POLITICAL ECONOMY ANALYSIS (PEA)

OF GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS PROGRAMME IN NIGERIA



Canada

actionaid



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Abbreviations and Acronyms

African Development Bank (AFDB)
African Union (AU)
Bank of Agriculture (BOA)
Bank of Industry (BOI)
Business Development Fund for Women (BUDFOW),
Business Member Organisations (BMOs)
Catholic Women Organisation (CWO)
Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN)
Commercial Agricultural Development Project (CADP)
Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
Federal Ministry of Women Affairs (FMWA)
Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (FMWASD)
Federation of Muslim Women Organisation of Nigeria (FMWON)
Female in Nigeria (FIN)
Gender Technical Unit (GTU)
Grow and Earn More (GEM)
House of Representatives (HOR)
Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
International Labour Organisation (ILO)
Local Government Area (LGA)
Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs)
National Agency for Control of Aids (NACA)
National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP)
National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)
National Centre for Women Development (NCWD)
National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP)
Nigerian Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP)
Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)
Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)
Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF)
Section (S)
Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)
Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN)
Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)
The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
The Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS)
United Nations (UN)
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPPA)
Women Aid Collective (WACOL)
Women Entrepreneurship Development Programme (WEDP)
Women Fund for Economic Empowerment (WOFEE)
Women in Management, Business and Public Service (WIMBIZ)
Women in Nigeria (WIN)

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Executive Summary

The Global Gender Gap Report 2018, published by the World Economic Forum, ranked Nigeria 133rd out of 149 countries benchmarked in relation to their progress towards gender parity across four thematic dimensions of Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment. This is an insignificant improvement from its 135th position out of 144 countries in 2017. More so, findings and analysis show that the magnitude of gender disparity in Nigeria is widening and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) issues are on the increase. This study is, therefore, aimed at scanning the women's rights programming and gender equality advancement environment to determine the factors hindering or contributing to these current realities. It involves gathering relevant information on the political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal environments on current global, national and project states trends and how these have impacted the achievement of gender equality in project states specifically, and in Nigeria generally.

Desk review and qualitative research methods were used to collect and analyse relevant primary and secondary data on the laws, regulations, policies and literature on the subject in order to determine the status of implementation of legal and policy framework while the qualitative research was undertaken through oral interviews with respondents, using an interview guide. A total of 45 persons were interviewed in-depth and descriptive data analysis technique was used in analyzing the data. The data from the laws, literature and the interviews were triangulated to produce the information in this report.

Findings and Conclusions

Political Participation

An appraisal of women in politics and decision-making positions in Nigeria indicates that women in Nigeria are politically marginalized and under-represented in the political scene. Lack of appropriate legal and policy framework has been fingered in the high failure rate of women's political enterprise amongst other socio-cultural and economic factors that continue to undermine women's participation. The Constitution and the Electoral Act are guiding documents on what political parties should do and who should contest election. Yet, they do not contain any direct provisions of similar purport as can be found in international and regional instruments that are intended to encourage women's political participation and increase their representation in Government.

The foregoing notwithstanding, political parties can adopt and implement the affirmative action as was done for zoning of key leadership positions. Furthermore, eliminating political violence and engaging with traditional and religious institutions, including cultures opposed to women leadership is imperative in order to encourage women to take active roles in politics.

Economic Empowerment

An analysis of the economic environment reveals that there are so many constraints to women economic participation in Nigeria, including education (formal or informal), access to properties, access to financial services, lack of medical services which may lead to maternal mortality, cultural practices, child marriage, child labour, legal, regulatory and policy framework, gender norms and discriminatory social norms.

Data reveal that women are more financially excluded than men; literacy rate among young women is significantly lower than that of their male counterparts; majority of women in Nigeria live in rural areas and are predominately engaged in the informal sector including petty trading, subsistence farming, artisanry and beauty services which are often neglected by government interventions – even where such intervention come, the programmes are usually menial packages that do not meaningfully empower these women. At other times, soft loans offered to these women are diverted by their husbands who are the decision-takers at the household level. There are also limited information and awareness on the existence of some government economic interventions for women.

When women are empowered, they can afford better health care for themselves and provide more for their families. Still, there is need to quantify the unpaid work done by women for childcare and household management as this will make the men appreciate their roles and contributions to the household. Unfortunately, the lack of economic power by women contributes to low political participation and is one of the factors that lead to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Women and girls in Nigeria are vulnerable to physical, sexual and psychological abuse that cut across lines of income, class, and culture. The most prevalent SGBV issues in Nigeria are female genital mutilation, trafficking in persons, widowhood practices and disinheritance of women and girls, and domestic violence / wife battering. Surprisingly, data reveal that spousal abuse and sexual violence are experienced more by high-income educated women than their low-income counterparts. Unfortunately, law enforcement agents often treat domestic violence with kids-gloves, calling it family matter that should be settled at home. Paucity of data, illiteracy and poverty are some of the factors that hinder interventions on SGBVs.

Emerging issues on SGBV

An emerging type of SGBV in Nigeria is violence to women in conflict situations and in political settings. The emergence of Boko Haram and the spread of violence have opened-up new windows for this new form of gender violence – sex slavery, forced marriage to terrorists and 'sex-for-food', especially in Internally Displaced Persons Camps.

Socio-political violence is also emerging. In the 2019 elections, for instance, thugs in the shape of political supporters under the influence of drugs, took control of the roads, streets and wards or settlements with all manner of dangerous weapons scaring and forcing people, especially women, to surrender their valuables including bags, phones and other items or adornment or risk being maimed or killed. In other situations, this group of bandits resorted to the indiscriminate rape of women – married and unmarried – under the guise of political support. Pressurised voting is also another emerging type of violence against women. An incident was reported of a husband who divorced his wife because she refused to vote for the candidate of his choice, preferring to vote for the candidate that suited her. Shaming and abusing women using social media, including portrayal of allegedly concocted nude photos are ways of keeping women from participation in public life. Violence within online spaces by women who shame other women or by intimate partners is also emerging as a form of violence perpetrated by women against other women.

Funding of women movements and organisations

Women are organized for economic, political and social reasons as networks, professional groups, cluster groups, groups with common interest, or observers' groups. However, most women organize for gender equality and empowerment. In fostering the movements and organisations of women, however, funding has been identified as a major challenge for the advancement of gender equality and empowerment. Donor's funding priorities are usually the thematic areas within the donor's mandate. More so, when calls are put up for funding in specific areas, local relevant NGOs respond to the calls depending on whether the area falls within their own mandate too. Consequently, there is no flexibility for taking on issues considered a priority by local women's groups.

Furthermore, funding interventions are needed to raise awareness and consciousness on SGBV issues like FGM, rape, domestic violence, harmful widowhood practices – including denial of inheritance rights and trafficking in persons. Interventions should also attack patriarchy by engaging traditional and religious leaders with human rights approaches. Cooperative groups are a good place to revolve funds for the empowerment of women as they act as guarantors for one another.

Recommendations

The multi-pronged recommendations are directed to different arms of Government, especially the Executive and the Legislature; INEC; Political Parties; Civil Society; and International and Donor organizations with interest in Nigeria. The recommendations focused primarily on the legal protection of women's political rights and creation of a legally enabling environment that will stimulate gender equality and women's empowerment and eliminate discriminatory practices. The recommendation directed to Political Parties will encourage adoption of party gender policy and overall achievement of gender equity in identification of candidates to be sponsored by the party. The recommendation for CSOs/NGos, Women's groups, international and donor organizations will help to promote, support and advance an enabling legislative environment to achieve gender parity and enhance the capacity of the lawmakers on gender issues, capacity of women leaders on negotiation and lobbying skills and capacity of interested gender experts on how to engage stakeholders effectively.

1.0 Background and Introduction

The project is conceived and funded against the background that women rights organisations are struggling to get funding for advocacy and service delivery on matters related to women's rights, particularly issues concerning women's political participation, economic justice and sexual and gender-based violence amongst others. In most cases, funding is difficult to come by, but where such funding is available and no scope of application is defined by the donor, it is taken away by the beneficiary NGOs from core women rights issues and applied simultaneously to gender matters, women's issues and other related issues. This has worked greatly against the actualization of the core mandates which women's right advocacy and service delivery seek to address.

Driven by the desire to put project funds in the hands of women's rights group for proper advocacy and service delivery on matters of women's rights, this study was commissioned to undertake quantitative and qualitative research on issues relating to women's rights. These include women's political and economic participation rights – the right to vote and be voted for, and the right to an improved standard of living respectively – as well as rights that are violated in relation to SGBV, including rape, wife battering, female sex worker targeted violence, FGM, early and child marriages, sex slaves in conflict regions; Exclusion Practices like denial of land rights, disinheritance, harmful widowhood practices, girls exclusion from school; and violence in online spaces.

The reviews of relevant laws and situational analysis seek to determine the factors hindering or contributing to the current realities that hinder the achievement of gender equality in project states specifically and in Nigeria generally. On the other hand, this study interrogates how local organizations face significant barriers in improving the status and rights of Nigerian women. It analyses how women's rights groups are organising themselves in Nigeria, how they source their funding, what the funding priorities are; identifies the funding gaps as well as the policy framework on women's rights in the States under review amongst others.

Available statistics has shown that women globally, particularly in Nigeria, are voiceless and underrepresented in matters related to women's political and economic participation and that the issues of sexual and gender-based violence are on the increase. Unfortunately, lip-service seems to be paid to the implementation of both the laws and policies on these as well as conspiracy of silence both on the side of the victims and other stakeholders, necessitating an inquiry into the legal and situational analysis, challenges encountered and the way forward.

1.1. Objectives of the Assignment

The objectives of this assignment are to:

a. Identify and review the legal and policy frameworks that promote or impede the realisation of women and girls' rights in Nigeria, making connections to international and global frameworks;
b. Identify core issues on women and girls' rights in the project states and Nigeria;
c. Analyse the political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal context of women's rights programming in Nigeria;
d. Identify how local women's rights organisations and movements are organised and how they are organising in project states and in Nigeria;
e. Identify funding sources for women's rights organisations;
f. Identify donor priorities to funding women's rights organisation and granting models/alternatives;
g. Identify gaps between available funds for women's rights organisation and the actual funding needs
h. Identify utilisation approach by the local women's rights organisation and their movements;
i. Analyse and interpret the implications of all the issues identified and the interconnectivity between each of these;
j. Based on the findings, draw up policy implications and recommendations for programming; and
k. Make recommendations on core areas/issues for intervention in the project states.

1.2 Approach and Methodology

The goal of this study is to identify and analyse the status of women's rights and the extent of women's rights programming and gender equality advancement efforts to eliminate discrimination and rights violations in policy and legislation (including implementation) and the provision of services, as well as harmful social beliefs and practices in Nigeria. Effective analysis required gathering relevant information on the political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal environment, and analysing and interpreting the findings. Thus, desk review and qualitative research method were used to collect and analyse relevant primary and secondary data. The desk review involved a review of the laws, regulations, policies and literature on the subject in order to determine the status of implementation of extant legal and policy framework. The primary sources of materials include: the Nigerian Constitution of 1999 as Amended, the Electoral Act of 2010 as Amended, the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act 2015, Case Laws, Policy documents from relevant ministries and agencies, Federal and State Laws, Government White Papers, Inquiry Reports, National Bureau of Statistics reports, annual reports of relevant agencies and election petitions. Furthermore, reliance was placed on secondary sources, including textbooks, journal articles, workshop and seminar papers, newspapers, magazines and internet materials. There was some level of incorporation of comparative perspective to determine the extent to which the domestic standards comply with the international and regional policy environment.

The qualitative research was undertaken through face to face and phone based (one-on-one) interviews with respondents, using an interview guide. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting persons to be interviewed, which was administered either instantly or on request. This was conducted under strict respect for the ethics of qualitative research, consistent with the TOR. A total of 45 persons were interviewed in-depth to ascertain information on adequacy of laws, policy gaps, the extent of implementation of extant laws and possible gender bias in its implementation, and suggestions towards adequate and

effective gender equality advancement programmes. Descriptive data analysis technique was used in analysing the data. The data from the laws, literature and the interviews were triangulated to produce the information in this report.

2.0 Introduction on Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights in Nigeria

There is existing gender specific legislations that are geared towards the achievement of gender equality globally and locally, yet the impacts of these legislations have not translated to better living experiences for the Nigerian women. The general framework of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966, have provisions for the protection of human rights of men and women. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) guarantees, among other rights, the right to life, freedom from torture, freedom from slavery, the right to liberty and security of the person, rights relating to due process in criminal and legal proceedings, equality before the law, freedom of movement, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of association, rights relating to family life and children, rights relating to citizenship and political participation, and minority groups' rights to their culture, religion and language. The ICESCR, on the other hand, guarantees, for instance, the right to work, the right to form trade unions, rights relating to marriage, maternity and child protection, the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to health, the right to education, and rights relating to culture and science. These provisions were also adopted for the regional human rights instruments. For instance, The African (Banjul) Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, 1981, and the Charter's Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol) 2003, which was built on the United Nations Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) but with regional specificities and even of higher threshold in terms of recognized standard.

There is also global specific protection to women in laws which prohibits discrimination based on sex and ensures the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all rights contained in them (United Nations Human Rights, 2014). The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 and ratified on 3 September 1981, is the most unique among existing human rights instruments because it is concerned exclusively with promoting and protecting women's human rights and because it operates from the premise that patriarchy is a global reality. CEDAW focuses on elements of the social traditions, customs, and cultural practices that "legitimately" violate women's rights in many societies, identifying them as elements that help perpetuate, de facto, inequality. It operates with the understanding that the States Parties' failure to remove obstacles to women's enjoyment of all their rights is discriminatory, expanding the concept of rights by holding States Parties accountable for failure to act and for abuse of power by private parties. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989, focuses on the rights of women and girls and also provides a basis for the elimination of FGM as a human rights violation.

Aside these legislations, there are United Nations declarations and resolutions relating to women and the girl child. For instance, there are the United Nations' General Assembly Resolutions and Secretary-General Reports on Traditional or Customary Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Girls; Report of the Secretary-General (Fifty-third Session, 10 September 1998; A/RES/53/354, paras. 17-18); United Nations' General Assembly Resolution on Traditional or Customary Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Girls; Report of the Third Committee (30 January 2002) A/RES/56/128 United Nations' General Assembly Resolution on Traditional or Customary Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Girls, Report of the Third Committee (7 February 2000; A/RES/54/133); GA Resolution 61/143 (2007).

[1] See Article 18

In Nigeria, there is a general framework of the protection of human rights of all, under Chapter IV of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended (the Constitution) and non-discrimination under S. 42 of the Constitution. There is also in existence the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act, 2015, with some states of the Federation making laws on Violence Against Persons. Though the Child's Rights Act has been domesticated and adopted in about three quarters of the states of the Federation, the domestication and implementation of laws specific to women remain a big challenge. For instance, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is yet to be domesticated despite concerted efforts by women's groups, including the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs. However, certain prohibited acts in both CEDAW and the African Charter's Protocol on the Rights of Women have been innovatively incorporated, especially by some states into our laws as prohibited acts including widowhood practices, female genital mutilation, and prohibition of early marriage and trafficking in women and children.

Unfortunately, most of the issues affecting the rights of women are embedded under criminal legislations, laws relating to civil and personal rights, and customary laws and practices. For example, the provisions of Section 55 of the Penal Code Act (applicable in the Northern part of Nigeria) allows a man to chastise his wife while Section 6 of the Criminal code (applicable in the Southern part of Nigeria) denies legal recognition of rape within marriage by defining unlawful sexual intercourse as that other than between husband and wife.

