

Canada

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Women's Voice and leadership WVL-Nigeria Project



IMPACTING LIVES
IN BAUCHI 2019 - 2024

5 Years WVL NIGERIA PROJECT
RE-WRITING SheStories



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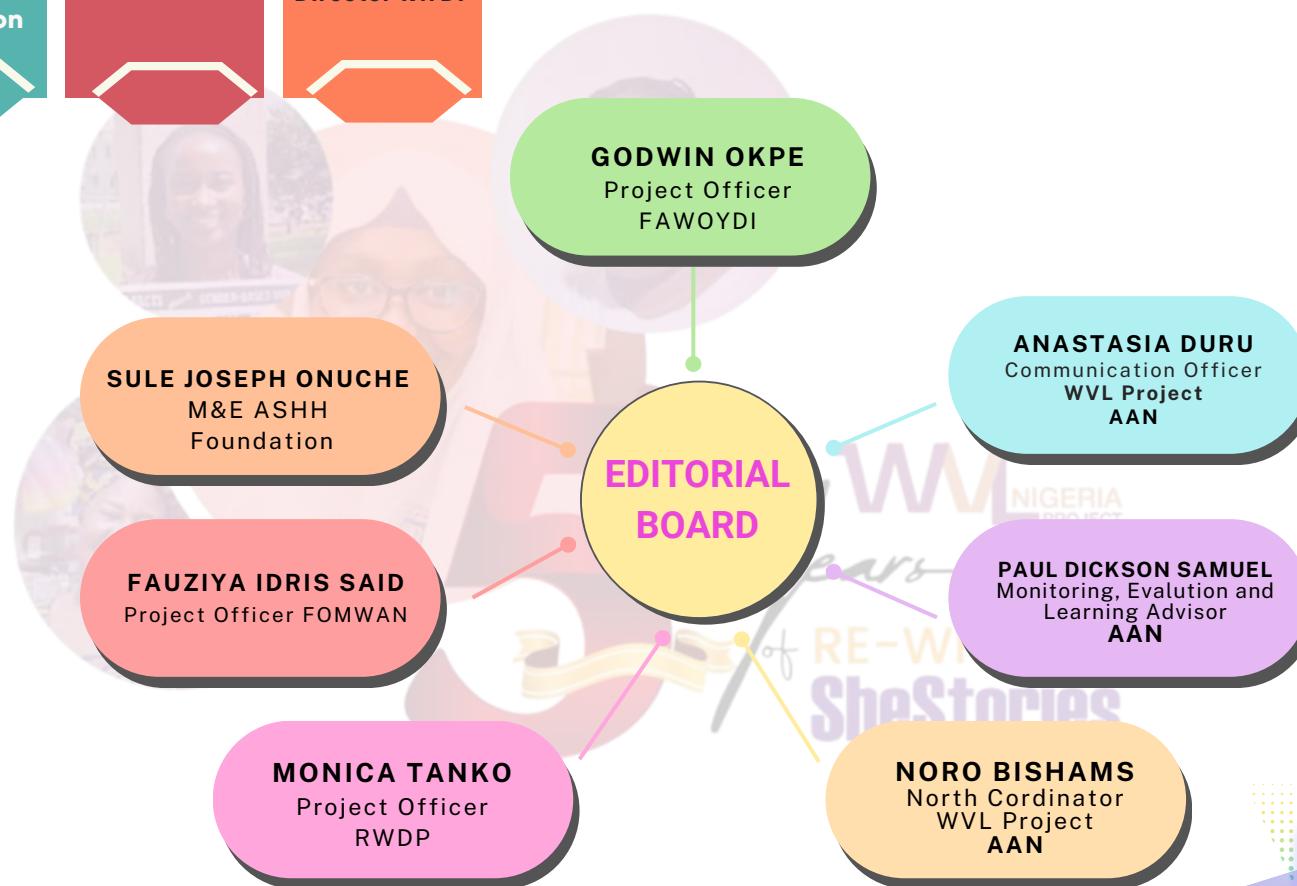


ACRONYMS

ActionAid Nigeria (AAN)
Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)
Fahimta Women and YOUTH Development Initiative (FAWOYDI)
Global Affairs Canada (CAC)
Women's Rights Organizations (WROs)
Attah Sisters Helping Hand Foundation (ASHH Foundation)
Federation of Muslims Women Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN)
Rahama Women Development Programme (RWDP)
Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law (VAPP Law)
Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA)
Women sales Agents (WOSA)
Aid connect for Development (AIDCODE)
Women Wing of Christian Association of Nigeria (WOWICAN)
Child Is Gold Foundation (CIGF)
Syndicate in Supporting Women and Children Initiative (SISWACHI)
Nigeria Women Right and Empowerment Network (NIWOREN)
Small Scale Women Farmers Organization in Nigerian (SWOFON)
Reproductive Health Initiative and Support Association (RHISA)
Karofi Hazaka Ethnic and Values Multipurpose cooperative society (KHEV-MS)
Khairi Women and Youth Upliftment for Development (KWAYUDA)
Awalah Women of Wisdom Farming Cooperative Society (ABWW-FCS)
Women Empowerment Initiative (WEIN)



EDITORIAL BOARD





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Women Voice and Leadership Nigeria (WVL-N) project, funded by Global Affairs Canada and managed by ActionAid Nigeria, has made significant strides in advancing women's rights and gender equality in Bauchi State over the past five years (2019-2024). Through collaboration with Local Women's Rights Organizations (LWROs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), the project has addressed critical issues such as Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), women's political participation, economic empowerment, and protection of women and girls from violence.

The project has achieved numerous milestones, including the delivery of comprehensive legal and psychosocial support services to 1,200 survivors of gender-based violence, awareness campaigns reaching 585,203 individuals, and the enactment of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Law by the Bauchi State government in 2020. Additionally, the project has facilitated economic empowerment through training and materials for farming activities, income-generating skills, and village saving groups, benefiting over 10,000 women.

In the realm of political participation and leadership, the project has contributed to the appointment of female commissioners, chairpersons, and judges, as well as the integration of women into traditional councils and vigilante groups. The project has also supported girls' education through the construction of classrooms and advocacy efforts.



BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Bauchi State faces significant challenges in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. Women are often considered subordinate to men, limiting their participation in politics, education, and other sectors. Deep-rooted socio-cultural norms perpetuate unequal power dynamics, leading to widespread gender-based violence (GBV). Domestic violence is frequently viewed as a private matter, discouraging reporting and intervention, and fostering a culture of impunity. GBV survivors often lack access to necessary support services, with attention focused more on punishing perpetrators than aiding survivors. Economic empowerment for women is also hindered by limited funding, cultural and religious barriers, and a lack of resources. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these vulnerabilities.

In response, the state's Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Development launched the "Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Strategy" in 2019. The WVL-N Project, also launched in 2019, aims to address these issues. Despite these efforts, significant work remains to overcome the socio-cultural barriers and support women's empowerment in Bauchi State.

Political context in Bauchi State:

In Bauchi State, the exclusion of women from political and leadership roles remains a pressing concern. Despite some progress, women continue to face significant barriers to participation and representation, resulting in severe underrepresentation in elected and appointed positions. The 2019 general elections in Bauchi State highlighted this marginalization, with women holding a mere percentage of elected offices and facing obstacles in decision-making processes.

The implementation of the 35% Affirmative Action policy, which aims to increase women's political participation, remains a contentious issue, with local women's rights organizations advocating tirelessly for greater representation and leadership opportunities for women. In a positive development, the Women Right organizations in Bauchi, hosted a dialogue on promoting women's participation in governance, bringing together stakeholders to address this critical issue.

