphan, and a survivor of rape in Bodinga became pregnant at the age of 16 while staying with her relatives. Being under-aged and uninformed, Hauwa developed complications while carrying the pregnancy which led to her hospitalization.

Understanding the severity of the case, EU-UN Spotlight Initiative through its partner 3Ps intervened and followed it up critically and clinically to ensure the safety of both Hauwa and her child. The case was referred to Usmanu Danfodiyo University Teaching Hospital (UDUTH) where she was diagnosed with eclampsia.

With the support of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative Project, Hauwa received the needed emergency surgery which saved the lives of her and her child. Hauwa has fully recovered and is presently receiving psychosocial support services through the monthly survivors' forum. In her words: "I was at the brink of death, if not for the intervention of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative during my ordeal, I would have probably lost my life and that of my child".



Hauwa's Story



Accelerated Second Chance Education Program for women and girls in Sokoto State Empowers a GBV Survivor of serial Rape back to a formal Education System to achieve her lifelong learning and dream career.

Second Chance Education Program is providing lifelong recovery, a safe space to Survivors and those at risk of GBV through literacy teachings, improving their Health education and Life skills, which empowers them to understand their SRHR, to speak up (be assertive), build up their self-esteem and confidence to relate as functional members of the society. Livelihood skills, Entrepreneurship, and start-up kit are also provided for survivors/persons with disability and mainstreaming of those that Chooses to further their career in the Formal Education System.

Adama is a 20- year -an old young woman from Sokoto North Local Government Areas of Sokoto State in Nigeria. Her journey for being a serial rape survivor started when she dropped out of school as a result of financial burdens and family challenges, when her parents got divorced and she was left in the hands of her family relations to survive, due to her condition she could not continue her studies, she suffered different forms of abuse including domestic abuse and serial rape from those that were meant to protect her. she lived with her perpetrators to the extent she resolved that the abuse was normal for her, she was further introduced to the use of drugs as a means to cope with her misfortune. Her situation remained difficult following her inability to provide for herself and her basic needs. She had no skills nor employment. she had to seek financial assistance to support herself.

Adama was supported with rehabilitation, forensic examination, Psychosocial support counseling, and other services and was further referred to Grassroots Entrepreneurship Skills Acquisition [GESA] Initiative through the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative Second Chance Education Program where Adama is now enrolled in a Livelihood



Skills, Entrepreneurship a start-up support program beneficiary, under the program, Adama is determined to be skilled in Fashion Designing and to further set-up a fashion designing enterprise in other to be self-reliant and further support her education. The Second Chance Education Program also supported the registration of Adama at Umaru Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto State where she is studying Laboratory Science.

Adama has embraced her lifelong learning career since joining the Second Chance Education Program which has enabled her to dream beyond her past experiences.

For Adama and other survivors of Gender Based Violence Second Chance Education ensures that their voices are heard and unlocks their potential for a brighter future through education and skills development.

Aisha (pseudonym), a 17 years old disabled survivor of neglect in Bodinga LGA has suffered emotional and physical trauma from her paternal relatives after the death of her father. She became physically challenged at age seven where she suffered from broken limbs after being knocked down by a sheep they reared. At the advent of the loss of her father, her condition deteriorated with constant pains in her hips, legs, and back as well as the development of boils and lesions on her leg, which calls for serious intervention. On the 15th of July, 2022, a case worker reported Aisha's case to the Centre for People's Health, Peace, and Progress (3Ps) – the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative partner working in Bodinga LGA.

The EU-UN Spotlight Initiative partner visited Aisha to assess her condition and provide the necessary support needed. She was referred to the Sokoto State Advance Medical Diagnostic Centre where she underwent medical examinations and treatment. Aisha was presented with a wheelchair to ease her movements. The wheelchair was presented to her during the monthly survivor's forum in August 2022. Aisha has now recovered from the lesions on her legs and consistent pains and currently attends the Survivors Forum in Bodinga where she continues to receive mental health and psychosocial support services. She expressed her gratitude to the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, 3Ps, and the community surveillance team for standing with her all through her trying moment. In her words: "With the intervention of 3Ps with support from the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, I have recovered from the physical injuries, and

the provision of the wheelchair has enabled me to do many things I couldn't do on my own".



Aisha's initial condition



Aisha on the wheelchair



Bilkisu's Story

Now leading her small business and making homemade samosa and meat pie, Bilkisu Aliyu's vision of financial freedom didn't always look attainable. After many attempts to set up a small business, Bilkisu was about to give up. 'I didn't, at the time, have the skills to successfully run a small business that would enable me to cater for my own needs as well as my children's need, I was about to give up,' said Bilkisu. That was when she was selected to be part of Neem Foundation's Second Chance Education, Financial Literacy, and Vocational Skills Training.