Discriminatory provisions are found in certain laws too. For example, Regulation 52 (3) of the Nigerian Police Regulations (NPR) requires that for a woman to be appointed as a cadet sub-inspector, she must be unmarried, without any such similar imposition for the man. Regulation 121 and 122 of the NPR also relegate the roles women can play in the force to be secondary roles connected with women and children or to relieve the male police officers of clerical duties. These disadvantaged positioning of women affect them from rising to decision-making positions such as Assistant Inspector Generals (AIGs) or Deputy Inspector Generals (DIGs), etc. Regulation 127 of NPR which provides that an unmarried woman police officer who becomes pregnant shall be discharged from the force, affects the decision-making right of the women in their family and health matters. Commendably, however, Regulation 124 of NPR which requires women police to apply for permission to marry has been declared to be unconstitutional by a Federal High Court sitting in Lagos.

Furthermore, married women in the public sector are taxed based on the wrong assumptions that they have no family responsibilities and are maintained by men. The men are entitled to tax relief for children and dependents, whereas the women are not. Spouses and families of the men in management-level jobs are entitled to medical treatment, yet spouses and families of women are not entitled to medical treatment by their employers. Sections 34 and 44 of the Labour Act provide for a right to be accompanied by one's family at the employer's expense. However, the term family is explained to mean a husband, wives and children, and there is no room for a woman to enjoy such benefits.

In the final analysis, it becomes apparent that there are a few laws that seemingly provide for the rights of women not to be discriminated upon and for them to participate freely in key processes of their choice. However, these laws are not adequate and are not effectively being implemented. The existence of several discriminatory laws also portrays the lack of sincerity in guaranteeing women's rights generally as they hinder the actualisation of these rights with specific provisions. These hindrances are further amplified by cultural and religious preferences as will be seen in the next chapter of this study.

[2] See also UN Document A/RES/67/146 .

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

3.0 Analysis of the political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal context of women's rights programming in Nigeria

3.1 Women in Politics and Power

3.1.1 Global Time Line of Women's Political Participation

It is interesting to note that several years passed after the establishment of organized societies and rulership under the dictates of political dispensation before the right to vote and be voted for was granted to women across the continents (Chafetz and Anthony, 1986). Women were hitherto not considered as equals but were seen and treated as chattels and tools for pleasure until they began to revolt, react and organize under several fronts to wrench from the male-centric society some form of recognition, respect, inclusion and the right to participate. Girls and women have the right to engage in civil society, vote in elections, be elected to government offices, serve on boards, and make their voices heard in any process that will ultimately affect them, their families, and their communities (Tatiana DiLanzo et al, 2018).

Available statistics have shown that globally, in 2016, women held only 32% of senior management positions in the central governments of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries (Tatiana DiLanzo et al, 2018). While in 2017, only 31 countries in the world had 30% or more women ministers and the commonly held portfolio by women ministers is in the social sectors, such as: women affairs, social affairs, education and the family (Tatiana DiLanzo et al, 2018). In 2018, only 23.8% to 24% of parliamentarians globally were women, a slow increase from 11.3% in 1995 (UN-Women, 2019). As of January 2019, only 11 women are serving as Head of States and 10 are serving as Head of Government (UN-Women, 2019). In terms of women to men ratio, Rwanda has the highest number of women parliamentarians worldwide. Women there have won 61.3% of seats in the lower house. Globally, there are 29 States in which women account for less than 10% of parliamentarians in single or lower houses, as of November 2018, including 4 chambers with no women at all (UN-Women, 2019).

Global statistics also reveal that women political participation presents wide variation for each of the region of the world in respect of women parliamentarians for all the legislative houses combined: Nordic countries, 42.3%; Americas, 30%; Europe including Nordic countries, 27.7%; Europe excluding Nordic countries, 26.6%; sub-Saharan Africa, 23.6%; Asia, 19.4%; Arab States, 17.8%; and the Pacific, 17% (UN-Women, 2019). In other domains of government, particularly local government, the global proportion of women elected to local government is currently unknown, constituting a major knowledge gap in the assessment of women political participation at that level. As of November 2018, with the exception of, Rwanda, Cuba and Bolivia,a greater majority of countries are yet to record 30% or more of women political participation, not even the United States, even though gender balance in political participation and decision-making is an internationally agreed target set in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Tatiana DiLanzo et al, 2018).

[3] 61.3% of women in parliament.

[4] 53.2% of women in parliament.

[5] 53.1% of women in parliament.

Women's representation in politics in Nigeria has raised concerns about core democratic tenets of participation and inclusiveness. In Nigeria, women's participation has been consistently low and marred with poor election outcome and representation. In two decades of return to civilian rule (1999 to 2019), women's representation has not passed the ten per cent threshold. In fact, statistics revealed a decline in representation after the 2015 general election (Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, 2018). The results from the 2019 general elections in Nigeria reaffirm that women remain a significant minority in elected offices in the election cycle. While women make up 47 per cent of registered voters, only eight per cent were cleared to vie for the 2019 presidential elections. For the National Assembly and State Assembly, women's candidature is only 12 per cent of the total seats available, given that a total of 763 women vied for seats for the Senate and House of Representatives as well as State Houses of Assembly out of 6,563 available contestants. According to INEC, only 62 women out of the 2,970 who contested for different political offices in the 2019 general elections were elected. A breakdown of the figure given by INEC showed that while only seven women were elected into the Senate during the 2019 elections, the House of Representatives has 11 women. While four women were elected as deputy governors, 40 women were elected into the 36 states' Houses of Assembly. The foregoing data show that in Nigeria, women's rates of participation in formal decision-making remain one of the lowest on the continent and across the world with women occupying an abysmal 5.6 per cent (86 out of 1534) of all elective positions at both the national and sub-national levels (Chiedo Nwankwor and Elor Nkereuwem, 2019).

3.1.2 Women in politics and power in Nigeria

The rights of women to participate freely in electoral processes in Nigeria are supposedly guaranteed under the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Section 77 (2) provides for citizen's right to vote and be vote for, on attainment of 18 years and once resident in Nigeria. Section 40 guarantees the right to assembly and association, including participation in political party of one's choice. Further, S. 42 prohibits discrimination based on sex against a citizen of Nigeria amongst others, while S. 14 promotes the principles of democracy, social justice and federal character. Going by The Provisions, it seems like women are given the freedom to participate actively in the electoral processes. However, these provisions are not given effect, and are often overshadowed with religious and cultural inclinations. Therefore, there is need to give effect to these provisions, with strict obligations on the part of government, in the realization of these principles.

Furthermore, a gendered analysis of the Electoral Act reveals that it is not a gender sensitive legislation. Unfortunately, only one section mentions anything on women and about the maintenance of two separate lines on the day of election. This is merely gender specific in form and not in substance. Widely expected affirmative action or proportional representation that will increase female representation is absent (Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, 2015). This has necessitated the Women Participation in Elections Support Bill 2018 which is pending before the National Assembly. The bill requires political parties to ensure that at least one-third of the total number of candidates from all the three senatorial zones, federal constituencies of the state, and the area councils of the FCT must be women. Several women leaders and activists have commended the provisions of this bill. For instance, a former majority leader of the House of Representatives suggested that additional seats should be reserved exclusively for women – one seat per state for the senate and two seats per state for the House of Representatives.

[6] See "Only 62 women won elections in 2019, says INEC" Punch Newspaper, Thursday May 16, 2019, p. 19.

[7] See also Premium Times, February, 23, 2019 available at https://www.premiumtimesng.com/features-and-interviews/314708-analysis-scorecard-of-womens-participation-in-nigerias-2019-elections.html

[8] Section 51 of the Electoral Act, 2010.

More so, there is the National Gender Policy (NGP) adopted in 2006 with its policy objective 5 geared towards achieving minimum threshold of representation for women in order to promote equal opportunity in all areas of political, social and economic life of the country for women, as well as for men. Unfortunately, this policy has not been followed and implementation plan of the policy is weak (Joy Ezeilo, 2018). Currently, no political party has taken any practical measure to ensure quotas in accordance with this policy. The NGP was revised in 2011 but was not launched due to some political issues. It is presently being considered for overdue review and revision bearing in mind that the policy targets were to have been achieved in 2015. The NGP has provided the basis for other state institutions such as the National Assembly, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the Nigerian Police Force, to adopt their own gender policies. For instance, the INEC Gender policy aims to achieve gender balance and access to all cadres of staff of the Commission, as well as providing a strategic platform and championing engendering a more inclusive political process. Unfortunately, this policy can be implemented only to the extent of the mandate given to INEC which cannot impose such gender-sensitive decisions on the political parties, especially where such is not in conformity with the extant constitutional and electoral framework.

Realistically, therefore, political participation in Nigeria is significantly skewed against women in the three arms of government and the three tiers of government. Research has shown that even with the affirmative action of 35% representation of women for political and non-elective positions in Nigeria, the number of women in the elective and appointed positions in Nigeria is not encouraging. For the executive and at the federal level, statistics from the 2017 National Bureau of Statistics reports have revealed that from 1999 through to 2019 elections, a woman has never been the President or the Vice President of Nigeria.

The 2019 general elections saw 73 candidates contest for the position of presidency. However, only 7 of those 73 were women. There has also been no elected female governor in Nigeria. For deputy governors, the 2007 and 2015 elections produced female Deputy Governors in 6 states which remains the highest till date. In the 2019 gubernatorial elections, only 4 states elected female deputy Governors. In Lagos state, the Deputy Governor position stands as the only position where women have had higher representation than men. Between 1999 and 2015, Lagos has had six female Deputy Governors and three male Deputy Governors. However, in the 2019 elections, male dominance prevailed with the deputy governor-elect of Lagos State being a man. For the LGA Chairmen/Chief Executives, there were only 9 percent female and 91 percent male from 1999 – 2017. In the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), from 1999 to 2015 elections, no woman has ever won an election in the six Area Councils that make up the FCT, Abuja. The Six area council chairmanship seats have always been won by men. In Cross River state, there are 4 female chairmen of LGAs out of 18 LGAs slots.

In the legislature, representation at the National Parliament was 5.76 percent female and 94.71 percent male from 1999-2017. Females and males constituted 5.50 percent and 94.50 percent of the Upper House respectively. While 2007 and 2015 elections recorded 8 women occupying the hallowed chamber, the 9th Senate will see a total of 7 women following the announcement of the 2019 election results. The principal officers at the Senate in 2003, 2007 and 2011 had no female representative. A total of 4 female principal

[9] Oral interview conducted with the Former Majority leader House of Representatives on 29 April, 2019.

[10] Data sourced from INEC Gender office, Abuja on 29 April 2019.

[11] C21st Nigeria, 'All Eyes on Governor Ambode To Appoint More Women In<Lagos State'https://c21stnigeria.wordpress.com/2015/08/24/all-eyes-on-governor-ambode-to-appoint-more-women-in-lagos-state/>accessed 29 April 2019.

[12] Gbenga Adeniji, ' 2019: Lagos APC picks Hazmat as Sanwo - Olu's running mate<' https://punchng.com/2019 lagos-apc-picks--hamzat-as-sanwo-olus-running-mate/ >accessed 29 April 2019

officers were recorded in 1999 and 1 recorded in 2015. A female held the position of deputy minority leader and chief whip in 1999 as well as two deputy minority whips that emerged at different times between 1999 and 2003. Only one female got elected to the position of a deputy minority whip in 2015.

The percentage of female and male in the Lower House were 5.83 percent and 94.17 per cent respectively. The 9th House of Representatives is expected to have the lowest number of women representations since independence and transition to democracy. The 2019 election results showed that out of the 360 available seats in the House of Representative, only 11 of them will be occupied by females. Contrast this with what obtained in 2011 which is the highest till date, where 26 women won elections into the house. Representation at the State Assemblies recorded 5.29 percent female and 94.71 percent male respectively. Statistics reveal that in 2011, female representation at states assemblies was 58, the highest record from 1999 to 2015, with an increasing trend recorded as 22, 30 and 43 in 1999, 2003 and 2007 respectively. However, the figure dropped in 2015 from 58 in 2011 to 37 (NBS, 2017).

The poor representation also exists at the state level. For example, research has revealed that the highest number of female representations in Kwara State parliament was in 2015 elections and it stood at 20.14 % with 5 females as Honourable members. However, there is a decline in the 2019 elections with only one woman emerging as a winner in the State parliamentary election out of a 24-member Assembly. Furthermore, there is no single woman among the six elected members of the Federal House of Representatives; neither is there any female among the three Senators-Elect. In Lagos State, the 2019 elections saw the number of women at the Lagos State House of Assembly shrink to 4 from 7 which was the figure in the last House of Assembly while the number of women from Lagos in the House of Representatives reduced to 1 from 3 in 8th National Assembly. In Cross River State, there are currently 3 female members of House of Assembly, which increased to 4 by the 2019 inauguration.

While a handful of female contestants across political parties in Bauchi, Borno and Kebbi were recorded to have participated in the 2015 general election, only one female, Maryam Bagel, won election to represent Dass Constituency in the Bauchi State House of Assembly. The situation on women political participation in Bauchi, Borno and Kebbi, was the same in the 2019 general elections, as only one (Zainab Gimba) out of the female contestants won election from Borno State to represent Bama/Ngala/Kala-Balge Federal Constituency in the House of Representatives. Women appointed as commissioners and into executive positions in government agencies in these States constitute the minority. There are three Female Commissioner in Kebbi State, three in Bauchi State, and two in Borno State. In relation to assigned portfolio, the commonly held position by women is in the social sectors, such as: women affairs, social affairs, education and the family.

At the local government, Councillors were 5.9 percent female and 94.1 percent male (NBS, 2017). In the 2019 elections in the FCT, while 701 candidates contested to occupy the 62 councillorship seats out of which 88 were females, only one woman emerged a winner as

[13] Data sourced from Federal Capital Development Authority Servicom Desk on 29 April 2019. See also 'APC wins 5 out of 6 local councils in Abuja' < https://www.thecable.ng/apc-wins-5-6-local-councils-abuja >accessed

29 April 2019, INEC, ' Candidates For FCTArea Council Chairmanship Election 2016'< http://www.placng.org/situation_room/sr/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/CANDIDATES-FOR-FCT-AREA-COUNCIL-CHAIRMANSHIP-ELECTION-2016.pdf>accessed 30 April 2019

[14] Databod, The Widening Gap of Gender Inequality in Nigerian Politics' < http://databod.com/widening-gap-gender-inequality-nigerian-politics/ > accessed 29 April 2019.

[15] Marginalization: Kwara Women Drum Support for KWHA Member-Elect, Ilorin.info of 10 April 2019 < https://www.ilorin.info/fullnews.php?id=25150>acessed 28 April 2019

[16] Data sourced from INEC Gender office, Abuja on 29 April 2019.

councillor. In Kebbi state, out of the total Local Government Chairmanship positions in the State, there are only 2 female, and a total of 19 Councillors out of the total 225.

Analysis of the above figures reveals that women across Nigeria participated most successfully in the 2011 general elections. While it has been claimed that the government of the day opened up the political space for women to participate, there is need to investigate how women organized themselves prior to that election to determine whether that was a contributing factor to the success recorded by women. This does not underscore the significance of the political will of the government to get women involved, but may reveal how women effectively engaged that government and what exposures the men at the helms of leadership had on women' rights and participation.