Furthermore, the Emir of Bauchi has demonstrated his commitment to gender equality by expressing concern about domestic violence and sexual harassment, and supporting efforts to create safe spaces for women and girls. In a significant step forward, Bauchi State has implemented the Violence against Persons Prohibition Act, aimed at preventing violence against women and girls. Despite these efforts, much work remains to be done to address the deeply ingrained gender disparities in political and leadership roles in Bauchi State.



Economic Context in Bauchi State

In Bauchi State, women's economic empowerment is profoundly influenced by a complex interplay of socio-cultural, economic, and political dynamics. Traditional gender roles confine women primarily to household duties, restricting their access to education and economic opportunities. Cultural practices like early marriage and female genital mutilation further limit women's autonomy and hinder their participation in the economy. Discrimination and stereotypes exacerbate these challenges, impeding women's access to resources and decision-making roles.

Economically, the rate of poverty in Bauchi has a significant effect on women. Many women lack financial resources and access to credit, relegating them to precarious positions in low-paying informal sectors such as agriculture and small-scale trade. Moreover, inadequate transportation infrastructure and limited market access constrain their ability to expand economic activities and achieve financial independence.

There are opportunities for improvement through enhanced access to education, vocational training, and financial services tailored specifically to women's needs. Initiatives driven by communities and NGOs are pivotal in advocating for women's rights, providing crucial support through training, mentorship, and grassroots advocacy efforts. However, deep-seated cultural beliefs, infrastructure inefficiencies, and the



challenges of conflict and insecurity in north eastern Nigeria remain formidable barriers to achieving sustained progress in women's economic empowerment. Bauchi State has avenues for advancing women's economic empowerment through education, policy reforms, and community engagement, addressing persistent challenges rooted in socio-cultural norms, economic disparities, and governance requires comprehensive and multifaceted strategies. Efforts must focus on dismantling barriers, fostering inclusive economic growth, and empowering women to participate fully in the socio-economic development of Bauchi State and beyond.



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Between 2019 and 2024, Bauchi State, Nigeria, has faced significant challenges and made some progress in addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). Deep-rooted cultural and religious beliefs have historically perpetuated gender inequalities and justified violence against women. Despite the domestication of Nigeria's Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act (VAPP) in 2020, enforcement remains weak due to lack of resources, training, and corruption.

Increased awareness and advocacy campaigns, especially in urban areas, have led to a 30% rise in reported SGBV cases. Community-based interventions, including safe spaces for women and girls, have provided essential support, though change is slow. Persistent poverty, stigma, and fear of retribution continue to be significant barriers to reporting and addressing SGBV.

The Women's Voice and Leadership-Nigeria (WVL-N) project has been instrumental in addressing SGBV issues in Bauchi State. By empowering local women's organizations and enhancing their capacity to advocate for women's rights, the WVL-N project has played a crucial role in raising awareness and supporting SGBV survivors. These efforts have contributed to a gradual shift in attitudes towards SGBV, although deep-seated cultural beliefs still pose challenges.

IMPACT OF COVID -19

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted development work in Bauchi State, with several challenges arising. Restrictions on face-to-face meetings hindered participatory research and development efforts. Engaging women became difficult due to a lack of access to handsets and internet connectivity, causing delays in holding meetings. Additionally, some participants forgot meetings or failed to charge their devices, further complicating efforts.

Despite these setbacks, the state government took proactive measures to address these issues. They established the COVID-19 Action Recovery and Economic Stimulus (Bauchi NG-CARES) program to stimulate economic recovery and provide livelihood support. The government also committed to implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (UNSDPF) 2018-2022 Work Plan and inaugurated a sensitization committee to mobilize participation in the COVID-19 vaccination exercise.

Women-led organizations in Bauchi State also played a crucial role in supporting these efforts. They distributed relief materials, such as food and personal protective equipment, to vulnerable communities and raised awareness about COVID-19 prevention and safety protocols, particularly in rural areas. These initiatives complemented the government's response to the pandemic and supported the most affected populations as a result of support from ActionAid Nigeria funded by Global Affairs Canada.



ABOUT THE WOMEN'S VOICE & LEADERSHIP-NIGERIA PROJECT

The Women's Voice and Leadership Project is a five-year Global Affairs Canada development assistance with the goal to support the capacity and activities of local and regional women's organizations and movements seeking to empower women and girls, advance the protection of women's and girls' rights and achieve gender equality. Nigeria is one of the 30 recipient countries, and it is being managed by ActionAid.

Through this project ActionAid Nigeria has re-defined the narratives of Donor funding by establishing partnership with 153 women's rights organizations that have the privilege of accessing funds which allows them the flexibility of implementing their respective core mandates as women-focused organizations.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

If Local Women's Rights Organizations (LWROs), Networks and Movements have technical and institutional expertise, assuming they have the courage of conviction for transformative gender equality work and relevant stakeholders are committed with enabling environment for the advancement of gender equality in Nigeria, then they will deliver interventions that influence programs, policies and legislations, change negative social beliefs relating to women and girls' rights; thus contributing to enjoyment of human rights of girls and women in Nigeria

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Work to protect women and girls from violence, create opportunities for economic independency, and enhance decision making capabilities.



ABOUT THE WOMEN'S VOICE & LEADERSHIP-NIGERIA PROJECT

EXPECTED RESULTS ULTIMATE OUTCOME

Increased enjoyment of human rights by women and girls and the advancement of gender equality in Nigeria.

Intermediate Outcome 1

Improved management and sustainability of local women's rights organizations in Nigeria

Intermediate Outcome 2

Enhanced delivery of programming and advocacy to advance gender equality by local women's rights organizations in Nigeria

Intermediate Outcome 3

Increased effectiveness of sub-national, national, and regional women's rights platforms, networks and alliances to affect policy, legal and social change in Nigeria

ActionAid Nigeria's Women's Rights Unit is dedicated to empowering women and girls to claim their rights and challenge gender inequality. Through this project, they provide a comprehensive approach to address violence, economic disempowerment, and exclusion from decision-making processes. The project offers multi-faceted support, including funding, capacity building, and mentorship, to strengthen the organizational capacities of women's rights organizations and community-based groups. This enables them to effectively advocate for women's and girls' rights and address the root causes of gender inequality. In Bauchi State, 4 LWROs and 12 Community-Based Organizations implemented this comprehensive approach across 20 local government areas, by working together, they aim to create a society where women and girls are valued, respected, and empowered to fully participate in all aspects of life.

UNIQUENESS OF THE PROJECT

This project is unique because it has different funding opportunities and capacity building for both personnel and organization focusing on women led organizations.

