

FACT SHEET

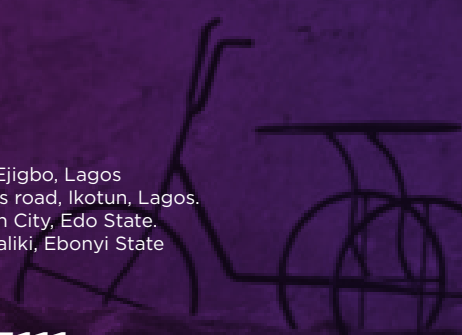
AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH DISABILITIES AGAINST SEXUAL & GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



Women's Rights
And Health Project
(WRAHP)







AFRICAN
WOMEN'S
DEVELOPMENT
FUND



Lagos Address: The Pent House, 196 Egbe-Ikotun Road, Ejigbo, Lagos
Ireti Resource Centre: Idowu Anisere bus stop, Governor's road, Ikotun, Lagos.
Edo Office: 9 Oyiade street, off Benoni street, GRA, Benin City, Edo State.
Ebonyi Office: 120 Ogbaga road, Stadium junction, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State
E-mail: whr.project@yahoo.com
Website: <http://wrahp.com/>

07011948577, 07003333111

 @wrahpnigeria  wrahpnigeria  Wrahp Nigeria  Wrahp Nigeria

Introduction

More than 1 billion people globally – about 15% of the world's population – are estimated to have a disability, and most of them live in developing countries. This number is expected to increase in the future due to a range of factors, including aging, war and conflict, natural disasters, and forced displacement.

Disability is more prevalent among women than men. The World Report on Disability estimates that, globally, 19% of women have a disability compared to 12% of men. The number of children with disabilities is estimated to range between 93 million and 150 million. However, unreliable data collection means that these numbers may not give a real representation of the number of persons with disabilities worldwide.

Women and Girls with Disabilities represent one of the most marginalized and vulnerable groups in Nigeria. In spite of the increased awareness about rights of women, laws protecting women and girls from violence and several interventions to tackle cases of gender-based violence affecting women and girls with disabilities, these initiatives have not translated to positive and genuine impact experienced by women with disabilities, who still face marginalization due to their gender and their disability condition.

Realities of Women and Girls with Disabilities in Nigeria

- Lack of disaggregated data by age, gender, disability, ethnicity, and other status hinder the calculation of adequate statistics on the number of girls with disabilities relative to boys. This contributes to the invisibility of children, especially girls, with disabilities.
- There is a persistent tendency among women and girls with disabilities to pity their abusers. As a result, many of these survivors remain in abusive environment.
- Women and Girls with Disabilities are still ill-treated and stigmatized by their spouses, relatives and families.
- Women and girls with disabilities experience multiple forms of violence, including psychological and emotional violence, neglect, financial abuse or exploitation, and physical or sexual abuse. This violence could include ignoring nutritional or medical needs, or inappropriate handling by caregivers, family members and spouses. It could also take the form of being denied access and control over financial resources.

BARRIERS AFFECTING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

- Stigmatization of women and girls who are survivors of gender-based violence by their families and the society.
- Poverty, which limits most women and girls with disabilities who have suffered violence from accessing justice. Majority of them sometimes do not have transportation cost and resources to follow up on cases till justice is obtained.
- The lackadaisical attitude of families of women and girls with disabilities who are survivors of gender-based violence also constitutes a major barrier. Most of their families still suffer from fear and therefore are not willing to provide consent for the cases to be filed to court.
- Prolonged and bureaucratic legal processes that result in delay of prosecution of perpetrators.
- Difficulty in accessing relevant offices for SGBV response for women and girls with disabilities especially those with mobility impairment.
- Limited number and sometimes complete absence of signers in many SGBV service providing organizations and government agencies.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGE

As WRAHP's modest effort to address this challenge we have been implementing a project supported by the African Women Development. This is aimed at amplifying the voices of women and girls in Lagos and Edo States in advocating for their rights to be free from violence as enshrined in the VAPP Act and other existing laws; improving access to justice and violence against women and girls' response services among women and girls with disabilities; and improving the implementation of laws on violence against women and girls within the justice sector.

Specifically, this involves:

- Training of women and girls in laws on violence against women and pathways for accessing justice.
- Peer-Led knowledge transfer sessions
- Distribution of sample laws, policy briefs and fact sheets
- Consultative meetings with duty bearers, the media and representatives of women and girls with disabilities.
- Provision of psycho social support for survivors of violence against women and girls

Some key accomplishments so far include:

Provision of Psycho social support services for Survivors

Provision of Case Management Services to 12 persons with Disabilities (10 females, 2 males). Out of these cases, nine persons were provided with psychosocial support while three were referred. Among these cases 25% (3) were emotional abuse cases, 16.7%(2) were neglect, physical abuse and empowerment needs, while 8.3%(1) were on rape and finances. Counseling support was also provided for a 34-year-old female with disability reported to have been emotionally abused by her neighbours due to her physical impairment condition.