A former member of House of Representatives attributed the success of women in 2011 to the People's Democratic Party as a party. She argued that PDP had consolidated its presence and so was willing to allow female aspirants into the political space since it had minimal opposition. But immediately a formidable opposition came up in 2015 and 2019, the PDP reverted to giving men the tickets because they believed that the men had the arsenal in finances and physical strength to fight the opposition. This assertion is in line with the PDP Spokesman's statement that the format of the election is not the type that women can really do well in, as it is marred with "aggression, large scale rigging, abuse of processes, vote buying, violence and other vices."

The judiciary has provided a fairer chance for women as Judges at the federal courts were 29.38 percent female and 70.62 percent male. This may be attributed to the fact that it is a career path, with most of the women judges starting as magistrates while more of the men come in at the level of high courts and above. More so, the percentage of female law graduates is more than the men, as women bend to pass through the rigorous legal education. Nevertheless, the leadership positions at the judiciary are still skewed against women, with only one woman having been the Chief Justice of Nigeria, one as the President of Court of Appeal and very few as Chief Judges of the states. Out of about 110 justices that have sat on the Supreme Court bench, only 6 were women. The 6th and incumbent President of the Court of Appeal is the first woman to occupy the position. However, in the Lagos State High Court, 85% of its Judges are women (Peters Ifeoma, 2017). For elevation to the rank of Senior Advocate of Nigeria, every year while more than 25 male lawyers are admitted into the inner bar, only about one or two female lawyers make the list.

A Gender expert from Cross River State laments that women are used as mere "campaign materials" and dumped afterwards. She queries why the position of a women-leader should be created and wondered why there are no men leader positions. The founding Chairperson of the Muslim Women Cooperative, Abuja, recounted the way women are used for grassroots mobilization and abandoned during the core political process. An INEC staff noted that most of the marginalization of women is at the primaries where women are intimidated, threatened and harassed. Women, therefore, participated in the 2019 elections through the smaller parties because of the threats at the primaries of the major political parties. She also notes that violence during the elections discourages women from participating in the electoral process both as voters and as those to be voted for. She commended the women in the role they played in the 2019 elections in raising awareness, protesting and obstructing rigging in Sokoto, Rivers and Bauchi states and in Lagos where women chased a man who snatched a ballot box, to ensure that they protected their votes.

[17] Oral interview conducted with a serving Commissioner from Cross River state on 20th April, 2019.
[18] Data sourced from INEC Gender office, Abuja on 29 April 2019.
[19] Data sourced from Federal Capital Development Authority Servicom Desk on 29 April 2019.
[20] Oral interview conducted with a female LG Chairperson in Kebbi state on 29 April 2019.
[21] Ebuka Onyeji , '2019 elections worst for Nigerian women in nearly two decades, analyses show' Premium Times April 20, 2019, https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/326243-2019-elections-worst-for-nigerian-women-in-nearly-two-decades-analyses-show.html

3.1.3 Women and leadership in public sector in Nigeria

On appointments at the Executive, men have also dominated most of the appointive positions and public offices in Nigeria. In 1999 and 2003, out of those that occupied 130 federal boards of public corporations, only 7 (5.6 percent) were women. During the period, out of 47 cabinet ministers appointed, only 7 were women which represent 14.89 percent. Special Advisers and Senior Special Assistants were 2 women respectively. Six (6) women were appointed as Special Assistants, 8 women as Permanent Secretaries and one woman as Special Assistant to the Vice President. In 2011, more women were given political appointments – 12 women were appointed as Ministers out of 42 which represent 30 percent and 4 women out of 20 as Special Advisers. From 2015 to 2019, only 6 women were appointed as Ministers out of 30 ministerial appointees (NBS, 2017).

Available data from the National Centre for Women Development (NCWD) and the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) show that women are underrepresented among high-ranking government administrators with decision-making power. The highest representation of women among high-ranking government administrators with decision-making powers was in the position of Special Assistant, which recorded 28 percent, followed by Head of Service (25 percent) and Special Advisers (23 percent). Also, no woman has been nominated as the Central Bank Governor or the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF).

From the analysis on appointive positions, out of a total of 341 ministers that served from 1999- 2015, only 47 (14 percent) were female, while 294 (86 percent) were male which is an indication that the males are also dominating in appointive positions in National appointments. Though the number of females appointed as ministers in 2011 slightly increased, 2003 appointments recorded the lowest number of female representations. It is, however, worrisome that from 1999 till date (2019) no female has ever been appointed as the SGF in Nigeria.

The case is not different at the state levels as data from the Federal Capital Development Authority reveals that the percentage of female appointees in FCT is 10% while the male stands at 90%. In Kwara State, the appointive positions in the administration that rounded off shows that out of 4 principal officers appointed by the State Executive, only one is a woman and out of 19 commissioners only 4 are women. In the position of Permanent Secretaries there are 7 females. In Ondo state, from the 2019 elections, there is only one-woman representative in the State House of Assembly, with no woman at the National Assembly. Despite the insistence by women in Ondo state that a woman is included in the list of the three ministerial nominees from the state, the name of the woman included was removed at the last minute which left the women protesting and refusing to sign off on the list. More so, the absurdity in having a man as the Commissioner for Women Affairs in Yobe State is condemnable and reveals the doubt wrongly attributed to women in managing even their own affairs.

Little progress is recorded in Lagos and Edo states. Though the Lagos State executive council and other principal offices in Lagos state have been 90% male and 10% female between 1999 and 2017; the appointment of 10 women permanent secretary out of the 19 permanent secretaries in Lagos State is welcomed and celebrated. Efforts to see that more women are appointed into the Lagos State Executive Council and Boards of Agencies must be intensified until it is achieved. In Edo state, the state government has appointed a Special Assistant on Gender for the state and for each LGA in the state.

[22] Globally, women were 50.3 percent of law-school grads in 2017 and are 51.3 percent of those currently enrolled. See https://www.bestlawyers.com/article/women-now-outnumber-men-in-law-school/2029

[23] See https://leadership.ng/2017/07/22/san -bridge-female-lawyers -cross/

[24] Oral interview conducted with a Gender expert from Cross River state on 28 th April, 2019.

[25] Oral interview conducted with the founder on 25th April, 2019.

[26] Oral interview conducted with a female INEC staff on 29 April 2019.

Available data also shows that the percentage of men employed in the State Civil Service for 2010 to 2015 was higher than that of women for both senior and junior positions. On average, the percentage of women employees from 2010 to 2015 was 38.16 per cent for both junior and senior positions while it was 68.84 per cent men for both subgroups. Also, in federal Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs), men dominated the civil service as women on grade level 01–17 plus the special grade level was below 42 per cent in 2014–2016 (NBS, 2017).

3.1.4 Women and leadership in private sector in Nigeria

Gender parity in the corporate sector is a global challenge and Nigeria is not an exception to this. Thus, years after the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) directed that women occupy 40 per cent of top management positions, and 30 per cent board positions across banks from 2014, only 22.3 per cent of women have attained that. An analysis based on data obtained from the website of 21 banks revealed that women constitute 22.3 percent of the total board appointments in Nigerian Banks while the percentage of men stands at 77.7 percent. Further breakdown of data shows that among 238 board members, 185 are male while 53 are female.

Though the number of women in the corporate sector has increased after the CBN directive in 2014, there is still paucity of women in senior executive positions and on company boards (only 11.7 % of board directors in the country are women). Often, this is due to the opaque board nomination processes usually done through informal networks such as old boys association or men's social clubs which obviously puts women at a disadvantage. In addition to this, most companies are unaware of the benefits of a gender diverse board. Research has shown that there is a positive correlation between women in senior corporate roles and a company's financial performance.

Women in Management, Business and Public Service (WIMBIZ), a non-profit organisation that has been at the forefront of the advocacy for equal opportunities for women in the corporate sector, published the first ever data on female Directors in Nigeria in 2011. The data revealed that of the 190 listed companies, only 10.5 per cent of board seats were held by women. The WIMBIZ report of 2015 revealed that women own only 20 per cent of enterprises in the formal sector and only 11.7 percent of Board Directors in the country are women. A recent (2018) study of the boards and management of 20 commercial banks revealed that they have 200 board members, with 152 men and 48 women only. Three of the banks – First Bank, Access Bank and Guaranty Trust Bank – have women as their chairpersons. This figure translates to 15 per cent as against the 85 per cent held by men. The statistics further reveals that only two of the 20 banks, Standard Chartered Bank and Unity Bank Plc., currently have women as Managing Directors, translating into 10 per cent for women and 90 per cent for men. Another interesting perspective revealed by the study indicates that, out of the total of 46 women directors, only 21, representing 45.6 per cent are Executive Directors. The other 25, representing 54.3 per cent, are either Non-Executive Directors or Independent Directors. The data analysis above shows that despite CBN directive on 30 Per cent women representation on the boards of financial Institutions, women are still marginalized.

[27] Data Sourced from Federal Capital Development Authority Servicom Office on 29 April 2019.
[28] Oral interview conducted with a Gender expert from Kwara State on 27 April 2019.
[29] Ondo state chapter presentations on state of affairs of women in the state at the Annual General Meeting of the Nigerian League of Women Voters held on 15th May, 2019 at the Nigerian National Merit Award House, Abuja.
[30] C21st Nigeria, 'All Eyes on Governor Ambode To Appoint More Women In< Lagos State'https://c21stnigeria.wordpress.com/2015/08/24/all-eyes-on-governor-ambode-to-appoint-more-women-in-lagos-state/>accessed 29 April 2019.
[31] Edo state chapter presentation on state of affairs of women in the state at the Annual General Meeting of the Nigerian League of Women Voters held on 15th May, 2019 at the Nigerian National Merit Award House, Abuja.

The markets across Nigeria are the only places where female representation is of predominance and equal to men. This is evidenced by data got from an oral interview of traders in selected markets in FCT, including Dutse Alahaji Market, in Bwari Area Council, Utako market and Karimo Market respectively. The oral account of traders revealed that the leadership roles in the market spread across both male and female, sometimes with the women exceeding the number of men. In Karimo Market, a woman is the leader of the market and that is commendable. In Lagos State, there is an adequate representation of women in the leadership roles in the market places. Iyaloja which is the title given to the female representing market women in Lagos state is a revered position. In Kwara State, the Iyaloja General, just like what is obtainable in Lagos state, is also involved in politics and wields so much power, especially on the traders across the State.

3.1.5 Women in traditional and religious groups in Nigeria

Traditional stools and community decision making in Nigeria, including in Lagos State, Kwara State and in FCT have the predominance of men in positions. This may be as a result of the fact that some customs do not allow women to take up traditional titles. However, there are other traditional systems and cultural practices that see to the fact that there is adequate female representation, and these include the Igbo traditional Umuada System, which is one of the powerful institutions by which women exercise their leadership roles in Igbo land.

In Christianity, the representation of women can be said to be adequate. Thus, in the Catholic Church, the Catholic Women Organisation (CWO) serves as a platform for women voices to be heard in the Church. Oral interview with the executives and members of the CWO of the Christ the King Catholic Church, Kubwa, conducted on 27th April 2019 revealed that the CWO is a powerful and respected institution in the Catholic Church and it ensures adequate representation of women in all affairs in the church. This ensures that women are adequately represented in the Laity and Pastoral council of the Catholic Church which is one of the decision-making bodies of the church. This was affirmed by an oral interview, conducted on the same day, with members the CWO of the Holy Cross Catholic Church, Gwarimpa, Abuja; and executive members of Christ the King Parish, Enugu, and Holy Trinity Parish, Enugu. However, the role of women in such mixed sex committees are usually as assistants – assistant secretary, treasurer and the likes.

Muslim women also play a key role in the lives, education and empowerment of Muslim faithfuls. They establish Islamic schools, secular schools and skill acquisition centres which are run by them and most decisions on the establishments are taken by them.

3.1.6 Women and decision making in the households

In terms of women decision making in their homes, oral testimonies from the CWO executives and members already mentioned above reveals that most major decisions still dwell with the men. Decisions such as the number of children to have or family planning and right to their health lie with the men as it is backed up by religious doctrine which recommends only natural family planning methods and is also against abortion. Furthermore, the Christian doctrine and beliefs recognize the man as the head of the house

[32] Sunday Micheal Ogwu, CBN Directive, Women Occupy only 22% Board Seats in 21 Banks , Daily trust of February 2018 https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/cbn-directive-women-occupy-only-22-boards-seats-in-21 - banks.html.

[33] Center for Africa, Women Make up 49 % of Population but only 4% of Law Makers<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2016/03/08/women -in-nigeria-make-up-49-per-cent-of-the- population-but-only-four-per-cent-of-lawmakers/>

[34] Center for Africa, Women Make up 49 % of Population but only 4% of Law Makers https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2016/03/08/women-in-nigeria-make-up-49-per-cent-of-the-population-but-only-four-per-cent-of-lawmakers/

[35] WIMBIZ, Nigerian Females on Corporate Boardhttp://wimbiz.org/wpontent/uploads/2018/01/Nigerian Females-on-Corporate-Board-2012-Survey.pdfaccessed 5 May 2019.

who should make all important decisions in the home including decisions as to the reproductive health of their wives; even when and how to have sexual relations are determined solely by the husbands, sometimes leading to spousal rape. Oral accounts also reveal that for Muslim women, their husbands decide where they go and who they mingle with. The husband also decides on the number of wives he wants and has the absolute right to divorce them at will, without any consequences.

A pharmacist of 19 years who has run a pharmacy for over 16 years in Abuja noted how women sneak to buy drugs that prevent pregnancy. Some think it is a taboo for them to make decisions on their body as their bodies belong to their husbands. A gynaecologist who has practised for 15 years in Lagos notes that women are becoming more involved in family planning and taking such decisions more than was the case in the past. He noted that it is still common for northern women to insist that their husbands sign the consent forms before going on with a caesarean section, even though the surgery could go on with only her consent. He also noted that though several women suffering from infertility would have loved to be helped by assisted reproduction, religion and traditions hamper this. A public health consultant with 15 years practice notes how women are, even pregnant, exposed to and affected by tobacco smoking at home against their will.

Furthermore, the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) policy on obtaining an International passport by a married woman is also discriminatory and hampers women's decision-making on their movements. This policy states that for a married woman to obtain an international passport, or for a change of name on the passport, the written consent of the husband must be obtained. Meanwhile, the written consent of the wife is not required when a husband seeks to obtain an international passport. Fortunately, the court has held that to be discriminatory and obnoxious in the case of Priye Iyalla – Amadi v. the Comptroller-General, Nigeria Immigration Services and Nigeria Immigration Services.

Unmarried females also suffer discrimination as landlords interfere in their choices of where to inhabit by prohibiting them from being their tenants even where they can pay the rent. Some other land owners do not agree to sell land to a woman unless she comes through her brother or husband.

3.1.7 Barriers to women participation or representation in politics and other decision-making processes

Multiple barriers prevent women from taking their place within the political arena, including legal, political, and cultural constraints. These barriers — which are often rooted in exclusionary traditional gender norms — bring additional challenges for

[36] Oral Interview conducted in Dutse Alahaji Market on 27 April 2019. The interview involved about 15 traders out of which 8 were women and 7 Men. The interview spread across the market leaders and ordinary traders in the market.

[37] Oral Interview conducted in Utako Market on 29 April 2019. The interview involved about 4 traders all women. The interview spread across the market leaders and ordinary traders in the market.