MULTI-LAYERS
FUNDING

CAPACITY
BUILDING FOR
INSTITUTIONAL
STRENGTHENING

MENTORSHIP
SUPPORT

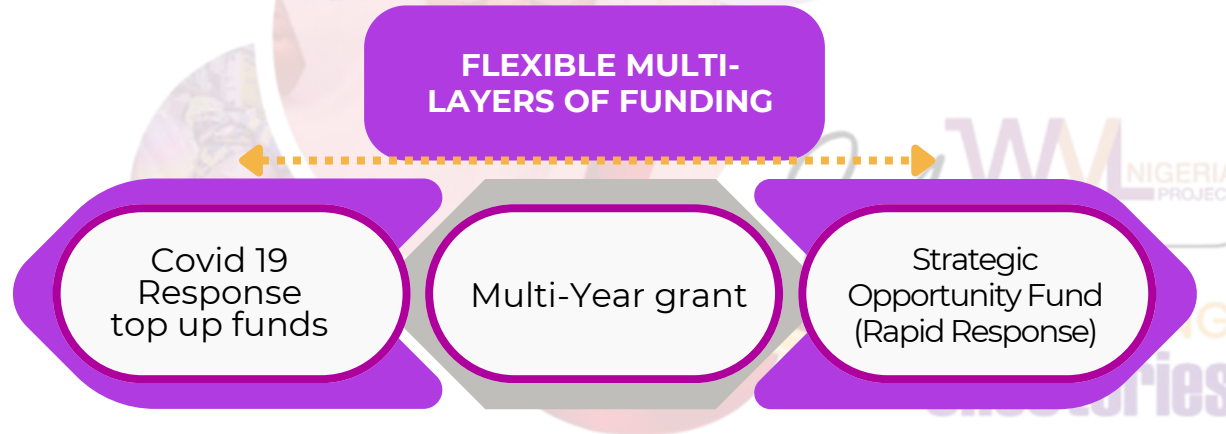
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SCOPE AND DURATION

The project was a five-year intervention spanning from 2019 to 2024, targeting communities across all 20 Local Government Areas of Bauchi State. This comprehensive initiative aimed to address various socio-economic challenges faced by women, promote gender equality, and combat gender-based violence. By engaging local communities and leveraging the efforts of women-led organizations, the project sought to empower women, enhance their participation in political and economic activities, and improve access to essential services. The intervention also focused on providing support and resources to GBV survivors, ensuring a holistic approach to women's empowerment and community development throughout Bauchi State.

MULTIPLE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES ACCESSED BY BAUCHI STATE PARTNERS ON WVL PROJECT



**Financial Investment made
via Granting (2019-2024)**

N357, 633,398.44

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS IN BAUCHI STATE AND GEOGRAPHIC LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS

There are 16 implementing partners in Bauchi State, comprising 3 Local Women Right Organizations 1 network and 12 Community Based Organizations has demonstrated great capacity to implement women rights and empowerment.

Rahama Women Development Programme (RWDP)

Fahimta Women and Youth Development Initiative (FAWOYDI)

The Local Women Right Organizations are:

Attah Sisters Helping Hand Foundation (ASHH Foundation)

Federation of Muslims Women Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN) network

The Community Based Organization includes:

1

Aid connect for Development (**AIDCODE**)

4

Syndicate in Supporting Women and Children Initiative (**SISWACHI**)

7

Reproductive Health Initiative and Support Association (**RHISA**)

2

Women Wing of Christian Association of Nigeria (**WOWICAN**)

5

Nigeria Women Right and Empowerment Network (**NIWOREN**)

8

Karofi Hazaka Ethnic and Values Multipurpose cooperative society (**KHEV-MSc**)

3

Child Is Gold Foundation (**CIGF**)

6

Small Scale Women Farmers Organization in Nigerian (**SWOFON**)

9

Khairi Women and Youth Upliftment for Development (**KWAYUDA**)

10

Awalah Women of Wisdom Farming Cooperative Society (**ABWW-FCS**)

11

Women Empowerment Initiative (**WEIN**)

12

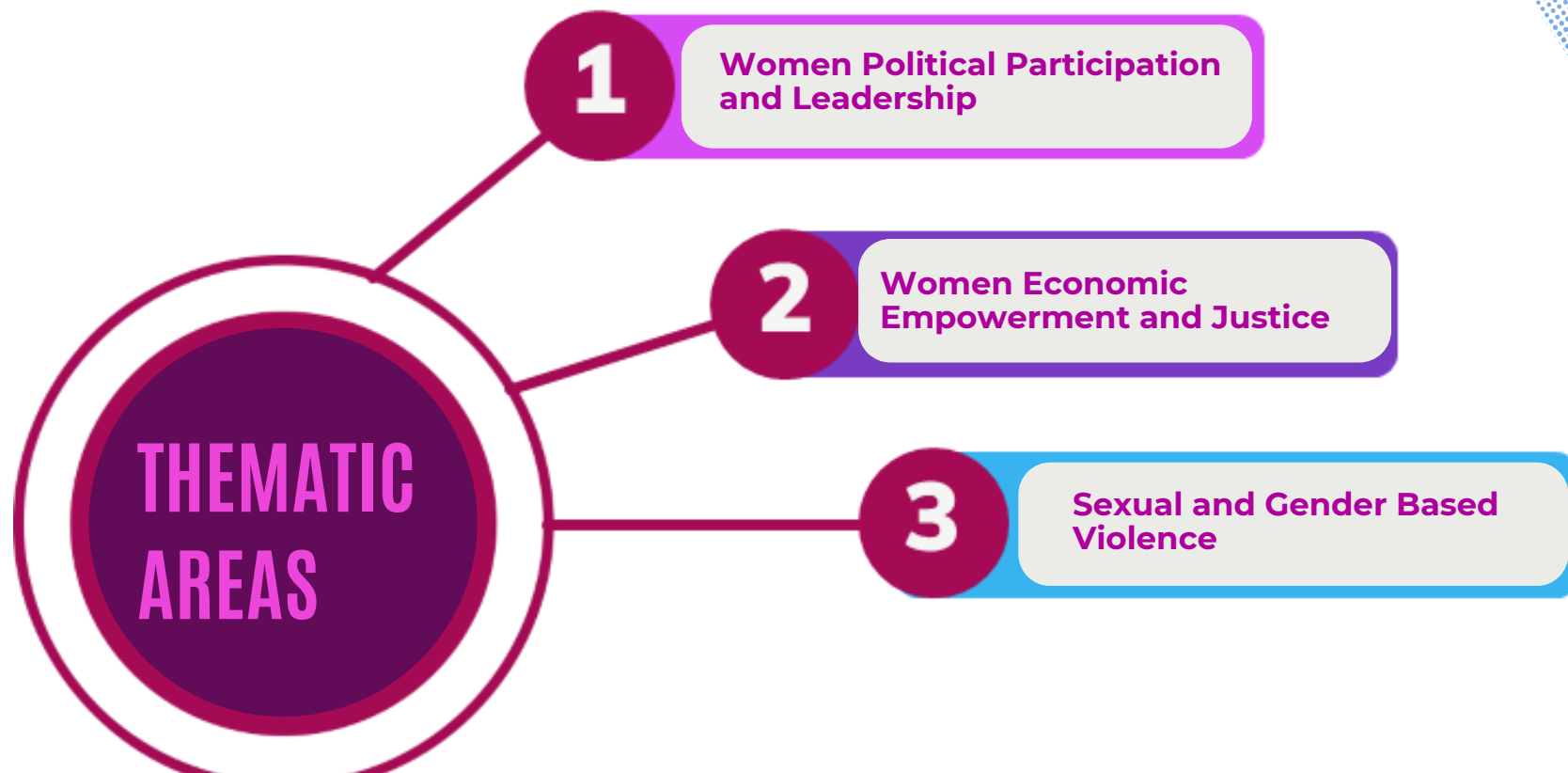
SABEERASH Foundation



PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- **Community mobilization and sensitization**
- **Advocacy**
- **Awareness campaign**
- **Formation of structures**
- **Dialogue meeting**
- **Capacity building/Trainings**
- **Media campaign**
- **Financial literacy**
- **Legal Aid Support**
- **Sub-Granting of CBOs**
- **Mentoring and monitoring**
- **Psychosocial Support**

PROJECT THEMATIC AREAS IMPLIMENTED IN BAUCHI STATE



KEY ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

- **Community Mobilization and Sensitization:** Extensive community sensitization and mobilization activities were conducted to raise awareness about gender-based violence and the vital importance of women's participation in politics and decision-making spaces. These efforts aimed to educate and engage community members in the fight against gender inequality, promoting a culture of inclusivity and empowerment. Through these activities, community members were encouraged to challenge harmful gender stereotypes and support women's leadership and participation in public life, ultimately contributing to a more just and equitable society
- **Advocacy Visits:** Targeted advocacy visits were held with key community leaders and stakeholders, including Bauchi State House of Assembly, Local Government Chairmen, Commissioner of Women Affairs and Child Development, Commissioner of Chieftaincy Matters, Traditional Rulers. These meetings facilitated dialogue and collaboration to advance women's rights and gender equality at various levels of governance.