Arrest support provided for a 38-year-old female Speech impaired survivor who reported a case of physical abuse and neglect. The survivor, a mother of three children was also provided with psychosocial support and taken to a safe place with her children while the perpetrator was arrested

Training of Women and Girls SGBV Advocates/Ambassadors

79 peer educators (women and girls with Disabilities) in Ebonyi and Lagos States trained on how to participate in decision making processes at all levels (in private, public and political spaces

Peer-Led Knowledge Transfer Sessions

Sensitized 1158 women and girls with disabilities via 13 peer- led knowledge transfer sessions at disability clusters in Lagos and Ebonyi States to be aware of and exercise their rights against SGBV and all forms of rights violations.

Advocacy and Engagement of Key influencers

44 key influencers and stake holders in Lagos and Ebonyi state made public declarations/statements to identify with the needs of women and girls with Disabilities and promote their access to justice if they experience abuses and rights violations.

Consultative meetings and engagement of duty bearers, the media and representatives of women and girls with disabilities

Engaged 62 duty bearers, the media and representatives of women and girls with disabilities in Lagos and Ebonyi States on how to effectively amplify the voices of women and girls with Disabilities against SGBV. These comprised representatives from; (government Ministries and Agencies, international development partners, civil society organizations and networks including persons living with disabilities, Security/Law Enforcement Agencies including Nigeria Police Force, the media, health care providers etc.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS GOING FORWARD

- Training of more women and girls with disabilities as SGBV advocates/ambassadors
- More Peer led knowledge transfer sessions at the clusters led by trained advocates from the clusters
- Increased Funding support for SGBV intervention programs targeted at women and girls with disabilities (WGDs).
- Massive public awareness using multiple channels including social media.
- Engagement of Community and Religious Leaders.
- Ensuring better coordination of SGBV programs at the Local Government levels.
- Massive production and distribution of IEC materials (banners, posters, handbills etc)
- Increased funding for the Nigeria Police and other Law Enforcement Agencies to promote better response.
- Increased synergy and collaboration between the Nigeria Police and other government Ministries and Agencies including civil society actors
- Media Awards for best performing SGBV reporters as a strategy to increase sustained media reporting.
- Following up SGBV reported cases to logical conclusion e.g., conviction and not leaving it mid-way, or just stopping at the level of court filing
- Provision of Signers in SGBV responses of service providers including the Nigeria Police and other law enforcement agencies
- Domestication of the National Disability Act in States where this has not been done and establishment of Disability Commission for women and girls with disabilities. This will help to address their health and development issues including SGBV
- Intensify efforts to criminalize/punish undue interference on SGBV cases by family members and sometimes even the community at large

- Enforcing measures to reduce or stop completely demands for finances by law enforcement agents and other justice sectors from survivors when cases of SGBV are being reported.
- Converting VAPP Law and other existing VAWG laws into sign language, audio, and audio-visual clips and films

REFERENCES

World Health Organization and the World Bank Group. 2011. World Report on Disability.

Devandas Aguilar, C. 2017. Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights of Young Women and Girls with Disabilities. UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities. Presented at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly.

International Network of Women with Disabilities. 2010. Document on Violence Against Women with Disabilities – Discussion.

Ozemela, L., Ortiz, D., and Urban, A-M. 2019. Violence Against Women and Girls with Disabilities, Latin America and the Caribbean. Policy Brief N IDB-PB-302. Gender and Diversity Division, Inter-American Development Bank.

African Child Policy Forum. 2011. Violence Against Children with Disabilities in Africa: Field Studies from Cameroon, Ethiopia, Senegal, Uganda, and Zambia.

Andrae, K. 2017. Disability and Gender-based Violence – Peer Research in Kibaha and Mkuranga, Tanzania. Action on Disability and Development International.

About WRAHP

Women's Rights and Health Project (WRAHP), managers of Ireti Resource Centre is an innovative, nongovernmental, not for profit organization that promotes the health and general development of women, young people and communities using the rights-based approach. Currently, WRAHP has physical offices in Lagos, Edo & Ebonyi States.

Vision

A just society where the dignity of women, young people and communities is respected and they enjoy sound health and maximize their potentials.

Mission

To use a rights-based approach to improve women, young people and community health and development by equipping, mobilizing and actively engaging community members as agents of social change through information sharing, capacity building and advocacy.

NOTES

[illegible]

NOTES

[illegible]