[38] Oral Interview conducted in Karimo Market on 30 April 2019. The interview involved about 11 traders out of which 7 were women and 4 Men. The interview spread across the market leaders and ordinary traders in the market.

[39] Samuel Abulude. 'Iyaloja Mobilises Market Women for Sanwo - Olu's Victory' <https://leadership.ng/2019/03/07/iyaloja-mobilises-market-women-for-sanwo-olus-victory/>accessed 29 April 2019.

[40] Ahmed Ajikobi, 'Aggrieved traders allegedly sack Iyaloja General, others in Kwara ' National Pilot Newspaper of 21 March 2019 (Ilorin) https://thenationalpilot.ng/aggrieved-traders-allegedly-sack-iyaloja-general-others-in-kwara/>accessed 29 April 2019

[41] ' Meet 50 Obas Who Run Lagos With Oba Rilwan Akiolu' < pleasuresmagazine.com.ng/2016/10/meet-50-obas-who-run-lagos-with-oba-rilwan-akiolu/>Out of the 50 Obas who run Lagos State none is a female.

[42] Oral interview conducted with a Kwara state indigene on 29 April 2019 See also 'Kwara Govt. promotes 22 traditional rulers'< https://www.pmnewsnigeria.com/2018/05/15/kwara-govt-promotes-22-traditional-rulers/ >accessed 29 April 2019

[43] Oral interviews conducted with indigenes of Dutse Alahaji in Bwari Area Council on 27 April, 2019 revealed that the traditional stools (Etsu) in FCT are occupied by men.

[44] Umuada, <http://icsn.co.uk/umuada/>accessed 29 April 2019

[45] Oral interviews conducted with an Executive of FOMWAN on 27 April, 2019.

[46] Oral interviews conducted with a Muslim woman that has been married for 20 years on 25 April, 2019

[47] Unreported (2008) cited in Joy Ezeilo, Women, Law and Human Rights, 2011, p. 276.

[48] Oral interview conducted with a Deputy Director at the FMWA on 29 April 2019.

[49] Oral interview conducted with a Former majority leader HOR on 29 April 2019.

women who belong to marginalized groups (Tatiana DiLanzo et al, 2018). Some of the specific barriers include the following:

a. Most men misunderstand 'gender and human rights' and misconstrue it to be liberation, and competition by women.
b. A male former gender officer of the GTU identified the mind-set of some elected legislators as a challenge as some of them argue that since women did not send them to the National Assembly, they have not come to the legislature do women's agenda there.
c. Frequent turn-over of staff of FMWA from and to other sectors truncates knowledge, capacity and experiences gained.
d. Cultural and Religious beliefs: it is believed in most tribes that women do not make better leaders, while some religions believe that women are the weaker sex and should not take up leadership roles. The founding Chairperson of the Muslim Women Cooperative, Abuja, stated that the Islamic doctrine teaches that women are not supposed to lead, but to assist and support men. Therefore, women are encouraged to vote and support during campaigns. Some others believe that women should only lead women not men. These beliefs are among the factors that serve as a barrier to women's participation in politics in Nigeria.
e. The stigmatization on women that participate in politics as 'political prostitutes' also discourages women from political participation.
f. The Nigerian society is patriarchal in nature; hence, women are always relegated to the back during politics and decision-making processes.
g. Gender-based violence, especially violence in elections, is also one of the factors militating against women participation in politics.
h. The insignificant number of female legislators makes it difficult for them to galvanise to push women agenda.
i. God-fatherism also hinders the involvement of women in politics.
j. The economic situation, especially the lack of funds to purchase the pricy tickets and carry on campaigns, serves as barriers to women's participation in politics.

3.2 Women and Economy in Nigeria

Women's economic empowerment is the process of achieving women's equal access to and control over economic resources and ensuring they can use them to exert increased control over other areas of their lives (Abigail Hunt and Emma Samman, 2016). It is observed that there are so many constraints to women economic participation such as education (formal or informal), access to properties, access to financial services, lack of medical services which may lead to maternal mortality, cultural practices, child marriage, child labour social protection, legal, regulatory and policy frameworks, gender norms and discriminatory social norms.

Sixty-four percent of Nigerian women reside in the rural areas (MICS5, 2016/17). Women in Nigeria are predominately engaged in the informal sector including petty trading, subsistence to middle scale farming, as artisans, beauty services, etc. This means that interventions should be targeted at the rural areas and in women predominant occupation. However, these interventions should be strategic and seek to significantly empower them and not come as menial packages. When women are empowered, they can afford better health care for themselves and provide more for their families.

[50] UN Women, 'It's election season in Nigeria, but where are the women?
' http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/2/feature -women-in -politics -in -nigeria accessed 27 April 2019

3.2.1 Women's Role in the Economy

Gender disparities in women's economic participation have remained deep and persistent across the globe (Ghani, Ejaz et al, 2013). According to the World Bank's 2018 Women, Business and the Law Report, 2.7 billion women globally are legally restricted from having the same choice of jobs as men. Despite the steady progress reported by the World Bank on women economic participation in its 2019 report, available data shows that 74.71% of economy around the globe gives women only three-quarters the rights of men (World Bank Group, 2019). This is because many laws and regulations continue to prevent women from entering the workforce or starting a business; encourage discrimination that can have lasting effects on women's economic inclusion and labour force participation (World Bank Group, 2019). The 2018 report further reveals that, even where the opportunity of women economic participation exists, it is more in the informal and vulnerable employment. The statistics shows that women in informal employment in developing countries amount to 4.6% points higher than that of men, when including agricultural workers, and 7.8% points higher when excluding them.

Nigeria still has several laws on the book that make it harder for women to work than men (Alexandra Bro and Jack McCaslin, 2019). According to the Women and Foreign Policy Program's Program's Women's Workplace Equality Index, which visualizes data from the World Bank and ranks 189 countries on how level the legal playing field is for women in the workforce, Nigeroa comes in at number 87 on its global ranking.

Data reveals that in 2016, 55.1% of the financially excluded population were women (NFIS, 2018). An analysis of financial inclusion status as at 2016 showed that the South West geopolitical zone had reached 18% exclusion rate while South East and South South recorded 28% and 31% respectively. The exclusion rate for North Central geopolitical zone stood at 39% while that of North East and North West were 62% and 70% respectively (NFIS, 2018). Literacy rate among young women and men aged 15-24 in 2017 was significantly disproportionate, with 59.3 per cent and 79.9 per cent respectively (MICS5, 2016/17). The rate is lowest in northern Nigeria. Available data from the Federal Ministry of Education shows that enrolment rate of school aged girls in primary education was 48.6 per cent in 2014 but it decreased to 47.3 in 2015 and slightly bounced back to 47.5 in 2016. This shows that women are educationally disadvantaged and this translates to the type of job they will be able to access in the future.

Furthermore, the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) report on the spread of poverty self-assessment status indicates that the northeast has about 81.8 per cent poverty prevalence and that the actual incidence of poverty accounts for 76.12 per cent which is the highest in the country. Of the 10 states with the highest incidence of poverty, Bauchi ranked 4th with 86.3 per cent of its population poor (DFID and CIDA, 2009). More so, the effect of poverty is strongest on women and children. Of the 4.3 million people in the state, two million still live on under ₦50 per day while one million live on ₦100 per day (BSMWASD, 2008). An estimated two million citizens of Bauchi State go hungry every day; 1.5 million have never had the chance to go to school; three out of every five who work full-time do not earn enough to keep their families above the poverty level; almost four out of every five children live in poverty and only two out of every five go to school. Generally, hunger, malnutrition, disease and squalor are experienced in many homes and communities in the state (BASEEDS 2005). Data analysis of budget allocations show that issues that concern women receive paltry sums that can hardly impact on development. For instance, in Bauchi State, the approved budget for the year 2018 is ₦139,163,369,495 (Bauchi State 2018 Approved Budget). The summary of expenditure by sector shows that Bauchi State Commission for Youth and Women Rehab and Development got the sum of ₦2,220,550,706, representing 1.32%. While

the Ministry of Women Affairs got ₦434,748,360, representing 0.26%. The approved budget for the year 2019 is estimated at ₦163,051,759,656 (Bauchi State 2019 Approved Budget). Out of the budget estimate, the summary of expenditure by sector shows that, Bauchi State Commission for Youth and Women Rehab and Development got the sum of ₦3,685,402,947, representing 1.87%, while the Ministry of Women Affairs got ₦517,091,673, representing 0.26%.

In the case of Kebbi State, the approved budget for the year 2018 is estimated at ₦151,221,564,377 (Kebbi State 2018 Approved Budget). Out of the budget estimate, the summary of expenditure shows that the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development got ₦87,200,000; for the year 2019, the estimated budget is ₦151,462, 236,238 (Kebbi State 2019 Approved Budget). Out of the budget estimate, the summary of expenditure shows that the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development got ₦93,910,000.

For Borno State, the total budget estimate for the year 2018 is ₦181,828,514,000 out of which the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development is allocated the sum of ₦1,859,240,000.00 to complete reconstruction of hostels for refugees and inmates, reconstruction of Remand Homes in the liberated towns, purchase of tools for the handicapped and up-keep of victims of Human Trafficking and other essential facilities in all the three Senatorial Districts of the State (Borno State 2018 Approved Budget). While for the year 2019, the budget estimate is ₦144,739,477,375 and the allocation to the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social development is ₦1,706,000,000 (Borno State 2019 Approved Budget).

The 2018 budget of Enugu State was ninety-eight billion, five hundred and sixty-three million, five hundred thousand naira only (₦98,563,500,000). Out of the total budget of ₦98.56 billion, the sum of ₦60.72 billion, representing 61.6% of the total budget is for Recurrent Expenditure. Under capital expenditure summary for 2018, the breakdown is as follows: Administration sector has 9.30 %; Economic Sector has 50.63%; Law and Justice Sector has 3.22 %; Regional Sector has 0.40%; while Social Sector has 36.44%. The social sector is the second largest getting 13.7 Billion out of the total N37.8 Billion Capital Expenditure. However, further breakdown by Ministry revealed that the Enugu State Ministry of Gender got zero per cent of Capital Expenditure by Program. Also, the Ministry of Youth got zero per cent. Yet, these two groups – women and youth – are critical mass in any economic and human development. It demonstrates the lip-service usually paid to gender budgeting for integration of women in development. The figures in the Capital expenditure includes: 1% for Societal re-orientation, 1% for Economic Empowerment through Agriculture, 1% for water resources and rural development, 2% for poverty alleviation, 2% for information, communication and technology, 6% for environmental improvement, 8% for improvement of Health. Reform of Government had a whopping sum of 29 per cent and Road 33 per cent (2018 Multi Year Budget of Enugu State).

More so, the Ministry of Gender and Social Development for 2016 and 2017 got zero per cent in actual budget despite having allocations of ₦211,000,000 in the budget. This also shows a mismatch or gap between budget estimate and actualization – the actual release of the budget. For 2018, 2019 and 2020, it was stated that in respect of Capital Expenditure for Social Sector that the Ministry of Gender and Social Development will get ₦165,000,000, ₦145,000,000, and ₦134,000,000 respectively. However, going by the Government analysis, they got zero per cent for 2018 and it is most unlikely that this will change despite increasing profile of women's poverty and struggle for livelihood sustainability.

That, notwithstanding, the claim by the Enugu state Government was that in 2017, it had spent huge sums on the empowerment and sensitization of rural women during the 2017 August Meetings. It also stated that with support from the World Bank-assisted Commercial Agricultural Development Project (CADP), it provided support to women and youth beneficiaries in Poultry, Aquaculture, Maize, Fruit Tree, Rice and Meat Production. Each Farmer benefitted to the tune of ₦3.02 Million. This, according to Enugu State Government, yielded an outcome of increased productivity in the different areas of production, job creation for women and youths, food security and value addition to farm produce. However, the challenge is not having gender disaggregated data to clearly show specifically the number of women beneficiaries that would validate the Government's claim. The same is true of virtually every state in Nigeria. Sadly, across the states of the federation, this type of budget is gender-blind and heavily weighted against women, leading to reinforcement of women's poverty, women's political powerlessness and low status. The challenge is not having gender disaggregated data to clearly show number of women beneficiaries that would validate Government's claim. The same is true of virtually every state in Nigeria. From the analysis above, it can be seen that the budgetary allocation for women is quite insignificant. Importantly it demonstrates that gender analysis does not inform budgeting at all levels of governance in Nigeria.

These obvious neglects, notwithstanding, there have been efforts by the government to encourage and promote women's participation in the development of the Nigerian economy. A survey by the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) and National Bureau of Statistics conducted in 2013 revealed that female entrepreneurs accounted for 43.32% in the ownership structure of micro enterprises as against 22.75% in small and medium enterprises. Consequently, the National Policy on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises was made with provision on promoting women owned enterprises. For instance, it runs several programmes exclusively for women – The Rural women Entrepreneurship programme targets grassroots; The Women Entrepreneurship Development Programme (WEDP) strengthens the capacity of business member organisations (BMOs) and NGOs and provides equipment for empowerment purposes. It disbursed 100 sewing machines and 100 water pumping machines after training the women in Bayelsa state; 44 beauty and make-up kits to the women trained in Umuahia, Abia state; 100 sewing machines and 100 grinding machines to the women trained in Nasarawa state; 150 grinding machines and 10 sewing machines to the women trained in Enugu state. The number of persons trained in each area determines the number and type of equipment to be purchased. AWAKE is an entrepreneurship capacity building programme for women in agricultural cooperatives. Grants are given after the training. The WISEP is a capacity building targeted at getting women self-employed. It is for women in cooperatives and a grant of ₦210,000 is given to each cooperative as a revolving fund. SMEDAN also engages in post-training monitoring of its beneficiaries; it engages mostly in entrepreneurship and vocational trainings.

The Bank of Industry also has financial inclusion programmes like Market money, Trader Moni and Farmers money, but these are not exclusive to women. This means that the bank is not gender sensitive to the economic empowerment of women. The Bank of Agriculture, for its own part, has several programmes exclusive to women. In 2014, it started the Grow and Earn More (GEM) programme, which grants women loans of up to ₦1,000,000 without collateral, for expansion and start up projects on agriculture. The only requirements are that the woman is 18years and above, maintains at least 10% of the loan amount as her account balance with her bank and provides two guarantors. The interest rate is 14%. The repayment rate on GEM is 74%. Other donors that have funded programmes for the bank include ILO, AfDB, ECOWAS, IFAD and the European International Bank. The bank embarks on trainings for women on record keeping, farm management, and adequate nutrition so that they may remain healthy and manage their businesses.

[51] SMEDAN And National Bureau Of Statistics Collaborative Survey: Selected Findings (2013) < https://www.smedan.gov.ng/images/PDF/2013-MSME-Survey-Summary-Report.pdf>accessed7 May 2019

[52] National Policy on Micro, small and Medium Enterprises <Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria> accessed 7 May 2019

[53] Section 4.2 (iv) of the Policy.

Similarly, the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Fund (MSMEDF) Guidelines 2015 of the Central Bank of Nigeria stipulates that women's access to financial services should increase by at least 15 per cent annually to eliminate gender disparity. Currently, 60 per cent of the Fund has been earmarked for providing financial services to women. The Fund has a take-off seed capital of ₦220 billion. Only Micro Enterprises and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are eligible to benefit from the fund. This means that individuals cannot access the funds. The eligible activities under the Fund are Agricultural value chain, Cottage Industries, Artisans, Services, Renewable energy/energy efficient product and technologies, Trade and general commerce and other economic activities as may be prescribed by the CBN. The maximum loan amount to micro enterprises are ₦500,000; and ₦5,000,000 and ₦50,000,000 for small and medium scale enterprises respectively, with single digit interest rate for a maximum of one year for micro enterprises and five years for SMEs.