Amid high inflation and persistent economic downturn, which had made the dependency on the income of the husband inadequate to meet the family needs, Bilkisu could no longer sit on the sideline. Bilkisu a resident of Sokoto North LGA, aged 37, is a full-time housewife with 3 children and was selected to be part of Neem Foundation's Second Chance Education, Financial Literacy, and Vocational Skills Training.

This is a program built to provide young women with practical skills to enhance their financial ability. After gaining financial literacy knowledge and going through vocational skills training in catering for about three months, Bilkisu was able to start a small business making and selling samosa and meat pies from the confines of her home. And She has also learned how to communicate in basic English language having undergone the basic literacy class session under the Second Chance Education program of the Spotlight Initiative "Without the skills and insight I picked, I don't think I will be able to make the little money I make from this small business," Bilkisu said proudly.

Worldwide an estimated one in three women has experienced or is experiencing one form of gender-based violence. It undermines the health, dignity, security, and autonomy of its victims, yet it remains shrouded in a culture of silence. This is the situation of Rukkaya Abubakar (not real name) a 25-year-old divorcee, from Sokoto North LGA and a mother of one child.

Rukkaya is an intimate partner violence survivor, who also got infected with HIV by the perpetrator who later divorced her. Following her divorce, she moved on with her life and later married another man with the same health status as hers, but her situation turned out worse because the second husband was also an abuser. She could not take the abusive situation anymore, she decided to sue him in court for divorce, and her request was granted.

After counseling her family through Nana Khadija SARC, the family accepted her back and never stigmatized her and she was later referred to EU-UN Initiative Partner- Neem Foundation through Nana Khadijah Center to have access to second chance education, mental health, and psychological therapy, and the economic empowerment program, a few months after participating in all the activities she shared with us how she has been impacted positively and considered herself to be one of the lucky people to be part of this program

In her own words "Zanso ace wannan gidauniyar zata taimaka ta cigaba da wannan tsarin saboda nayi matuqar qaruwa ta fannin ilimi da lafiyan hankalina da Kuma jikina. Zanso 'yanuwana dasuke irina suma samu irin wannan qaruwa".



Rukkaya Abubakar

(How I wish this Partners will continue to implement this program because I so much benefited from it in terms of improving my knowledge and health status, especially my mental and physical health. Therefore, I wish those of the same status as I would also benefit the same way as I do).

Rukkaya wishes to express her gratitude to EU-UN Spotlight and UN Women for such an initiative to support all women and girls who suffered such a fate.

Men's attitudinal change in action!

It is a known fact that in the conservative northern traditional setting, women do not have equal rights with men. This was the case during the training of teachers in Sokoto. Female participants were not allowed to freely express themselves by male participants and they were not also allowed to go for their meal until men have been fully served.

The facilitators at the training addressed this during the training and it became a serious issue that almost brought the training to an abrupt end. At the end of the third day, the men agreed to women being served first but on the fourth day, they rejected the idea. The men on their own suggested two parallel lines of male and female being served simultaneously which everyone was happy about and which was retained until the training ended. This is a shift from the normal in a place like Sokoto. At the end of the training, there was obviously a change in the attitude of the men.

Hassana's Story

All hopes seemed dashed for Hassana a 15-year-old from Tangaza LGA who was raped by an unidentified man on her way to source for firewood in the bush.

After the incident, Hassana was rushed to the Nana Khadija SARC for medical care. She was immediately attended to and the case was reported to security agencies. The long search for the perpetrator is still on as she was unable to identify the perpetrator. Hassana was however referred to LHI by the surveillance team at the community to be part of the monthly survivor's forum.

Hassana has braced up to face the realities of times, and her mental health has greatly improved through the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative survivor's forum. She has enrolled in school and in her Senior secondary year now. In her words: "I want to be a lawyer, to be able to give justice to survivors like me. I am forever grateful for this training that builds in me a new hope and confidence, I feel free and also loved. Thank you, EU-UN Spotlight Initiative".

Nafisat's Story

Nafisat is a 12-year-old who lives in Binji LGA of Sokoto state. Subjected to hawking by her family in order to support the family's means of livelihood, Nafisat was raped and left to die by her perpetrator. Identified by the gender-based/child protection surveillance team in Binji, Nafisat was referred and taken for proper medical care at the Nana Khadija One-Stop Centre. In their quest for justice for Nafisat, her parent reported the case to the Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC). The perpetrator on hearing the news took to his heels and left the town. However, he is currently on the wanted list by security agencies in the State.