Town Hall Meetings: Town hall meetings and dialogues focused on addressing gender-based violence (SGBV) and women's participation in decision-making were organized.

These events brought together community members, political stakeholders, media personnel, and political party leaders to discuss and promote women's rights, encourage community-led initiatives to address gender inequality, and foster inclusivity and accountability in governance. Survivors shared their stories, experts provided intervention strategies, and the community explored ways to support victims and prevent violence. These efforts helped build strategic partnerships, mobilize support, and advance gender equality and women's rights.





KEY ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

Media Campaign A media campaign was conducted by the 4 LWROs and 12 CBOs to raise awareness about political participation, women's empowerment, gender equality, and women's rights. The goal was to reach a wider audience, promote behavioral change, and showcase the impact of the WVL-N project in Bauchi State.



Financial Literacy: In Bauchi State, financial literacy training was provided to women at the community and grassroots levels to enhance their economic status through income-generating activities. This initiative aimed to equip women with the necessary financial skills and knowledge to effectively manage their finances, start small businesses, and make informed economic decisions. The training covered budgeting, saving, investment strategies, and accessing microcredit facilities. By empowering women with these skills, the initiative sought to improve their living conditions and contribute to the overall economic development of their communities. Local women's groups, community-based organizations (CBOs), and leaders played a crucial role in mobilizing participants and facilitating the training sessions. The program also aimed to foster a supportive network among women, encouraging peer-to-peer learning and collaboration. As women became more financially independent and entrepreneurial, the positive ripple effects were expected to benefit their families and the broader community, promoting economic resilience and reducing poverty levels at the grassroots level in Bauchi State.



KEY ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

Legal Aid Support: Legal aid support was extended to survivors of gender-based violence, aiming to provide crucial assistance and representation throughout legal proceedings. This initiative was particularly crucial for individuals who lacked the financial resources to access justice independently. By offering legal aid, the program ensured that survivors received the necessary guidance to navigate legal complexities, understand their rights, and seek redress for the harm they endured. Legal professionals provided personalized support, advocating for the rights of survivors and working to secure fair outcomes in court. Beyond immediate legal representation, the initiative aimed to empower survivors by fostering a sense of empowerment and resilience in their journey towards justice and recovery. By bridging the gap in access to legal resources, the program contributed to broader efforts in promoting human rights and combating gender-based violence within the community.

Psychosocial Support: Psychosocial support and first aid services were extended to 206 survivors of gender-based violence, addressing their immediate needs and offering sustained assistance throughout their recovery journey. This comprehensive initiative included psychological counseling to help survivors cope with trauma, emotional support to rebuild their confidence, and practical assistance in accessing essential services. Beyond immediate crisis intervention, the program focused on empowering survivors by equipping them with skills and resources for long-term resilience and recovery.

By fostering a supportive environment and providing personalized care, the initiative aimed to restore survivors' sense of agency and dignity. This holistic approach not only aimed to heal individual trauma but also contributed to broader efforts in combating gender-based violence and promoting the well-being of survivors within their communities.





KEY ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

Capacity building/Trainings-Capacity building programs were conducted to enhance the skills and knowledge of women, girls, and community members, empowering them to become agents of change and advocate for gender equality. These programs included: Training workshops: On gender equality, women's rights, and leadership, skill-building sessions on financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and business management, community engagement by encouraging men and boys to support gender equality, advocacy training Empowering women and girls to speak out against gender-based violence

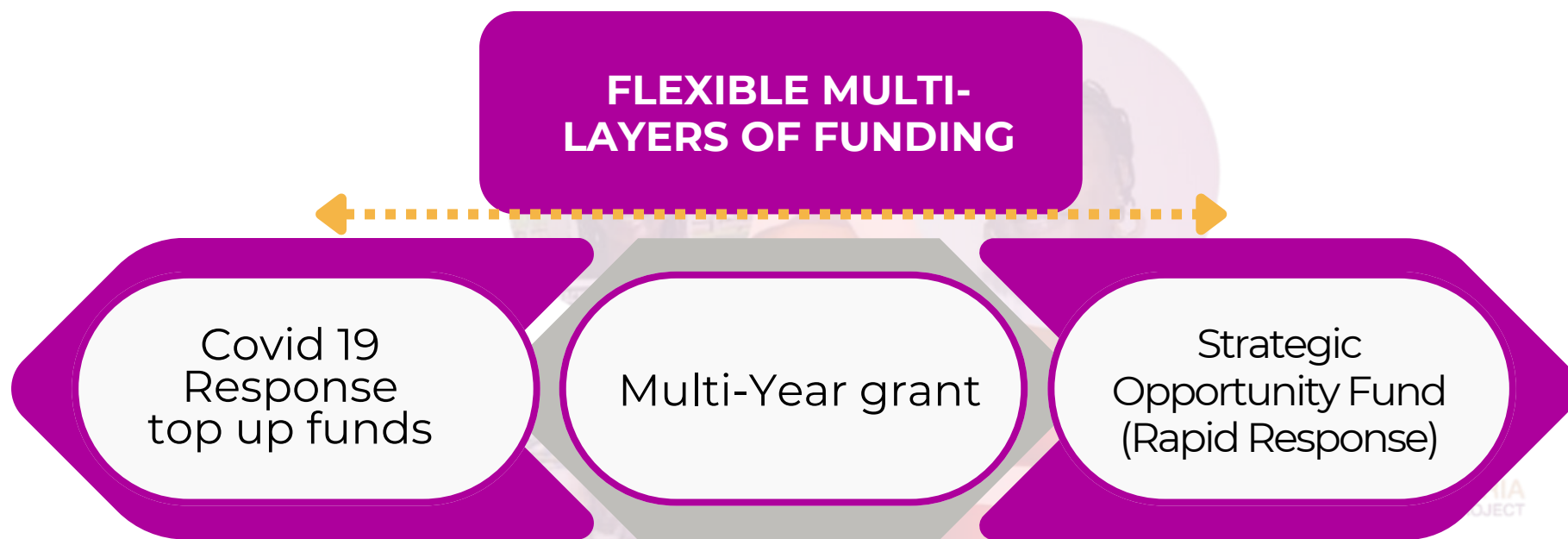
Mentorship Programs: Practical advice and guidance to women and young girls in Bauchi State's communities, aiming to empower them both personally and professionally. These programs paired experienced mentors with mentees to provide support, share expertise, and offer encouragement in various aspects of life, including education, career development, entrepreneurship, and leadership. At the grassroots level, these mentorship initiatives played a crucial role in nurturing skills, boosting confidence, and fostering a sense of empowerment among participants. Mentors shared their experiences, imparted practical knowledge, and helped mentees navigate challenges they faced. This personalized support not only enhanced

individual capabilities but also promoted a culture of collaboration and mutual support within the community

CBOs Sub-granting: The project employed a sub-granting approach where 12 community-based organizations (CBOs) received sub-grants from 2 LWROs (FAWOYDI & ASHH Foundation) to implement activities. This approach aimed to enhance organizational capacity, improve resource and fund management skills, and develop sustainable programs and services within the community-based organizations.