Furthermore, the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) 2018 of the CBN has KPIs which were defined based on the various dimensions of financial inclusion, including gender. Gender here means women. In the 2018 revised version, stakeholders were required to continuously apply a lens of inclusivity to their activities in order to achieve impact on particularly excluded groups such as women, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and people living in the most excluded regions (North East and North West).

The Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development has several plans and programmes, sometimes in collaboration with other agencies and donors, for empowerment of Nigerian women. For instance, the Ministry is collaborating with UNIDO to train women entrepreneur starters on how to develop and expand their business. This has been carried out in four geo-political zones with North Central and North-East as the outstanding zones. It also works with financial institutions like BOI, BOA and Garki Micro-Finance Bank to provide micro-credits, by guaranteeing soft loans which serve as revolving funds to women. It has the Business Development Fund for Women (BUDFOW), an individual loan of ₦100, 000 maximum, which it accesses from the BOI, as well as the WOFEE, a group loan of ₦350,000 accessed from the BOA.

The ECOWAS Gender Micro Credit Scheme has trained about 8 Nigerian women in agriculture and various handicrafts to replicate such trainings in different parts of Nigeria. There have been 14 successful replicated trainings as was monitored by Senegal. There is also an ECOWAS-AfDB project of 50 million women Speak Platform on entrepreneurial skill acquisition and the use of e-platform. Nigeria launched its country team in August, 2018. It will provide data of successful women in different sectors in Nigeria to enable comparison of experience and avoid duplication of interventions. There is also in view, collaboration with Islamic Development Bank on Women Entrepreneurship and Financial Inclusion, on capacity building.

In Cross River state, there is a Personal Assistant to the Governor on Widows Affairs, who oversees the monthly payment of ₦10,000 to each identified widow in the state. In Kwara state, the First Lady engages empowerment of women and girls by giving soft loans to widows and women artisans.

[54] Clause 1.4.
[55] CBN to increase women's access to credit ON MARCH 7, 2018, NWAFOR POLYCARP, https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/03/cbn-increase-womens-access-credit/.
[56] Clause 1.7.
[57] Clause 2.5.
[58] Clauses 2.6 and 2.7.
[59] Page vii.
[60] Oral interview conducted with a Director at the FMWA on 29 April 2019.
[61] Oral interview conducted with a Director at the FMWA on 29 April 2019.

3.2.2 Economic Violence Against Women

Economic violence is a form of violence being experienced by women in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world. This form of violence in Nigeria includes but not limited to access to funds and credit and means of production for livelihood sustainability. It extends to the control and restriction of women access to employment, education, economic and agricultural resources, and financial decision-making as well as discriminatory traditional laws on inheritance, property rights, and use of communal land. At work, women experienced receiving unequal remuneration for work done equal in value to the men's, were overworked and underpaid, and used for unpaid work outside the contractual agreement. At the home front, some were barred from working by partners; while other men totally abandoned family maintenance to the women. Economic violence results in deepening poverty and compromises educational attainment and developmental opportunities for women.

According to a World Bank Report, over 2.7 billion women are legally restricted from having the same choice of jobs as men globally. Of 189 economies assessed in 2018, 104 economies still have laws preventing women from working in specific jobs, 59 economies have no laws on sexual harassment in the workplace and in 18 economies; husbands can legally prevent their wives from working.

Equally, a 2018 report shows that women's global labour force participation rate is lower at 48.5 per cent, 26.5 percentage points below that of men. Also, aside from gender wage gap which is estimated at 23 per cent, Women spend around 2.5 times more time on unpaid care and domestic work than men. Gender inequalities in employment and job quality has also exposed women to inadequate social protection as (pensions, unemployment benefits or maternity protection) an estimated nearly 40 per cent of women globally in wage employment do not have access to social protection. More worrisome is the fact that less than 58% of women globally have access to a financial institution or have bank accounts, let alone have access to banks credit facilities. All these are reflections of economic violence against women.

In Nigeria, there is considerable evidence to suggest the existence of women's economic violence. WACOL women's legal clinic in Enugu confirmed worrying upsurge in cases of denial of inheritance rights (land, housing, economic trees) to women and girls, especially widows in the Igbo speaking states of South Eastern Nigeria despite the Supreme Court decision to the contrary and the linkage to violence and extreme poverty for those affected. CHELD, in its 2015 report, identified factors ranging from husbands preventing their wives from working or denying them funds for necessities such as children's school fees, health services and even food as forms of economic violence. A research in Northern Nigeria showed that the fear of power balance by men is a major factor that influences economic violence against women. The research states that men were worried that women earning an

[62] Oral interview conducted with a serving Commissioner from Cross River state on 20th April, 2019.
[63] Oral interview conducted with the founder of Women and Child Watch Initiative on 27th April 2019.
[64] Fawole, O. I. (2008). Economic Violence To Women and Girls: Is It Receiving the Necessary Attention? Trauma, Violence, & Abuse. 9 (3), 167 - 177. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838008319255; IMF (2018), Pursing Women's Economic empowerment, Electronic copies of IMF Policy Papers are available to the public from http://www.imf.org/external/pp/ppindex.aspx
[65] Ibid
[66] World Bank, Women, Business and Law 2018, (Washington, D. C., 2018), available at http://wbl.worldbank.org/
[67] International Labour Organization (ILO), World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends for Women 2018: Global Snapshot (Geneva, 2018). Available at: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/--- dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_619577.pdf
[68] UN Women, Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (New York, 2018). Available at: http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital - library/publications/2018/2/gender-equality-in-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-2018
[69] ILO, World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends for women 2017 (Geneva, 2017). Available at: http://www.ilo.o rg/global/research/global-reports/weso/trends-for-women2017/lang --en/index.htm

income would shift the balance of power. They were concerned that their wives would become "proud", would neither obey them nor respect them: "She may even look down on her husband – he may not have a say" according to a Male Farmer in Northern Nigeria.

The Utako Market Shop Owners and Traders Association comprise men and women but there are only few women who are shop owners there, as most women are tenants. The Founder of Change Managers International Network identified the fact that there are indeed some loans by government but that the problem is usually that there are limited information and awareness of their existence. Bauchi, Borno and Kebbi States are agricultural states with vast fertile soil. With very few women working in the formal sectors, majority of the women in these States are largely farmers and they engage in the farming of agricultural products, which include maize, rice, millet, groundnut and guinea corn. Women in these states also engage in irrigation farming as well as breeding of cattle and other livestock. They also engage in traditional crafts and mining of mineral deposits. However, farming which is the predominant economic preoccupation of women in these States is hampered by gendered economic norms and rules around land ownership and farming practice (Fatimah Kelleher, 2018).

3.2.3 Barriers to Women Economic Empowerment in Nigeria

Several factors constitute barriers to ending SGBV in Nigeria. These factors include but not limited to:

Inadequate Data: Inadequate data is a challenge to revealing the true situation of things as it relates to SGBV. This is because there is lack of or inadequate reporting and recording of the incidence of SGBV in Nigeria. This is further compounded by the fact the states have failed in their responsibility of establishing an adequate and effective monitoring and reporting mechanism of SGBV in Nigeria. There is also the issue of the pattern and circumstances of the occurrence of SGBV. Because SGBV such as rape, sexual exploitation, violence based on sexual orientation, confinement, domestic violence and FGM/C in most cases occur in private domain, it is difficult to capture and keep adequate record unless there is reporting and effective monitoring.

Empathy for/Dependence on the Institution: Some women are the bread-winners of their paternal homes by virtue of marriage and stay back in the marriage due to economic dependency, regardless of SGBV. Thus, sometimes, families may also be complicit in SGBV because they benefit economically from the sexual exploitation or forced marriage of family members, which may be framed as a way of gaining protection from other forms of violence.
The Culture of Silence/Conspiracy of Silence: Victims, most times, are discouraged from

[70] ILO, Women at Work: Trends 2016 (Geneva, 2016). Available at: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/ ---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_457317.pdf

[71] Demirguc -Kunt and others, The Global Findex Database 2014: Measuring Financial Inclusion around the World. Policy Research Working Paper 7255. (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2015). Available at: http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/187761468179367706/pdf/WPS7255.pdf

[72] Wolrd Bank, Gender -Based Violence: An Analysis of the Implications for the Nigeria For Women Project, 2019 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank

[73] Interview with WACOL team of lawyers in Enugu that provides free legal aid services to women, children and other vulnerable groups on May 2nd, 2019. They confirmed that denial of inheritance and intra-familial property disputes make up at least 60 percent of cases they receive annually. According to them, this is undoubtedly economic violence that leaves widows in worst forms of poverty. They have seen cases where as a result of the denial of inheritance widows have taken to prostitution in order to survive.

[74] CHELD, (2015) Violence Against Women in Nigeria and the Need for a Women's Fund, a publication of the The Center for Health Ethics Law and Development, available at https://cheld.org/chelds-project-on-violence - against-women/ accessed 30/6/2019

[75] Georgia , T. (2015) DFID Guidance Note on Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Through DFID's Economic Development and Women's Economic Empowerment Programmes - Part B, London: VAWG Helpdesk.

reporting incidences of SGBV for a range of reasons, including but not limited to the fear of repercussions, social stigma and lack of faith in the justice system. Thus, secrecy and shame associated with SGBV discourage victims from reporting (young girls/boys are afraid they may not find suitable suitors for marriage after reporting and married women/men are afraid of rejection by their partners or spouses). Even when family members know, they agree to keep the case low and not to report to the formal authority. The adoption by the victims of SGBV of this measure as a survival strategy has to a great extent provided a fertile environment for SGBV to flourish. The justification put forth most times by the victims and close relatives of SGBV is that the process of reporting the experience is highly traumatic for victims in whatever context, including during stages of investigation and testimonies in criminal trials. The protective framework for the victims and witnesses is also inadequate.
Lack of/Inadequate Monitoring/Law enforcement: Law enforcement agents often treat domestic violence with kids-gloves, calling it family matter that should be settled at home. State authorities, such as the army or police as well as other security outfits, sometimes condone or perpetrate SGBV both in times of peace and conflicts. State laws or the lack of them can sometimes facilitate the actions of perpetrators. In brief, weak systems of policing, criminal justice and community sanctions are factors which have influenced the prevalence of SGBV in Nigeria.

Illiteracy and Poverty: SGBV is the most socially tolerated of human rights violations in Nigeria because of the level of Illiteracy and Poverty.

Lack of/Inadequate Support and Care: There is the issue of inadequate support, care and protection in response to the victim of SGBV by the State, the society and even family members.

3.3 Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Sexual and gender-based violence can have serious long-term and life-threatening consequences for victims/survivors. These can range from permanent disability or death to a variety of physical, psycho-social and health-related problems that often destroy the survivor's self-worth and quality of life, and expose her or him to further abuse. Gender-based violence can lead to a vicious cycle of violence and abuse as survivors risk being rejected by their family, excluded and ostracized by society, and even arrested, detained and punished and sometimes abused again for seeking protection, assistance or access to justice.

3.3.1 Relevant Laws and Policies

Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) against women is an obstacle to the realization of the objectives of equality, development, and peace. SGBV includes rape, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, physical violence, forced/early marriage, domestic violence/neglect, harassment and security threats against women/girls. SGBV prevents women from enjoying their fundamental human rights and freedom. In Nigeria, women and girls are vulnerable to physical, sexual or psychological abuse that cuts across

[76] National Population Commission of Nigeria, UNICEF Nigeria, and U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Violence Against Children in Nigeria: Findings from a National Survey, 2014, Abuja, Nigeria: UNICEF, 2016, available at https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/reports/ending-violence-against-children-nigeria Thomas, S., Darkal, H., and Goodson, L., (2019), Monitoring and reporting incidents of sexual and gender-based violence across the refugee journey, IRiS WORKING PAPER SERIES, No. 29/2019, available at https://www.birmingh am.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/iris/2019/iris-working-papers-29-2019.pdf ;; UN Women, (2013), Ending Violence against Women and Girls Programming Essentials, available at http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/modules/pdf/1372349234.pdf

[77] Oral interview conducted with Comrade Lucy D. Unana, Executive Director, Women in New Nigerian and Youth Empowerment Initiatives and Women and Children Rights Peace Building Awareness Initiatives, Borno State on 1st May 2019.

[78] Oral interview conducted with a Deputy Director, Ministry of Justice; the Treasurer International Federation of Women Lawyers Kebbi State and Executive Secretary Women Arise, Kebbi State on 30 April 2019.

lines of income, class, and culture. The Beijing Platform for Action + 10 of 2005 requires all governments to promote research, collect data and compile statistics related to the prevalence of different forms of violence against women, especially on SGBV. Further, Agenda 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) also restated the provisions of the Beijing platform for action on ending sexual and gender-based violence. Responding to the provisions of the Beijing Platform for action, the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2006 adopted the National Gender policy which addressed issues of SGBV. Further in 2015, the Violence against Persons Act was enacted to address issues on violence against persons in Nigeria. Presently, Anambra, Oyo, Ogun, Enugu, FCT (Abuja), Lagos and Ekiti have each passed laws against Violence against Women. Yet, the incidence of SGBV is still prevalent in Nigeria as Gender and Women Rights complaints constituted the most complaints, almost a quarter of the complaints to the National Human Rights Commission.

Unfortunately, the Criminal and Penal codes have some elements that tend to condone domestic violence. For example, section 55 of the Penal Code Act (applicable in the Northern Part of Nigeria) allows a man to chastise his wife. In the case of Akinbuwa v. Akinbuwa, the court held that a minor assault of the wife by the husband for corrective purposes is tolerable in line with the Penal Code. Section 6 of the Criminal Code (applicable in the southern part of Nigeria) denies legal recognition for rape within marriage. Therefore, in the states that have not passed the Violence Against Persons Laws, these codes will still be applicable.

The recent United Nations Security Resolutions 1325 (UNSCR 1325) specifically deals with how women and girls are impacted by conflict and war differently, and recognises the important role that women can and already do play in peace building efforts. The resolution requires parties in a conflict to prevent violations of women's rights, to support women's participation in peace negotiations and in post-conflict reconstruction, and to protect women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence. The resolution calls for including a gender perspective in peace negotiations and increasing women's participation in peace negotiation, with particular attention to supporting local women's peace initiatives. A National Plan of Action was adopted and is currently with the National Human Rights Commission and the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs. However, implementation is still fraught with difficulties as women are still not on the peace table or leading action in that direction.

3.3.2 Situational analysis on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Against Women

Sexual and Gender-based violence against women and girls are prevalent throughout the world. The “Us Too” report of the IBA conducted by its Legal Policy & Research Unit (LPRU) and consultancy Acritas had over 7,000 respondents from 135 countries and reveals that one in three female respondents have been sexually harassed at work. These incidents are chronically underreported (IBA Us Too report, 2019).

The situation is the same in Nigeria. Women suffer from SGBV and this is obvious from some statistics. The percentage of women who married before age 15 in Nigeria is 18.5. 44 percent of women aged 20-49 married before age 18. About 18.4 percent of women had some form of female genital mutilation. One in three women in Nigeria feels that a husband/partner is justified in hitting or beating his wife in at least one of the five situations (MICS 2016/2017).