Nafisat was then enrolled by the Community Based Surveillance team where she attends the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative supported survivor forum put in place to encourage survivors build resilience and give life a second chance

She is gradually recovering from the trauma and shock she experienced from the event through engaging in psychosocial support services she enjoys at the safe space. In her words: "This group has helped me to develop great self-confidence and courage to go back to school. I now thrive for a better life. All thanks to EU-UN Spotlight Initiative and the Life Helpers Initiative (LHI) team for giving me a new beginning and also the teaching we get monthly has helped me to know how to stay safe and secure."

Fatima's Story

Fatima is a 30-year-old Fulani woman from Zamfara State who lost her parents at the age of 10 years and started living with her uncle who married her off to her first husband (a Fulani herdsman) at the age of 16. 3 years later, Fatima got pregnant but suffered prolonged labour for 3 days at home without help until her neighbours heard her cry and rushed her to the nearest hospital. She delivered a stillbirth and macerated through the caesarean section.

The husband who was away during the happenings that led to her fistula condition sent her a divorce letter which threw her into depression, anxiety, and stress. On discharge from the hospital, Fatima returned to her uncle's place where she stayed for years before being married to another Fulani man whom she had a daughter. The man passed away.

In her words: "At age 19 my entire life changed totally and I was psychologically disturbed. I started a new life in my uncle's house where I was isolated from everybody. I was given a separate room where no one would come to check on me. I cried bitterly every day and begged Allah to take my life".

Things took a new turn when information from the radio reached Fatima that there would be a free fistula repair campaign in one of the fistula repair centers organized by Fistula Foundation Nigeria. She was taken to the centre with the help of her uncle and an examination reviewed that she had a complex fistula that requires surgeries in stages.

Having lived with fistula for 15 years of her life, Fatima went through four stages of fistula repairs from which she had the last one earlier this year by Fistula foundation with support from the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative.

Fatima is now happily married, stands as a fistula advocate in her community and has been empowered through Ministry of Women and Children Affairs with various skills such as sewing, shoe making, and how to rear animals with support from EU-UN Spotlight initiative which has improved her livelihoods and mental health. Fatima now generates income from the empowerment program and is living a stable and fulfilled life with her family.

Amina - 1 Story

Amina is a 17-year-old young woman from Sokoto North Local Government Area in Sokoto state Nigeria. She is a primary school dropout and a survivor of Gender Based Violence [rape] her story is quite pathetic because of the trauma and stigmatization she experienced. She was raised in a poor home and due to poverty, her parents could not support her primary education. She managed to go through primary one to five and finally dropped out of school when she couldn't register to write her common entrance examination. Amina missed out on her adolescent stage development without comprehensive knowledge of her sexual reproductive health and dropping out of school made her very vulnerable to perpetrators in her community. She was raped by a male member of the community where she lived, for over four years Amina couldn't share her story, speak-out or report her case to government authority or try to seek justice, she has lived in fear, trauma, and stigmatization she feels depression, powerless and shy but she never gave up. Amina believed she will receive another opportunity for education.

During the community sensitization and enrollment of learners, Amina heard about the second chance education program and indicated her interest she was further screened and enrolled by her facilitator, the facilitator noticed her because of her depressive look, shyness, lack of interest in school interaction with others, she further engaged her, assessed her mental health and wellness. Amina opened up and shared her story with her facilitator, psychosocial support and counseling therapy were provided for her, and she was encouraged to take a new leaf and move on since her perpetrators can no longer be located.

Amina is now taking her six months basic literacy course under the Accelerated Second Chance Education Program implemented by EU-UN Spotlight Initiative [Grassroots Entrepreneurship Skills Acquisition [GESA] Initiative] in Sokoto State where she is training to read and write well, improve her social interactions, assertiveness and self-esteem through life skills teaching and health education to enable her to understand her sexual reproductive health and rights.[SRHR].

Today Amina believes she can further her education after the six months program, learn a trade skill, and also become a female champion and change-maker in her community.

In her words: "Ina ma Allah godiya da kuma kungiyar ku ta fistula foundation da EU-UN Spotlight Initiative da gudunmawa da suka bani har nakai wanga matsayi. Lalai ga da na zabi mutuwa, ama yanzu nafison in rayu. Nagode, kuma Allah ya saka da alheri".



Amina-2 Story

Amina was raped by a man who disappeared without a trace while trying to cope and recover from the trauma she was married off at the age of 12 to another man who was already married with a wife and children. After 3 years of marriage, her husband was influenced by his first wife to maltreat and eventually divorced her. She had been with her parents for over six months without and care from the abused husband. He had asked her to return to his home with the promise of turning a new leaf. Due to fears on a resourced abused she refused to return.