KEY ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

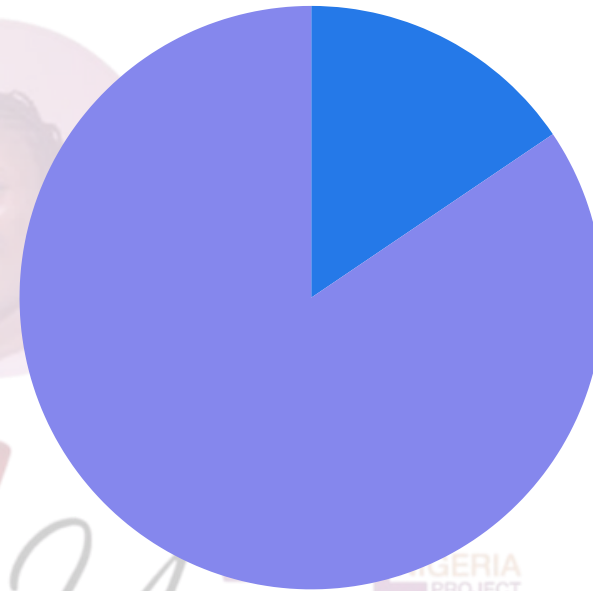




MILESTONE ON TOTAL NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES REACHED

- 1. Overall Direct Reach
- 2. Overall Indirect Reach

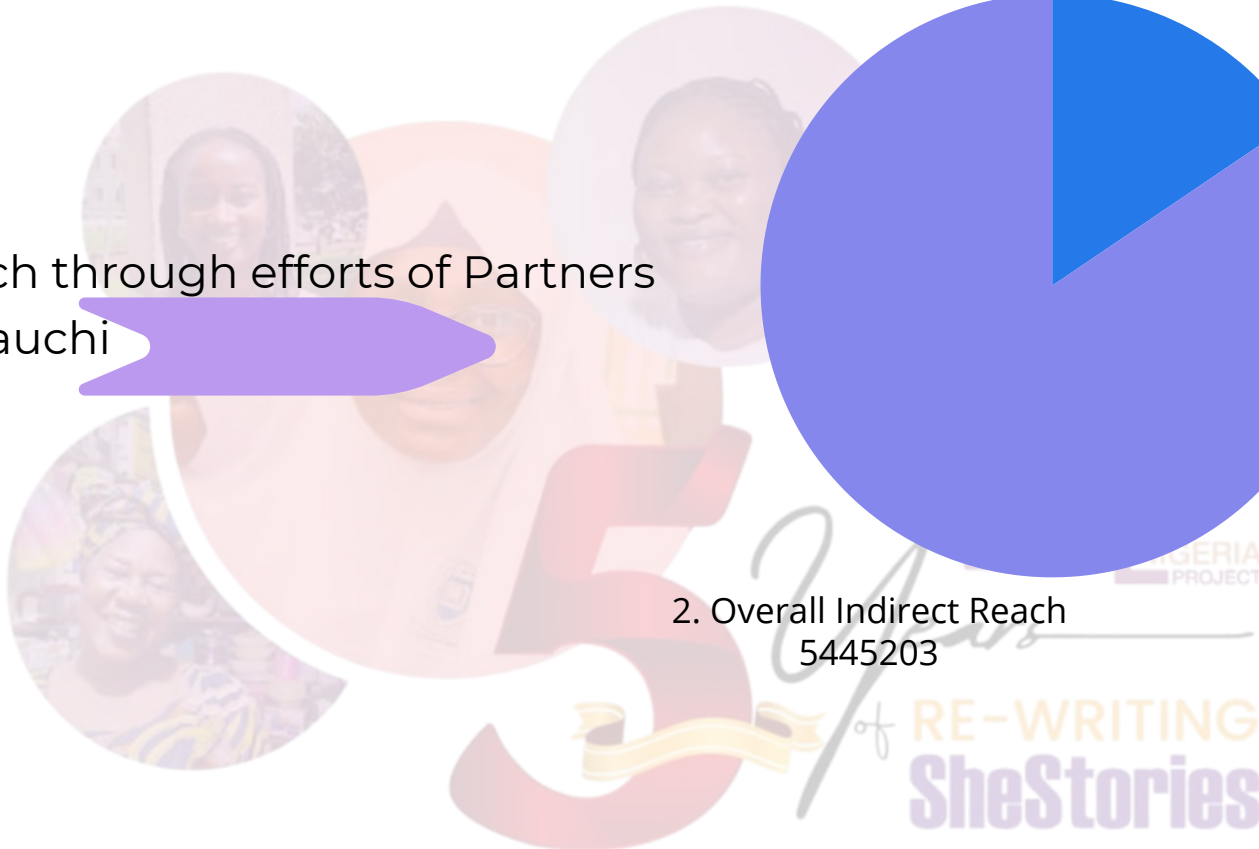
1. Overall Direct Reach
1001352



Reach through efforts of Partners
in Bauchi

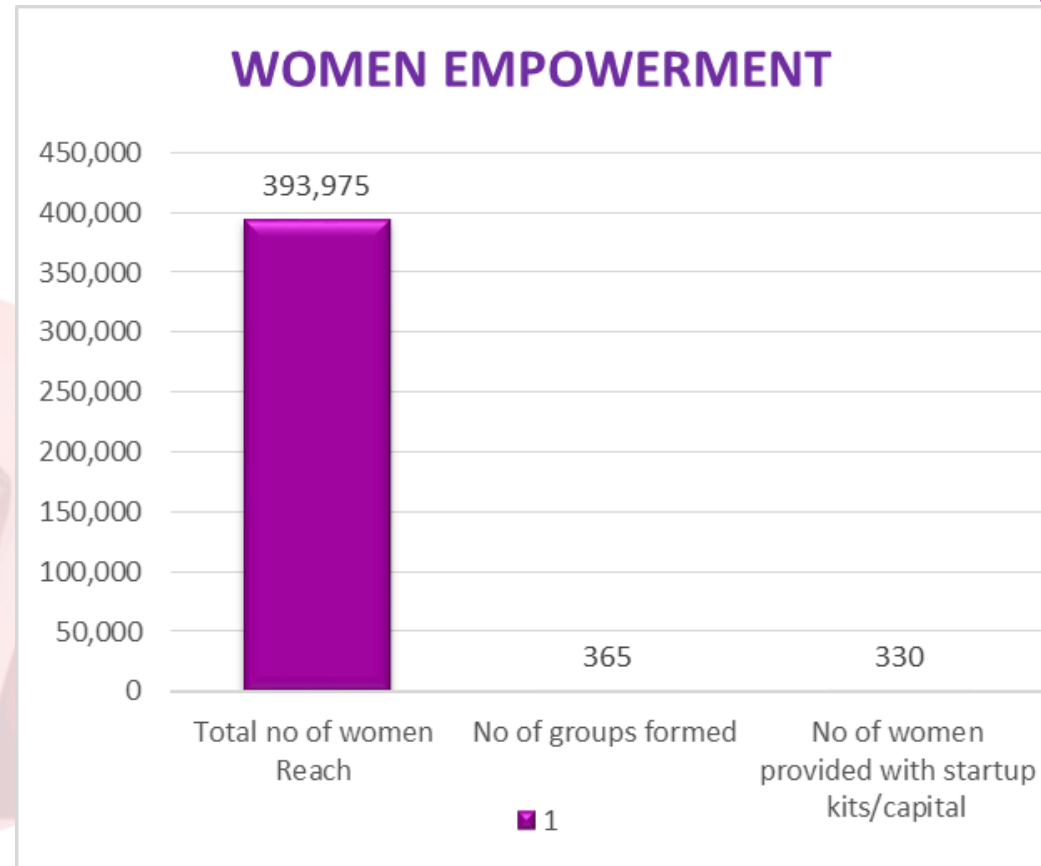


2. Overall Indirect Reach
5445203





MILESTONE THEMATIC AREA 1



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Total no of women Reach – 393,975