[79] Oral interview conducted with Comrade Lucy D. Unana, Executive Director, Women in New Nigerian and Youth Empowerment Initiatives and Women and Children Rights Peace Building Awareness Initiatives, Borno State on 1st May 2019.

[80] Oral interview conducted with a member Bauchi Human Rights Network, Bauchi State on 1st May 2019.

[81] Oral interview conducted with a Deputy Director, Ministry of Justice; the Treasurer International Federation of Women Lawyers Kebbi State and Executive Secretary Women Arise, Kebbi State on 30 April 2019.

[82] Action Sheet 4, Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons, available at http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/4794b3512.pdf accessed 26th July 2018.

[83] Data from 2017 NHRC Annual Report, p141.

There is a correlation between SGBV and women's predisposition to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and AIDs. The percentage of women living with HIV was increasing slowly from 51.7 per cent in 2013 to 53.1 per cent in 2016, but that of men was decreasing slowly from 48.3 per cent in 2013 to 46.9 per cent in 2016 (NACA). Females constituted about 76.63 per cent of trafficked persons for 2013 – 2015 (NAPTIP). These data reveal that women are exposed to and suffer from SGBV and these affect their physical and mental health.

Rape is also still on the rise, with under-aged girls falling victims the most. Recently, the upper Shari'ah court sitting in Tudun Wada, Zaria sentenced three rapists to one year imprisonment with an option of ₦7000 fine, with 20 strokes of the cane, for raping two girls aged 9 and 10 on their way to School. The sentence has generated a lot controversy and anxiety in the ancient city (Daily Trust April 27, 2019).

The raid and arrest of women at night by law enforcement agencies, on the guise of getting female sex workers off the street, is on the rise. On the 27th of April 2019 in FCT, Nigerians took to social media to condemn the alleged sexual abuse and violence by police officers who arrested several women in night hang outs. We can, therefore, conclude that SGBV is on the increase in Nigeria and there is a need for urgent focused intervention by government, women right based NGOs and concerned stakeholders.

Women are also targeted for violence. The founder of Change Managers International Network lamented on how women were attacked, cheated out and intimidated during the 2019 elections. Women's Aid Collective (WACOL) Enugu documented incidences of violence in the five states of south east geopolitical zone during the 2019 election. The findings demonstrate that election violence is gendered and election observers and monitors are sometimes oblivious of this fact. Iyom Joy Onyesoh of Women's Situation Room Nigeria (WSRN) noted some improvements in gender-sensitivity of electoral process, while raising concerns about serious incidents of violence and barriers to voting. WSRN observers also reported an improvement in the gender-sensitivity of the electoral process, with separate lines provided for women where appropriate, and persons living with disabilities, pregnant women, and nursing mothers given priority in voting. Observers also highlighted the large turnout seen at polling units across the country. A national survey, which was carried out by WSRN across all six geopolitical zones, exposed lower levels of awareness amongst women about the need to collect permanent voter cards (PVCs) in order to vote. Nearly 1 in 5 women incorrectly believed that it is possible to vote with a temporary voters' card. Further, the survey revealed that women have lower levels of awareness about the process for collecting PVCs. Women were 4% less likely than men to report having heard, read or seen anything about the process for collecting PVCs. Women also reported greater barriers to collecting their PVCs than men. Of those voters who have collected their PVCs, women were 6% more likely to have reported difficulty in collecting them. Finally, women reported a greater level of concern about insecurity, with those who have not yet collected their PVCs citing fear of violence as one of the reasons.

The Zamfara state government has stated that the bandits in the state have turned 8,000 women to widows and 16,000 children to orphans, since 2009. Women and children have been drafted as suicide bombers, are victims of sexual violence and assaults from insurgents. Three quarter of suicide bombers are girls who are exploited for violence and targeted for abuse. But as already recognised, women are also powerful agents for peace and security in their communities.

[84] Data from 2017 NHRC Annual Reports, p127.
[85] (1998) CA/B/6/94, 13 (Court of Appeal Benin).

The National Network Coordinator of WANEP-Nigeria, Ms Bridget Osakwe, noted the important role of the media as a key partner in promoting broad public awareness and effective implementation of UNSCR 1325. The media should promote, support and recognise the role women play in preventing conflict, building and sustaining peace. For now, media portrayal of women leaves much to be desired and the advancement in information, science and technology has not benefited women as expected.

Most Prevalent forms of SGBV

At the national level, the most prevalent SGBV issues are:

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is defined by the World Health Organization as all procedures which involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia and/or injury to the female genital organs, whether for cultural or any other non-therapeutic reason. FGM is widely practiced in Nigeria, and with its large population, Nigeria has the highest absolute number of cases of FGM in the world. Available statistical data from National Bureau of Statistics of 2017 indicated that women in the 45–49 age groups had the highest percentage that had any form of FGM (27.6 percent), while women between 15-19 years old had the lowest percentage (12.3 percent). Overall, one-quarter of Nigerian women age 15–49 are circumcised. Older women age 45–49 are more than twice likely to be circumcised than younger women. FGM is most common in South East and South West Zones, where nearly half of women are circumcised. FGM is most commonly performed by a traditional circumciser (72%) followed by a nurse/midwife (10%) (NDHS, 2013).

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86 Samson Toromade, Nigerians outraged over alleged sexual abuse of women arrested by Police in Abuja <https://www.pulse.ng/news/local/70-women-allegedly-sexually-abused-by-police-officers-in-abuja/j3hbv5m >accessed 2 May 2019.

87 See WACOL, Report on Nigeria's Election Violence Incidents for the South-East Geo-Political Zone in the 2019 General Elections Published 2019 with the support from IFES, USAID, and UKAID.

88 Ibid.

89 Women's Situation Room Nigeria (WSRN) is made up of over 40 women-focused organisations across the country. It was established prior to the 2015 elections to monitor election-related violence against women and has since played a crucial role in increasing women's substantive participation in political, conflict prevention, and peace building processes.

90 https://wsrng.com/womens-situation-room-nigeria-wsrn-releases-initial-findings-from-observation-mission/ accessed 3 May, 2019.

91 See Women's Situation Room Nigeria Press Release of 10th August 2018 signed by the Media Contact Sola Odeja.

92 New telegraph newspaper, Friday 26 April, 2019 p2.

93 National Action plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions on women, peace and security in Nigeria 2017 -2020 by federal ministry of women affairs and social development.

94 Amina Mohammed via a recorded Skype call to the AWLN, Nigerian Chapter launch on 2nd May, 2019.

95 Joy Yesufu, Women Participation: Key In Building Sustainable Peace And Security https://leadership.ng/2019/02/15/women-participation-key-in-building-sustainable-peace-and-security/

96 World Health Organization: Female Genital Mutilation: An overview. Geneva: World Health Organization; 1998.

97 National Bureau of Statistics,' Statistical Report on Women and Men in Nigeria 2017' and the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey 2013.

The spate of Female Genital Mutilation in Kwara State is on the increase. In 2018, a certain person made Facebook post advertising for a free cutting of girls in Kwara state. The person was arrested but no trial has been effected till date as a result of the lack of laws punishing /criminalising the offence. This sparked off online petitions to the state government on the need to end FGM in Kwara state. Although there is no national law prohibiting the practice, some states are beginning to criminalize it in specific legislations relating to domestic and other forms of gender-based violence. For instance, in Cross River State, a 2000 Law prohibits the practice of FGM and early Marriage.

Trafficking in Persons

Trafficking in person is defined as "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Available data from the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Person as at 2019 reveals that Thirteen Thousand, Three Hundred and Fifty (13,350) victims have been rescued by the agency since inception (NAPTIP 3rd Quarter Report). The case with the highest number of rescued victims is Procurement for sexual exploitation or internal prostitution, followed by the procurement of persons for sexual exploitation for external prostitution. An interview conducted with an officer of the Legal Department of NAPTIP revealed that women were the highest number of rescued victims for sexual exploitation both for internal and external prostitution. In Cross River State, the Director of State Services made arrests of fifty-nine sex workers in Calabar, claimed to be mostly under-aged who are alleged to have been trafficked from different parts of Nigeria. As has been observed:

> there are several intertwining factors that cause or fuel trafficking in Nigeria and they include poverty, escalating youth unemployment, gender inequalities, discrimination, corruption, sectarian conflicts, porous borders, declining economy, cultural and social norms, including fetish practices of oath swearing at shrines or those administered by native doctors to ensure secrecy and instil fear on trafficked persons not to expose their traffickers and to ensure their full compliance to the illegal contracts they have entered with the traffickers/smugglers (Ezeilo, 2018).

Widowhood Practices /Disinheritance of Women and Girls

Widowhood practices and disinheritance of women and girls is prevalent in Nigeria. Oral interview from FIDA staff revealed that the NGO receives and intervenes in cases on widowhood practices and disinheritance of women and girls. FIDA reviewed not less than 18 cases on Widowhood practices /Disinheritance of Women and Girls across Nigeria in the year 2018. The Women Aid Collective (WACOL) receives several cases on widowhood and disinheritance of women and girls and provides legal aid for them. In the first quarter of 2019, 400 women were reportedly deprived of their right to inherit property of their late spouse. In the last five years, WACOL legal unit has received 5000 cases of women and widows either battered or disinherited. 95% of the complaints in the last five years

[98] Domesticate the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act in Kwara State https://www.change.org/p/kwara-state-house-of-assembly-domesticate-the-violence-against-persons-prohibition-act-in-kwara-state accessed May 3, 2019

[99] UNODC, 'What is trafficking in persons?' <https://www.unodc.org/lpo-brazil/en/trafico-de-pessoas/index.html>

[100] DSS arrests 59 commercial sex workers in Calabar, Punch Newspaper, 5the May, 2019

[101] Federation of Women Lawyers, Women's Rights Through the Cases, a published book by the FIDA.

comprised women between 25 and 90 years, with a fraction of 2% male complaints. 25 of these women are currently receiving free legal representation at various courts in Nigeria courtesy of WACOL pro bono service. 70% of disinheritance cases comprise women living in the rural areas. Unfortunately, access to justice for these women is limited in a patriarchal society.

The recent decision of the Supreme Court recognizing women's right to inheritance is a milestone in the struggle for gender equality in relation to inheritance and ownership of land, housing and property. The Supreme Court in Ukeje v. Ukeje (2014) declared as unconstitutional, the law that disinherits children from their deceased father's estate. It follows, therefore, that the Igbo native law and custom which deprives children born out of wedlock from sharing the benefit of their father's estate is conflicting with section 42 (2) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended). The earlier case of Augustine Nwofor Mojekwu v. Caroline Mgbafor Okechukwu Mojekwu decided by the Court of Appeal Enugu on 10th April 1997 was indeed a precursor.

Domestic Violence / Wife Battering

The Nigerian Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP) report shows that approximately 80 million Nigerian women and girls are victims of sexual and gender-based violence in Nigeria. Statistical data from the latest Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) revealed that domestic violence cuts across all socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. Nearly three in ten Nigerian women have ever experienced physical violence since age 15, while 11% experienced any physical violence in the past 12 months. Women's experience of physical violence since age 15 is most common in South-South Zone (52%) and lowest in the North West Zone (7%). The same pattern is seen for experiences of physical violence in the past 12 months; 19% in South-South Zone compared to 3% in the North West Zone. Divorced, separated, or widowed women are most likely to have ever experienced physical violence since age 15.

Seven percent of Nigerian women age 15–49 have ever experienced sexual violence of which 3% have experienced sexual violence in the past 12 months. Women, who are divorced, separated, or widowed are more likely to have ever experienced sexual violence (15%) than women who have never been married (8%) or are currently married (7%). Experience of sexual violence varies by zone, from 16% in North East Zone to 2% in the North West Zone. Women who are employed but not paid in cash are most likely to have experienced sexual violence (17%), while unemployed women are least likely (6%). Women with no education are less likely to have experienced sexual violence (5%) than women who have been to school (8-10%). There is no clear pattern between the experience of sexual violence and household wealth. However, it is obvious that it is more prevalent in the South South and least prevalent in the North West. This may be because of early and child marriage practices in the North, which masks the classification of such acts as legal within marriage.

Nearly half of Nigerian women (45%) who experienced domestic violence never sought help or never told anyone about the violence. More than 70% of women who sought help did so from their own family. Nearly 30% of women sought help from their husband/partner's family. Notably, data from NDHS and oral account from the Gender Department of the Nigeria Police Force revealed that few women sought help from the police (2%). Oral accounts from the Federation of Women Lawyers and Legal Aid Commission revealed that Gender-based violence is on the increase. In Enugu State, WACOL reports that for the first quarter of 2019, 165 women were battered in their marriages. 65% of the battered women live in the urban area.

[102] [2014]28 W.R.N p. 1 Per Rhodes - Vivour, JSC at p. 13. Also, [2014] 11 NWLR (PT.1418) 384.
[103] The latest report is the 2013. It is reviewed every 5 years but the 2018 is yet to be published.

Violence to women in conflict situations

In the North Eastern part of Nigeria, there are at least 6535 cases of sexual violence against women and girls by the account given by Titilope Ajayi. No one can say for sure where it all began, but it has taken an alarming rate of increase and disturbing proportion in the nature and form it takes. Baby girls of 4-9 months are raped just like young girls and married women with impunity and lack of respect or decency to womanhood and humanity. Factors responsible for the escalation and unabated increase of SGBV include continued indifference to gender inequality, discrimination against women, stereotyping, poverty, illiteracy, drugs and related intoxicants, misogyny and lack of tolerance (Titilope Ajayi, 2018).

The emergence of Boko Haram and the spread of violence has opened up new windows for the a new form of gender violence in form of sexual slavery, abduction, kidnapping and trafficking of girls as mercenaries, and comfort women to provide sex for the insurgents, forced marriage to terrorists and 'sex-for-food' in this part of the country that is having significant impact on womanhood and the perpetuation of the miseries suffered by women on the basis of gender. The on-going insurgency in North East Nigeria is characterized by extreme levels of violence and destruction. Boko Haram's extremist ideology and its heavy reliance on tactics of indiscriminate terror perpetrated against a wide array of targets have significantly impacted social relations. There is the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) across the six (6) States of the Northeast region namely Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, Gombe, Bauchi and Taraba since the insurgency broke out. Available statistics show that about half of cases of sexual violence were due to Boko Haram insurgents, 27.3% were unknown and 17.8% were members of the police and armed forces. Other perpetrators were intimate partners (15.4%) and relatives (5.8%). Majority of the women (80%) reported Boko Haram insurgents as perpetrators of physical violence followed by unknown persons (12%), men in the camp or host community (5%) and police and army (3%).

Emerging forms of violence

An emerging type of SGBV is violence to women in conflict situations. As earlier reported, the emergence of Boko Haram and the spread of violence have opened up new windows for this new form of gender violence of rape, forced marriage to terrorists and 'sex-for-food'. Violence in the North-Central region between the farmers and herders also result to indiscriminate rape of women and girls.

Socio-political violence is also emerging. In the 2019 elections, thugs in the shape of political supporters under the influence of drugs, took control of the roads, streets and wards or settlements with all manner of dangerous weapons scaring and forcing people, especially women, to surrender their valuables including bags, phones and other items or adornment or risk being maimed or killed. In other situations, these groups of bandits resort to rape of women indiscriminately – married and unmarried – under the guise of political support.