Amina was then referred to the EU-UN Spotlight initiative partner, Save The Child Initiative (STCI) through the community surveillance team by her aunty where she was registered on the CPIMS for Case management services and enrolled into the EU-UN Spotlight initiative survivor's forum that provides a platform for healing through expression activities such as expressive therapy and other mental health and psychosocial support services. She was referred to the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs for Social support where she received a grinding machine. Amina has returned to school and has been empowered to be resilient and fend for her daily living.

Farida's Story

Farida is an adolescent girl who was raped and got pregnant. After the rape incident, Farida's parents tried to hide the case without knowing she was pregnant.

After Several months, the pregnancy was discovered, and unfortunately for her, she was thrown out of the house by her parents.

She was admitted to the maternity waiting home, until after she was delivered of the child and was connected with the Community surveillance/response team before getting discharged.

In Farida's words: "Aunty na gode kwairai da taimakon da na samu dagareki ta hanyar EU-UN Spotlight Initiative project. Allah ya saka muku da Alheri".

Recommendations



- Facilitate planning and budgeting engagement for state ownership of Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC).
- There is a need for diligent monitoring the implementation of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act (VAPP) in the state as a basis for further and necessary engagements.
- Program development on participation of citizens and groups in the enforcement of the provisions of the VAPP law is desirable. This could include capacity building for diverse citizens groups, medical/health professionals, law enforcement agents among others in litigation.
- Provision of office equipment for LGA Surveillance Teams to enhance proper documentation of all cases and activities.
- Inclusion of parents/caregivers of survivors in counseling and trainings on VAWG/C.
- Extended timeline to consolidate the gains of the Spotlight Project in the LGAs implemented as well as expansion to other LGAs.
- Expand the awareness-raising efforts on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) to cover the recently incorporated Spotlight focus Local Government Areas (LGAs).
- Plan and facilitate town hall meetings in the four LGAs where Spotlight initiative has been implemented, providing a platform for information exchange and feedback on GBV concerns.
- Host a symposium aimed at educating and involving stakeholders, including newly appointed political office holders, on the importance of GBV financing and related matters, promoting sustainability and ownership of initiatives to combat GBV.
- There is a need for the government to continuously assess the SI program's impact and adapt to changing needs and circumstances, as well as identify and support local champions that can advocate for the sustainability of Safe Space programs within the state.
- Strengthen the use of indigenous organization to implement project
- An ecological model is required in addressing gender based issues among in-school young people. As students are being reached in schools, parents need to be reached in the community; policy makers reached to provide policies and systems that provide enabling environment; teachers trained to provide information and enforce the policies in schools; while health facilities must be equipped to be youth friendly to take referral from schools.
- Proper coordination mechanism must be established among different implementers of the project to leverage on the strength of one another, for effective collaborations among stakeholders.
- The need to strengthen and implement digital literacy programs as an additional component to the Second Chance Education Program for survivors and persons with disabilities.
- Produce Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials in local languages.
- Addressing gaps in educational access and access to GBV services for women and girls with special needs by providing disability friendly tools, resources, safe learning environment and supportive aid equipment for the blind, deaf and physical and intellectual disabilities.

- Increasing GBV service points across hard-to-reach communities
- There is a need for more capacity building interventions for GBV actors.
- The GBV situation room to be equipped to standard.
- Data validation meeting and Data Quality Assessment should be held more regularly
- Collaboration through Referrals: Establishing strong referral networks among civil society organisations and support centres ensures comprehensive assistance for survivors. Referrals facilitate access to various services, including medical care, counselling, and legal support.
- Media Advocacy: Leveraging media platforms and technology, such as radio and social media, increases outreach to remote areas. Disseminating information through these channels ensures broader awareness and encourages conversations around gender-based violence and harmful practices.
- Document Best Practices: Collect and document success stories, challenges, and innovative approaches from different communities. These insights can guide future initiatives and contribute to evidence-based strategies. Empowering the communities on skills or cottage industries will also assist in Best Practices in Documentation.



Spotlight Initiative

To eliminate violence against women and girls

List of Acronyms

CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CRAC	Community Response Action Committees
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
FCTSGBVRT	FCT Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Response Team
FRED	Foundation for Resilient Empowerment and Development
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HP	Harmful Practices
IMPACT	Implementing Partner Assistance Concept
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
SKM-NTWG	Strategic Knowledge Management - National Technical Working Group
VAC	Violence Against Children
VAPP	Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAWG	Violence against Women and Girls



Spotlight Initiative