No of groups formed 365

No of women provided with startup kits/capital 330

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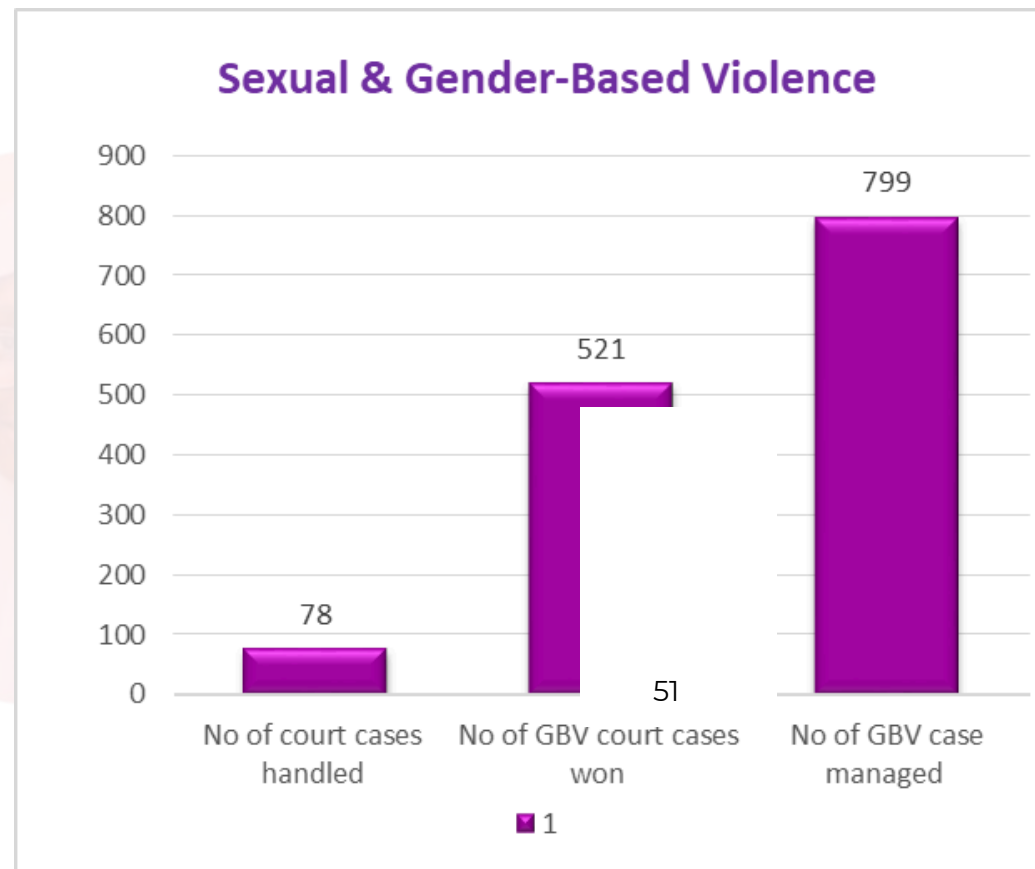


MILESTONE

THEMATIC AREA 2

Total No of person Reach on information on SGBV

413,008



Total No of person Reach on information on SGBV 413,008

No of court cases handled 78

No of GBV court cases won 51

No of GBV case managed 799

MILESTONE

THEMATIC AREA 3



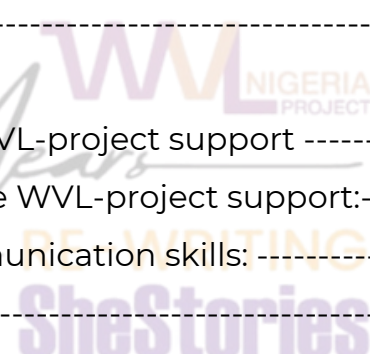
Total number of women reach



194,344

WOMENS POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP

Total number of women reach	194,344
Number of Peer Education Group:	24
Number of women enrolled in Peer Education:	576
Number of women reach through sensitization on political participation:	11444
Number of women support during voter's registration exercises:	20
Number of women who secured political appointment in the state through the implementation of WVL project:	16
Number of women that via for political position through the WVL-project support	12
Number of women that gain political appointment through the WVL-project support:	7
Number of adolescent girls mentored on leadership and communication skills:	6066
Number of Traditional Leaders and Religious Leaders Reach:	1937
Number of women inducted into traditional council/cabinet:	15
Number of women who established/owned a live skill business.	143





COLLECTION OF SUCCESS STORIES

Over the past five years, the WVL-N project intervention has initiated a series of efforts that have made a lasting impact on the lives of women and girls in Bauchi State. Below are some of the key impacts and success stories that highlight the effectiveness of the implemented strategies and activities.

Mother's Persistence Leads to Justice for her raped Daughter

In 2020, a 16-year-old teenager was adopted by a group of four boys who subjected her to a gang rape over a period of four days. The case was reported to the ASHH Foundation. The mother's insistence on legal action against the perpetrators sparked hostility from members of the immediate community, endangering the lives of the survivor and her family. As a result, shelter, medical support, and legal assistance were provided. These interventions led to the incarceration of the perpetrators, ensuring justice for the survivor and her family.

A woman empowered her Co-wife with startup Capital

A woman of VSL group in Kulet community Dass LGA empowered her co-wife by giving her loan of N30,000 to start up a business so she can be occupied and free her from trouble making & accusations. This woman is fully engaged into her business having no time to waste which prevented her from fighting with her co-wife as a result, the co-wife started accusing her of being part of a ritual group because she gains so much profit from her fire wood business being the major firewood seller in her community, the husband gives more attention to her and her children looks different from that of the co-wife. This has helped the women realize that without helping one another they may not go a long way as desired



From Struggling Widow to Thriving Entrepreneur

Mama Hannatu's journey from a struggling widow to a successful entrepreneur had a profound impact on her life and community. Her pottery business not only provided financial stability for her family but also improved their living standard and educational opportunities for her children. Moreover, her success story inspires and empowered many other women fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and self-reliance.

A Woman is appointed into traditional council

Aishatu Ibrahim is now a member of the traditional council of the Chikanni community, representing women's voices and participating in the decision-making process. She spearheaded a collective advocacy visit with the women's peer group to the district head of the Chikanni community, which resulted in the appointment of a female medical professional as the head of primary healthcare in the community to the benefit of women of the community at large. Women in Chikani community now actively have representation in the traditional council and can openly share their views at all levels. They take their income-generating activities seriously as it is a crucial part of their voice and strength.