Pressurised voting is also another emerging type of violence against women. An incident was reported of a husband who divorced his wife because she refused to vote for the candidate of his choice, preferring to vote for the candidate that suited her. Violence within online spaces by women who shame other women or by intimate partners is also emerging.

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[104] Oral interview conducted with an officer at the Gender department of the Nigeria Police Force on 29 April 2019.

[105] Oral interview conducted with an officer at the Legal Aid Commission on 2 May 2019.

[106] UNHCR, (2017) Key Developments, SGBV Monthly Update, March 2017 available at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/unhcr_nigeria_gbv_monthly_update_march_2017.pdf; Joe Read, (2017) Sexual violence and the Boko Haram crisis in north-east Nigeria, in Special feature The Lake Chad Basin: an overlooked crisis? (Humanitarian Exchange Number 70, Commissioned and published by the Humanitarian Practice Network at ODI, October 2017) p. 24.

[107] Ibid.

[108] Ibid.

3.3.3 SGBV in project states

It is important to note that different categories of SBV occur most prevalently in different states. Therefore, interventions should be targeted to the peculiarities and idiosyncrasies in each state. For example, statistics from the Lagos State Bureau of Statistics reveal that spousal abuse has become a scourge and 50% of women have been battered by their husbands at one time or the other, and unbelievably, more educated women (65%) are in this terrible situation as compared with their low income counterparts (55%). A gynaecologist who has practised for 15 years in Lagos recalled how a pregnant woman was brought into a hospital in Lagos state in a state of coma on 23rd April 2019, and ended up losing the pregnancy due to spousal battering. He also laments on how men are ignorant of the challenges of menopause, which affects the sexual life of the women, sometimes leading to SGBV.

Statistics from Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team shows that between January and September 2017, a total of 852 cases of domestic violence and related cases were recorded. There were 564 domestic violence cases, 60 defilement cases, 30 rape cases, 11 attempted rape, 123 child neglect and abuse cases, and 84 other cases. Furthermore, between July and September 2018, a total of 667 cases of domestic and sexual violence were recorded; 179 domestic violence reports, 201 sexual abuse reports, 143 reports on child abuse and 144 other cases. Lagos State is leading in the fight against SGBV as the Lagos state government, considering the prevalence of SGBV in the State, established the Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team (DSVRT) which is an organisation under Lagos state Government committed to ensuring total eradication of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in the State. However, Statistics revealed that SGBV is on the increase mostly on women and girls in the state and there is need for urgent action. It is observed that Rape, FGM, Child abuse and Physical violence were prevalent in Lagos State.
Kwara State Ministry of Women Affairs also identified rape, child abuse, molestation, female genital mutilation and domestic violence as the most prevalent SGBV in the state. The state Ministry of Women Affairs uncovered and confirmed 1,000 rape cases within 12 months in the year 2017, adding that the crime had become too high in the state.

In Cross River state, FGM, money bride, rape and domestic violence are prevalent. Commendably, the Cross Rivers state government has established a Gender Response Centre, with hotlines for anonymous calls, where victims can run to for help. This is maintained with support from UNFPA.

Women's Aid Collective (WACOL) since inception in 1997 has offered legal assistance to victims of abuse and human rights violations. In 2014, it started a specialized services (one stop shop) called TAMAR Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in partnership with the Enugu State Government, represented by the Ministries of Health, Justice, Gender Affairs and Social Development and the Enugu State Police Command. It received both financial and technical support from Justice for All (J4A) Programme of the Department for International Development (DFID). The Centre provided rapid, holistic and high quality free medical, counselling and other support services to victims and survivors of sexual assault in Enugu State; and between April 2014 and April 2017, it assisted 641 clients/victims of sexual violence. Of the 641 victims who reported to the Centre within this period, 401 were under the age of 18 (i.e. minors) of which 183 are under the age of ten, while 240 are above the age of 18.

[109] Bukola Ademola Adelehin et al, The impact of farmer-herder conflict on women in Adamawa, Gombe and Plateau States in Nigeria, 2018.

[110] Tayo Ogunbiyi, Lagos And The Crusade Against Domestic And Sexual Violence<https://lagosstate.gov.ng/blog/2019/01/16/lagos-and-the-crusade-against-domestic-and-sexual-violence/> accessed 3 May 2019

[111] Sahara Reporters, Lagos Records 852 Domestic Violence Cases In Nine Months http://saharareporters.com/2017/09/05/lagos-records-852-domestieviolence-cases-nine-months accessed 3 May 2019.

Though there is paucity of data on SGBV in FCT, the Federal Capital Territory Administration Social Development Secretariat revealed that rape, incest, sexual assault and domestic violence against women and girls are prevalent in FCT, especially in the suburbs. FCT administration has set up Sexual Assault Centre (SAC) in Karu General Hospital Abuja to handle cases of domestic violence, adding that such centres will be established in other public health institutions across the territory. The prevalence of rape related cases is on the increase, as some residents of Nyanja (a Suburb in FCT), near Customary Court in Area D, disclosed that rape has become a daily occurrence since the year 2017. One of such laudable efforts is the establishment and institutionalization of sexual assault referral centres and Sexual and Domestic Violence Response Teams in the FCT (SDVRT). SDVRT brings together a team of agencies and civil society organisations that are in the forefront of providing holistic support to victims and survivor in the Federal Capital Territory-Abuja.

A Deputy Director in the Kebbi State Ministry of Justice stated that rape and domestic violence cases are on the increase and are the most prevalent in Kebbi State. She lamented that parents and victims are reluctant to report and prosecute rape and other sexual based violence. This is because there is a culture of silence as a result of cultural and religious issues. More importantly, parents are afraid that, where cases are reported, the girls or lady may not have husbands to marry them, people will be pointing fingers at them and they will be stigmatized. She stated that, there is less incidence of gender based violence. Using herself as example, she stated that through the number of years she has spent in the civil service, she has never faced any challenges at her place of work to get her present position of Deputy Director. She stated that she got her promotion as at when due without discrimination, on the same level as that of men.

A respondent from Bauchi State stated that domestic violence is more pronounced than the other forms of violence. She stated that gender based violence also exist and she has been a victim herself. Another respondent confirmed that domestic violence is prevalent in Bauchi State and that sexual violence is growing in scale and proportion previously unknown.

In Borno State, a human rights activist stated that with the emergence of insurgency, there has been a lot of violation of women's rights, sexual exploitation in IDP camps (example is the reported cases of sex for food in the media). She also stated that there are reported cases of domestic violence (cases of physical beating of wives by husbands), as well as cases of sexual abuses of minors (this is applicable to both girls and boys). She concluded that issues of sexual and gender-based violence are underreported in Borno State.

3.3.4. Barriers to Ending SGBV in Nigeria

Several challenges exist that serve as barriers to ending Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Nigeria. Paucity of data acts as barrier in revealing the true situation of things to enable targeted intervention. In addition, some women are the bread-winners of their paternal homes by virtue of their marriage to an economically comfortable spouse. Therefore, they stay back in their marriages due to economic dependency, regardless of incidents of SGBV so that they can continue to provide for their paternal homes. The secrecy and shame associated with SGBV also discourage victims from reporting. Even when family members know that their relatives have been victims, they

[112] DSVRT, 'Lagos records 667 domestic, sexual violence cases in three months <https://punchng.com/lagos-records-667-domestic-sexual-violence-cases-in-three-months-dsvrt/>accessed 3 May 2019

[113] 'Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team'< https://www.dsvrtlagos.org/index.html>accessed 3 May 2019.

[114] Ibid.

[115] '1000 Kwara Women raped in one year', Punch newspaper of (2 September 2017)<https://punchng.com/1000-kwara-women-raped-in-one-year/>accessed 3 May 2019.

[116] Oral interview conducted with a former member of HOR on 2nd May, 2019

[117] Oral interview conducted with a serving Commissioner from Cross River state on 20th April, 2019.

agree to keep the cases low and not to report to the formal authority. This acts as a big barrier to finding the perpetrators and ensuring they are held accountable for their actions. Similarly, law enforcement agents often treat domestic violence with kids-gloves, calling it family matter that should be settled at home.

4.0 Women's Rights Programming, Organisations and Movements

4.1 Women groups and organisations

Women are organized for economic, political and social reasons as networks, professional groups, cluster groups, groups with common interest, or observers groups. However, most women organize for gender equality and empowerment. One of the first women movements in Nigeria is the Aba Women's Riot of 1929. This could be referred to as one of the foundations to women rights emancipation in Nigeria. The women in Aba – through protests such as refusal to be counted, refusal to count their goats and animals – resisted the imposition of tax on women in South Eastern Nigeria. The resistance grew from being peaceful to a strong resistance leading to riot. This resistance spread across southern Nigeria, leading to the burning down of houses and properties of the colonial masters. The women also resisted the police and it is believed that in the frenzy, about 18 women were killed and many others wounded. Women's movement in Nigeria in the 20th Century from the 1920s up until the 1990s had been organized around colonialism, nationalism and prodemocracy struggle to end, in particular, military rule. As Nina Mba puts it, a number of organizations have been formed by women in Nigeria, independently of any men's group or influence, whose membership has been exclusively female and some of which were explicitly political interest and pressure groups.

One is not unmindful of attempts at building national organizations especially in 1953 (5-7 August 1953) where Mrs Kuti organized a conference regarded as the parliament of the women of Nigeria. That assembly transformed to the Federation of Nigeria Women's Societies. The society was dominated by women from southern Nigeria and it is not recorded that anyone attended from the then Northern Protectorate/Northern Nigeria. As has been observed elsewhere, these groups were atomized, not national in character, but rather organized on communal basis among different ethnic groups in Nigeria and their interests never coincided with feminists' agenda elsewhere in the western world. To that extent, one may argue that there was no independent, national or Nigerian women's movement or feminists' organization as such until the 80s with the emergence of organizations such as Women in Nigeria (WIN), seen as the first feminist organization in Nigeria. It should also be noted that there is a difference between women's organization and women's movement. Thus, even in post-independence Nigeria and in the 21st century, it is still difficult to state whether there is a women's movement in Nigeria. Of course, there are many vocal women's groups, campaigning and taking action to eliminate discrimination against women but that is still different from the substratum of what constitutes a movement. In other words, what WIN did was to try to foster a women's movement in Nigeria and forge transnational feminist network, but it only succeeded for a while and WIN has since been in coma if not dead.

[118] Abuja Inquirer,'We are overwhelmed by rape, incest cases - FCTA Family members, clergy top abuse list <'http://www.theabujainquirer.com/?page=3329&get=We_are_overwhelmed_by_rape_incest_cases_%E2%80 %93_FCTA_Family_members_clergy_top_abuse_list_3329>accessed 3 May 2019

[119] Ibid

[120] Oral interview conducted with a Deputy Director, Ministry of Justice; the Treasurer Inter national Federation of Women Lawyers Kebbi State and Executive Secretary Women Arise, Kebbi State on 30 April 2019.

[121] Oral interview conducted with a member Bauchi Human Rights Network, Bauchi State on 1st May 2019.

[122] Oral interview conducted with Comrade Lucy D. Unana, Executive Director, Women in New Nigerian and Youth Empowerment Initiatives and Women and Children Rights Peace Building Awareness Initiatives, BornoState on 1st May 2019.

The organization of Nigerian women at the national level is fairly recent with the formation of the Federation of Nigerian Women Societies (FNWSA) in 1953. This was followed with the formation of the National Council of Women Societies (NCWS) in 1959, as an umbrella organization of women. WIN was formed in 1982 following the first ever post-independence national conference on women in Nigeria held at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) came into existence as a network umbrella association in the late 80s. Nowadays, we have hundreds of women's organizations and professional bodies that have not necessarily transformed or keyed into women's movement in Nigeria and beyond.

Recent women movements are more strategic and purposeful. For instance, the African Women Leaders Network serves as a continental platform to galvanise the leadership of African women towards fostering lasting peace and sustainable development in all sectors. It was established in 2017 through a collaborative partnership between UN Women, African Union and the Government of Germany, to mobilise the collective force of women leadership across Africa. It aims to enhance the leadership of women in the transformation of Africa, in line with Africa Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Sustainable Goals. The Nigerian chapter of the network was inaugurated on 2nd May, 2019. The priority areas for the network in Nigeria are women's participation in peace and security; women's high level advocacy to secure political will in support of policies to be domesticated and resourced; women's political representation and leadership; women's economic empowerment and social investment; and mentorship of young women and intergenerational dialogue.

The Nigerian Council of Women Societies has been in existence for about 60 years. It engages with the government on matters that concern the Nigerian women. It was a formidable group but derailed when the management of the association decided to tie itself in the apron of government and politicians, especially the first ladies at state and national levels. It was part of the lobby groups that engaged with President Goodluck Jonathan on 35% affirmative action for women. It has received funding from CBN and international donors.

The 100 Women Lobby Group was established in the year 2000. It is a lobby group that engages the Executive and the Legislature to ensure that women issues are at the front burner of affairs. Inroads were made during the Obasanjo administration as the group was vocal; it mobilized women by using crowd effect to support women even in court proceedings. A founding member of the group attributes the success recorded during the Yaradua/ Goodluck regimes as a result of intensive engagement of women with the electoral processes. The group recently engaged the government to ask for 50% appointive positions for women. It also calls on states to strive to give an additional 2 to 3 more slots for female commissioners from the present figures. She recommends the need to have adequate funds to sustain the coalition and its activities, as more activities and engagements are done when there are funds.

The Nigerian League of Women Voters is engaged in educating and mobilizing Nigerian women to enable them play a larger role in governance, public matters and public affairs and to defend and perfect Nigeria's democracy. The goal of the league is to attract all females from 18 years, to enlighten and educate them on their civic rights and duties within the context of Nigeria. It also promotes the empowerment of and participation of women in all arms of government, corporate bodies and stimulates their entrepreneurial skills.

[123] Ibrahim Anoba, The Aba Women's Riots of 1929: Africa's Great Tax Revolt, October 1 2018 https://www.africanliberty.org/2018/10/01/the-aba-womens-riots-of-1929-how-women-led-africas-great-tax- revolt/accessed 1st May 2019.

[124] Nina Mba, Nigerian Women Mobilized Research series No.48, Published by the International and Area Studies University of California, Berkeley 1982, Nigerian Edition Published 1997 Crucible Publishers Ltd. p.165. See in particular Chapter VI on Women's Organizations: Their Roles as Political Interest and Pressure Groups.

[125] Ibid. p. 173 - 181.

[126] Joy Ezeilo, Women, Law and Human Rights: Global and National Perspectives, ACENA Publishers, Abuja/Enugu, 2011 p. 28.

[127] ibid.

The Gender Technical Unit (GTU) was established in 2010 by the Gender and Affirmative Action (GAA) Issue Based Project, an initiative of the DFID Funded Coalitions for Change (C4C) at the National Assembly in a bid to promote women's increased quality political participation and legislative engagements towards achieving positive gender legislations in Nigeria. Its priority thematic areas include: Democracy and Governance, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Education. The unit is currently coordinated by Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA) under the auspices of the GAA in collaboration with Development Partners. It is interesting to note that 2 of the coalition organisations are headed by men. This portrays them as 'he for shes'. Members of the coalition pay annual dues to fund the activities of the unit, though the government members do not pay.