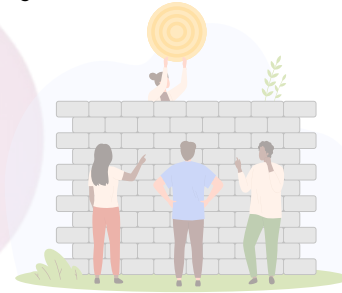
From Informal Group to Registered Organization

Awalah and Karofi were community women farmers group that operated within members' residences. In 2020, the group transformed into a community-based organization with a staff consisting of three members. However, it lacks a governing body, is not registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission, has inadequate working space, and lacks comprehensive policies for organizational operations. Furthermore, they have limited knowledge in report writing, financial management, concept note development, and proposal development. However, with intervention by WVL, they were able to overcome these limitations and successfully secured three grants from another donor. The organizations are now visible with well-structured offices and are registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission. They have a governing board, possess and in use of more than 12 policies. Currently, they are managing three different projects. Additionally, they establish connections with other organizations operating in similar fields, actively participate in workshops and conferences, and engage in fruitful exchanges of ideas and experiences. As a result, these activities broaden their horizons and deepen their understanding of the sector.



CHALLENGES

Despite notable progress in advancing women's rights and gender equality in Bauchi State, several challenges persist. To ensure continued success and sustainability, it's crucial to address these challenges.



01

Deep-seated cultural and traditional norms perpetuating gender inequality and discrimination, limiting women's participation in political, economic, and social spheres.

02

Economic instability exacerbated by factors like border closures and inflation, restricting women's financial empowerment and engagement in development activities.

03

Violence and intimidation against women, particularly those in politics and rights advocacy, discouraging women from taking on leadership roles and speaking out.

04

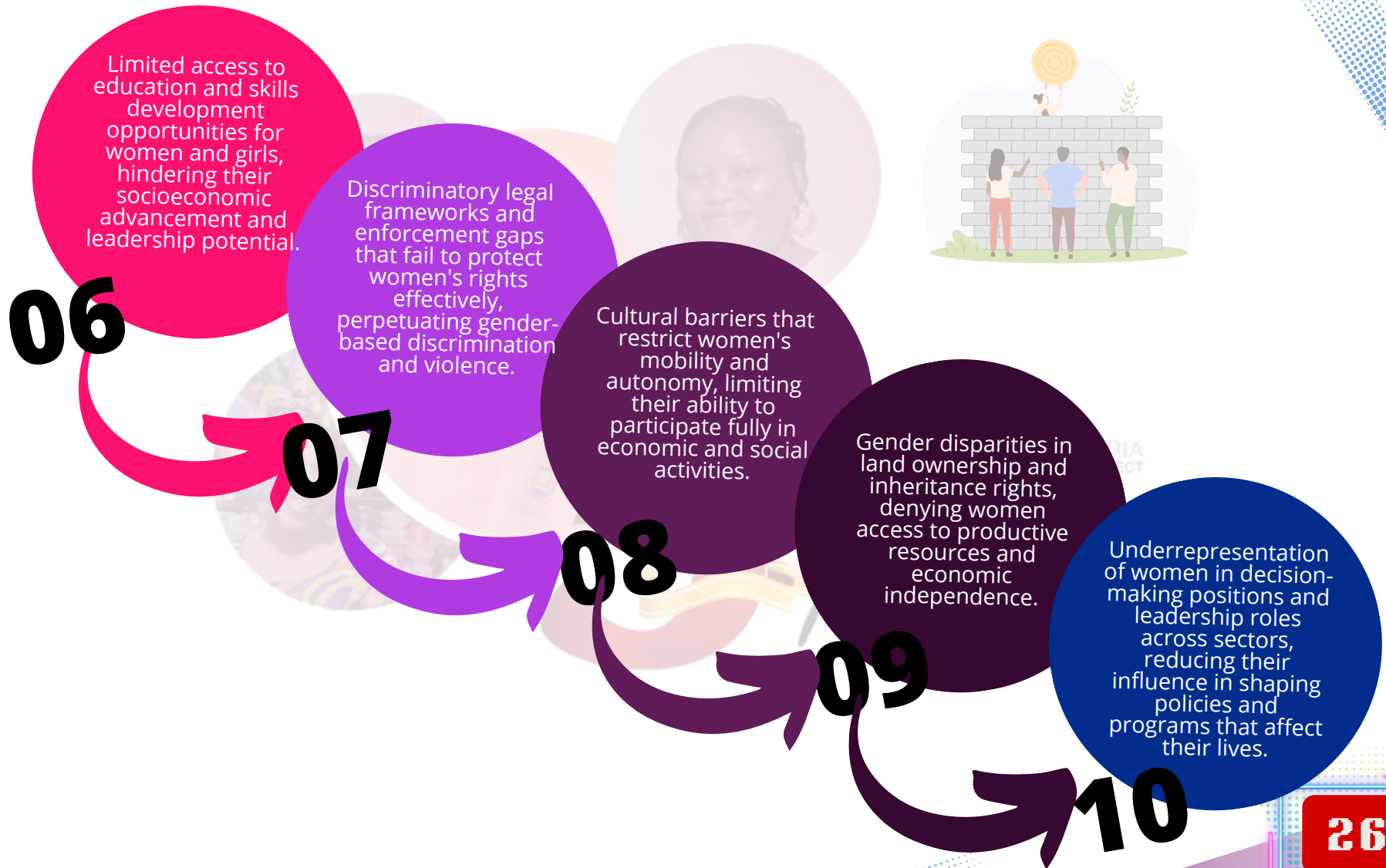
Inadequate funding and resources for women's rights initiatives, constraining program reach and impact.

05

Unanticipated health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which increased gender-based violence and restricted access to support services for survivors.



CHALLENGES



Lesson Learnt:



01

Persistent advocacy and media campaigns can drive policy changes, increase awareness, and influence societal norms.

02

Utilize digital media and technology for advocacy and awareness creation to reach a wider audience and enhance engagement, especially among youth and urban populations.

03

Build solidarity and collective action among women to strengthen their resolve in advocating for their rights and promoting gender equality.

04

Provide holistic support, including legal aid, psychosocial support, economic empowerment, and education on leadership and reproductive health, to address multifaceted gender inequality effectively.

05

Engage religious and traditional leaders to influence cultural norms and practices that perpetuate gender inequality.

06

Implement community engagement and sensitization programs to gain acceptance and support for women's rights initiatives within local communities.

07

Develop and implement conflict resolution mechanisms among stakeholders to maintain positive relationships and sustain collaboration.

08

Foster mentorship and role modeling among successful women leaders to empower younger generations and promote leadership skills.

09

Monitor and evaluate interventions using robust frameworks to track impact, ensure accountability, and inform evidence-based decision-making.

10

Bridge the digital gender gap by providing women with access to digital literacy programs and technology, enabling them to participate fully in digital advocacy and economic opportunities.

11

Sustain partnerships with civil society organizations, government agencies, and international stakeholders to leverage resources, expertise, and advocacy platforms for sustained impact.

12

Adapt interventions to local cultural contexts and realities, ensuring relevance, acceptance, and respect for diversity and local traditions.

13

Build capacity within local organizations and community leaders to promote gender equality beyond project lifespans, fostering long-term and sustainable change.

27



RECOMMENDATIONS:

01

Advocate for the adoption of gender-responsive budgeting at the state and local government levels to address the specific needs of women and girls.

02

Implement initiatives that actively involve men and boys as ambassadors to promote gender equality and combat harmful practices against women and girls.

03

Develop culturally sensitive approaches to challenge deep-rooted gender norms within the community.

04

Implement economic empowerment programs aimed at enhancing women's financial stability and independence.

05

Increase funding and allocate resources towards women's rights initiatives to ensure sustainable support and progress.

07

Build resilient health systems equipped to address gender-based violence and provide comprehensive support to victims.

06

Strengthen legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to safeguard women from violence and intimidation, particularly when seeking political positions.



CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1:

The tradition of Bagel community on women economic empowerment was never to deny women from running business but rather married women cannot go to the market for any purpose. Generally we can say that tradition have indirectly entrenched the women into poverty as the women finds it almost impossible to gain profit from the business, due to this a lot of women run out of business with little or no means of livelihood.

Sakina Adamu (a pseudo name) is a house wife who lives in one of the communities where WVL-N is being implemented. She is 28 years old, have 6 children and 2 co-wives. Her husband is a vulcanizer along the main road leading to the town, both she and her co-wives are full time house wives with no business. She was married at the age of 16 and her education stopped from junior secondary school. The husband provide food twice a day on a good day and mostly once daily, every wife have to find a way to feed her children or watch them stay hungry. Sakina washes cloths as a form of business (wankau) at a rate of N10 per set of cloth and all the money made goes into feeding.

When the WVL intervention started in Bagel community, Sakina joined the VSL group though she couldn't save anything at the time. 4 weeks passed by without Sakina depositing the agreed amount where some of the group members wonder why she is still in the group, the group decided to give her loan of N5,000 to start something so she will be able to make profit and start saving, she started selling local stuffs. After a month she returned back the loan, the group decided to give her another loan immediately which helped her a lot. She started saving in the 3rd week after collecting her first loan and that is how she was saving while frequently collecting loan from the group. This results to her saving up to N38,000 and received the profit of N35,690 in their first share out which made her burst into tears of joy.



CASE STUDIES

Empowering Change through Peer Education

Amina, a 35-year-old mother of four from Tafawa Balewa, Nigeria, initially led a life confined by traditional gender roles. Like many women in her community, she faced limitations in education and influence beyond her household due to societal norms restricting women's participation in decision-making and leadership. Her transformation began with the Women's Voices and Leadership Initiative, aimed at empowering women through education and peer support. A key component was the establishment of Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) and comprehensive peer education sessions. Selected for peer education and awareness training, Amina delved into topics like leadership, hygiene, women's rights in politics, and overall health, which expanded her knowledge and ignited her passion for advocacy.

Armed with newfound confidence, Amina started actively engaging her community, organizing meetings to share her knowledge and advocate for women's rights. Her efforts inspired other women to join her cause, amplifying their voices and challenging societal norms. Over time, Amina's advocacy gained momentum, leading to her election as a council member—an extraordinary achievement given her humble beginnings. Amina's journey illustrates the profound impact of targeted empowerment initiatives. Through her leadership, she has catalyzed societal change, promoting gender equality and community development in Tafawa Balewa. Her story serves as inspiration, motivating others to challenge norms and embrace roles as change agents.





CASE STUDIES

A 5-year-old girl was raped by a shopkeeper while running an errand for her mother. This case study highlights the family's journey towards justice amidst societal challenges and the role of external support organizations. The family resides in a neighborhood facing economic hardships and social marginalization, yet they maintain strong community ties and mutual support. The rape occurred when the girl, entrusted by her mother to buy seasoning, was lured into a secluded area by the shopkeeper, leading to emotional turmoil and vulnerability within the family.

Initially overwhelmed by shock and fear, the family rallied together, with the mother steadfastly determined to seek justice for her daughter. Recognizing the need for external support, the mother reported the incident to ASHH Foundation, marking the beginning of their journey towards justice. ASHH Foundation provided immediate psychosocial support and medical care crucial for the girl's well-being.

With this assistance, the family pursued legal action against the perpetrator, navigating complex legal processes with the aid of legal services. Despite societal pressures and legal obstacles, their perseverance and the support received led to the successful prosecution of the perpetrator. The resolution brought closure and justice, signaling a stand against gender-based violence in the community. It also sparked conversations about safeguarding children and supporting survivors, highlighting the power of resilience and community support in overcoming adversity.





QUOTES

- I am pleased with the WVL GBV Club that is formed in my community and I promise to give them total support in order for them to address some of the GBV issues we have in this community". Community leader from Miya".
- When my daughter was rape I don't know what to do neither do I know where to go to, I was confused and mad but I want to thank God for the intervention of the WVL-N, this intervention has help me to receive justice for my daughter in addition to that I received psychosocial support and medical care for my daughter; thank you ActionAid Nigeria and Global Affairs Canada. "Survivor's Mother"
- "I have never thought I can hold such an amount in my hands talk less of owning it myself, today I am a sole owner of N73,690 and by God grace I will send my children to school and must eat meat today". Woman from Bagel
- "Since I was able to access funds when my child was sent back from school because his WAEC fees were not paid and I was now able to pay, I have sworn that I will introduce all of my children to VSLA so that they can also benefit from the program. I sincerely grateful to Rahama-Canada for the opportunity that has been provided for us. May God bless you..." Woman from Dawui
- "Before the coming of WVL intervention I was not given opportunity to contribute while taking decision at home " Each time a woman stands up for herself without knowing it possibly without claiming it, she stands up for all women" (aishaabrahim)
- I no longer fight with my co-wife because I have something doing and don't have that time, this has made my co-wife very jealous and started accusing me of joining cultist group but when I gave her loan of N10,000 after our second share-out, she requested to join the group but had to wait till new cycle where she join a replica group too. (Sakina Musa)



QUOTES

- I am now able to enroll my son into a private school after our share-out for better education, now my son know what a noun is and even teaches me & his siblings what he learnt from school.
- I had no form of business and solely depend on neighbors to feed me while my son eats with friends at the start of the project but now have both matrass, blanket, mosquito net and secure a business for her son through the VSL loan
- Wow, the WVL intervention has broaden our knowledge and understanding on politics and women now understand that they have equal rights to contest for political position as well as right to vote and to be voted for.





CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Women's Voice and Leadership Project in Nigeria, implemented in Bauchi State, has made remarkable progress in promoting women's rights and gender equality. Through targeted interventions in economic empowerment, political participation, and combating gender-based violence, the project has positively impacted the lives of numerous women and girls. By empowering women and girls to claim their rights and challenge gender norms, the project has contributed to a more inclusive and equitable society. The successes and lessons learned from this project serve as a model for future initiatives, demonstrating the potential for collaborative efforts to drive meaningful change and promote gender equality in Nigeria.

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We express our heartfelt appreciation to everyone who contributed to the success of the Women's Voice and Leadership (WVL) project in Bauchi State. We are deeply grateful to Global Affairs Canada (GAC) for their generous funding and unwavering support, which has been instrumental in driving positive change and promoting gender equality in our communities.

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We acknowledge the tireless efforts of Community-Based Organizations, who have worked diligently to engage with communities and ensure that our initiatives reach those who need them most. We also thank traditional leaders, community members, and volunteers for their willingness to embrace change and support women's empowerment.

Lastly, we pay tribute to the courageous women we have worked with and all the communities we have partnered with for their resilience and determination. Your dedication and support have been an inspiration to us all. Thank you for your contributions to the success of the WVL project.