GTU acts as a research and documentation centre that supports female members of the National Assembly or any gender sensitive person. It engages in advocacy as it is the only civil society space in the National Assembly. It has achieved a lot in facilitating the passage of Bills, Motions and other legislative measures at the National Assembly; of remarkable mention is the passage of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act, 2015. The GTU is currently facilitating the passage of the Right to Food Bill in collaboration with Farm and Infrastructure Foundation (FIF) and the Gender and Equal Opportunities (GEO) Bill in collaboration with NCAA which are at advanced legislative stages at both chambers of the National Assembly. The GTU could be replicated in the state houses of assembly. There are consultations to replicate it at Kaduna and Enugu States Houses of Assembly. The GTU needs enough staff to be able to review and evaluate the gender component in each bill or the impacts of the intending provisions on women.

The FIDA Nigeria is a non-profit, non-political, voluntary association of women called to the practice of law in Nigeria. FIDA Nigeria's primary role is to protect, promote and preserve the rights of women and children in Nigeria. FIDA Nigeria actualizes its objectives through free legal representation for indigent women and children, advocacy and policy campaigns, education and training, mediation and counselling services and publishing information resources.

WARD C is a gender focused organization based in Lagos but working across Nigeria on gender issues, especially on sexual and gender-based violence, access to justice, political participation, and peace and conflict resolution. It coordinates a number of networks/coalition, including the Gender and Constitutional Reform Network (GECORN), Feminist E- Platform, and Transition Monitoring Group (TMG).

Women Aid Collective (WACOL) is committed to promotion and protection of human rights. WACOL's vision is a democratic society free from violence and abuse, where human rights of all – particularly women and young people – are recognized in law and practice. Its mission is to assist in the education, social, economic and political development of women and young people through a wide range of services: training, research, advocacy, shelter, free legal and financial aid, intra-familial/community conflict resolution, and information and library services. WACOL works throughout Nigeria and her legal aid programme has helped over 60,000 women and girls in especially difficult circumstances to access gender justice.

The Legal clinic is the fulcrum of WACOL, and it has existed since 1997, providing legal and

[128] http://fida.org.ng/about-us/.
[129] www.wardcnigeria.org
[130] www.wacolnigeria.org
[131] Oral interview conducted with an active member of over 20years on 1st May 2019.
[132] Oral interview conducted with a married woman of 33 years who resides in a rural community on 28 April, 2019.

psychological support services to women and children. The services available under the legal aid scheme include court representation, crisis intervention and counselling, information about victim's rights, shelter, home visits and other psycho-social support for victims, referrals for other needs. The legal clinic is equipped with in-house legal experts, trained to protect the interest of women and children in Nigeria.

The Catholic Women Organisations was established with the aim to uplift the faith of members and provide support for members in need. It is an all women group organized at the national level, state, zonal, parish and in clusters of 8-10 women. Its members include civil servants, petty traders, bankers, professional and the informal sector workers. Though SGBV issues are not brought to the fore front, seminars and talks are usually organized for members on women's health, family life and Christian values. Female headed households, the jobless and widows are usually assisted by wilful donations. Equipment such as sewing machines are purchased and gifted to the needy for economic empowerment. Members are also encouraged to patronize such persons.

The Federation of Muslim Women Organisation of Nigeria is an umbrella of Muslim women groups established to promote secular and Islamic education for Muslim women and youths. It also has skills acquisition centres – garri processing, adire making, knitting, sewing, soap and air freshener making, etc. – and money for seed is usually given to women who have completed the training to start their business. The organization also helps them sell their products. The skills acquisition centres are usually funded by the state governments for the organization. Other sources of funds are from philanthropic gestures. Though an apolitical organization, it supports its members or the husbands of its members by campaigns. It was engaged in a gender-based violence project from 2015 to 2017 in Maiduguri by sensitizing traditional rulers and identifying victims of GBV to provide psychosocial support and skills acquisition.

Under the Igbo traditional system, the women that are born into an extended family make up the umuada of those kindred while the women who are married into the kindred make up the ndi oyom. Both groups organize themselves to play crucial roles in the extended families. Membership is automatic, by birth or marriage respectively. The umuada are in charge off burial rites and widowhood practices and so they should be targeted for sensitization on SGBV issues. They, however, help to fight for inheritance rights for maltreated widows.

The ndi oyom play a role in negotiating and bringing back any wife who decides to leave her husband based on several reasons. They also should be targeted for sensitization enlightening them that a woman who is in a continuous and unbearable domestic violence relationship should not be forced or shamed.

Oral interviews conducted on 27th and 30th April 2019 in Dutse Alahaji Market in Bwari Area Council of FCT and Karimo Market in FCT revealed that women traders organize themselves in small cooperatives, mostly for economic and social reasons. According to the respondents, the cooperatives help them to access bank loans for trading easily and also serve as a mark of identity for a particular trade. Some of the local cooperatives in existence in Dutse Alahaji markets include tomatoes and Pepper sellers' cooperatives, Ugu and Vegetable seller's cooperative amongst others. In Karimo market, from the interview conducted on 30th April 2019, the local cooperatives are the Tatashi, Pepper sellers and Tomatoes sellers Cooperative, the Ugu and Vegetable seller's cooperative, the Yam sellers cooperative and the Okirika or second hand clothes cooperative, while the yam seller's cooperative is dominated by men, others are dominated by women.

The founding Chairperson of the Muslim Women Cooperative, Abuja, stated that the cooperative aims to provide financial assistance to members on 2.5% interest rate loans. Loans can be accessed within 24hours without unnecessary documentation. No collateral is

required and the loan repayment is deducted from source, but the loan amount must not be more than half of annual salary. The cooperative is registered with FCDA and has been in existence for 11years. Members are civil servants, market women and men who must front their wives to be admitted. The founder identified the lack of education as the major problem limiting Muslim women's economic empowerment and political participation, which invariably leads to idealness, paucity of funds and domestic violence. As a way to empower women, the cooperative engages in vocational training of women on spice making, liquid soap making, etc. Identified challenge for the cooperative is lack of capacity for cooperative management and automated system for operating cooperative accounting packages.

4.2 Emerging Online and Media Platforms for Women

There are also other platforms that promote women's rights or provide a channel through which women express their grievances or demand that government attends to certain inhuman treatment. Social media is a very strong tool to engender women participation in politics, economic empowerment and in the fight against domestic violence in Nigeria. Two of such social media tools are Facebook and Twitter platforms. Through Facebook groups, women in Nigeria have been able to fight for their emancipation and it could be said that a considerable progress has been seen. For instance, there was a social media campaign of 'Bring Back our Girls' to demand that government resolves to bring back the 276 school girls abducted from their school by the Boko Haram Insurgents in Chibok, Borno state. The campaign did not stop online, as women engaged in protests in Abuja, with the support of some men, demanding for the release of the girls. About 107 girls out of the 276 school girls abducted in 2014 have been released as a result of this campaign. When the Dapchi girls were also abducted, the campaign was also instrumental to the release of some of the girls.

The Female in Nigeria (FIN) is also an online global community for women with a core mission to end the culture of silence. This Facebook group is now a public page with about 1.7 million members. FIN is a movement which is focused on building compassion, providing support and nurturing the power of self-expression. It brings together women who share their troubles, ranging from domestic violence, abuse, workplace abuse, pressure from in-laws, child abuse and child labour, spousal abandonment, sexual orientation and overall wellbeing of women and girls and to explore issues affecting women in general. On FIN, women are advised to speak out and seek for help and the organisation gives them the requisite support. The challenge here is that its only people who have online presence that can access FIN.

WFM 91.7 MHz is the first female-oriented radio station in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is the only Nigerian gender sensitive and specialized radio station licensed by Nigerian Broadcasting Commission (NBC) to broadcast programs for women and their family. The station amplifies the voices and issues of women. It is owned by Dr. Babatunde Okewale and Toun Okewale Sonaiya and operates in Abeokuta, Ogun State, South West Nigeria. Thus, its operation is limited in reach. Due to paucity of funds for women human rights defenders in audio media channels, and the non-existence of any other gender sensitive radio stations, the Brekete Family (Human Rights Radio, Abuja) is providing a platform for women to voice out human rights abuses and discriminatory practices meted out on them. This reality radio show hosted in 'Pidgin English' started off as a human right programme championed by a man to help protect the vulnerable in the society, settle family disputes and serve as legal aid to the indigent in the society. The programme now seeks to promote the rights of women and girls among others and give them a voice and empowerment. Through the programme, women

[133] 12 #ChibokGirls Are Still Missing http://www.bringbackourgirls.ng/ accessed 1st May 2019

can now speak out and get rehabilitated. Through this platform, women bring complaints related to spousal battery, child support, abandonment, discrimination, and sexual abuse at workplace before going to law enforcement agents. The programme partners with the Police, lawyers, Human rights organisations, Public Complaints and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC). Early neutral evaluation of cases is often employed; when this fails, appropriate legal process is commenced.

4. 3 Challenges on Substainability of Women Coalitions

- A former Minister for Women Affairs identified suspicions on mismanagement of funds as a challenge. Women management is very difficult. Some women will believe that the hard work of other women is not for nothing and therefore allege that funds have been mismanaged in favour of the most hardworking ones.
- According to a feminist activist and the national Chairperson of TMG, Dr Abiola Akiyode-Afolabi, the key challenge of coalition building is trust, transparency and accountability as building trust takes time.
- A former majority leader of HOR notes that sometime in the past, women sabotaged themselves, but this seldom happens now as women are realizing that is part of designed strategy to keep them away from organizing for change.
- A former member of House of Representatives identified internal caucusing interests as a challenge to women coalition sustainability. Since the women come from different political parties, they are more politically aware and look out for how their interests are protected in the coalition.
- Since most coalitions are dependent on the member NGOs to fund them, it becomes a challenge.
- Sustainability for donor-driven coalition is also a problem, especially if the agenda, strategy or donor priority shifts.

5.0 Funding Sources and Donor Priorities for Funding Women's Rights Organization

Donor's funding priorities are usually thematic areas within the donor's mandate. Calls are usually put up for funding in specific areas and NGOs respond to the calls depending on whether the area falls within their own mandate too.

The founder of Change Managers International Network identified the need for funding for:

a. Litigation of election matters involving women, election violence meted out on women and other matters that affect women;
b. Advocacy on human rights issues by creating awareness;
c. Justice system should be improved to guarantee women possibilities for enforcement of their rights.

A former Minister for Women Affairs identified political empowerment as the most critical issue that requires funding. She argues that "if women have political power, then others follow because people who have power decide what percentage of budget goes to, for instance, maternal health." She concludes that political empowerment is better than piece-meal interventions. She opines that while funders usually argue that it is not in their mandate to fund political empowerment, some funders are now innovatively funding this, having realised that it is a crucial part in addressing women's rights and issues. She suggests funds for capacity building to get women more confident, teach them how to negotiate and lobby and how to find their voices amongst a male dominated polity. She suggests further the

[134] Female In Nigeria As seen on CNN , BBC, Facebook, 18 February 2018 https://web.facebook.com/femaleINFIN/ accessed 1st May, 2019
[135] http://wfm917.com/ accessed 26th June 2019.
[136] Brekete Family Radio Programme ://www.abuja-ng.com/brekete -family-radio -program.html accessed 1 May, 2019

need to show women how to make money and raise funds through fund raising and entrepreneurial ventures. Where women have enough economic power, they will be able to afford to litigate and jail perpetuators of SGBV. Women should also be taught that they achieve more when they work together. For example, the 2019 elections saw women working individually and this did not record much success.

A Commissioner for Women Affairs in Cross River states opined that funding legal aid and representation is central to women's access to justice and the realization of their human rights recognized internationally and under the Nigerian Constitution. According to her, donors hardly prioritise services crucial to women such as free legal assistance, shelter and psycho social support for women victims of sexual and gender-based violence seeking redress and in search of justice for harms suffered.

A Gender, Health and Women's peace and security Consultant to the UN, World Bank, African Union and UNICEF stressed the need for funding of women's issues to be mainstreamed in all MDAs, such that there is a Gender Budget line in each. For example, maternal health in the health sector, keeping girls in school in the education sector, priority budgeting for participation of women in peace processes, etc. She notes that donors work within their mandates, and stresses the need to emphasize prioritizing women issues, during the signing of agreements with donors from the onset. Donors should be discouraged from spending the donor funds on donor staff, cars and rent and focus more on support to beneficiaries. She encourages donors to engage in sustainable projects on empowerment of women and not hand outs and disempowering skills like hair dressing and bead making. She wishes to see women being empowered to engage in industrial and sustainable projects. While it is not wise to seek to empower well educated women with menial skills like bead making, it is important to note that these may be the only kind of skills to offer uneducated women and this will serve them in providing for their livelihoods. Some others believe that funding the proper education of girls will pay off in the long run. This includes ensuring that girls remain in school during their menstruation by providing them with disposable pads.

An extensive research has been done in Cross River state to identify the funding priorities of the different areas in the state. For Cross River South senatorial zone, SGBV issues like rape, domestic violence are prevalent and interventions are needed to raise awareness and consciousness. Funds are also needed for effective implementation of relevant laws and policies. For Cross River Central senatorial zone, internal displacement, conflict and vulnerability are prevalent. Interventions are needed in these areas. For Cross River North senatorial zone, patriarchal issues and money bride are prevalent. Interventions should attack patriarchy. All these issues are well identified in their soon to be published state gender policy. In Kwara, Lagos and Enugu States, SGBV issues like FGM, rape and domestic violence, harmful widowhood practices and denial of inheritance rights are prevalent and interventions are needed to raise awareness and consciousness. Funds are also needed for effective implementation of relevant laws and policies. The funding priorities for Bauchi, Kebbi and Bornu States are girl child education, and interventions to raise awareness and consciousness of the ill effects of child marriages, as well as interventions on SGBV issues like rape and domestic violence. In the case of Bauchi Human Rights Network, the spending or application of donated funds in priority is based on the donor's activities or work plan. Some of the donors that have funded their activities include: Amnesty International, Global Rights, Search for Common Ground and Mennonite Economic Development Associates. The intervention area is mostly in relation to issues concerning women and children rights.

[137] Oral interview conducted with a former Minister for Women Affairs on 27 th April, 2019
[138] Oral interview conducted with a Gender, Health and Women's peace and security Consultant to the UN, etc. on 27th April, 2019.

As observed by Abiola Akiyode- Afolabi, funding priorities should focus, in addition to GBV, on women and political participation, access to justice, sexual and reproductive rights, peace and conflict. However, donor interests do not always coincide with these priority areas.

[139] Oral interview conducted with a former member of HOR on 2nd May, 2019
[140] Oral interview conducted with a member of Bauchi Human Rights Network, Bauchi State on 1st May 2019.
[141] ibid
[142] ibid

6.0 Recommendations on Core Areas for Women's Right Programme in Nigeria

6.1 Women's political participation

As rightly observed, the development of any nation requires the participation of both men and women. Thus, the existing gender inequality in the political leadership of Nigeria is unacceptable. As stated by INEC Chairman, "gender inequality remained a constraint on growth and poverty reduction, a more equitable gender relation is an accelerator of poverty reduction". Going forward to enhance women's representation, there is need to include the principle of Affirmative Action in the Nigerian Constitution as has been done in Rwanda, Kenya and elsewhere in the world to promote women's effective participation in Government through elective and appointive positions. The current recognition in the on-going constitutional reform of 35 % affirmative action in appointive position is a right step in the right direction, although not concluded, and should be extended to elective posts. An Equal Opportunities Commission should be created to replace the Federal Character Commission so that besides geography and ethnicity, gender and disability are reflected in the criteria for operating the federal character principle/policy entrenched in S. 14 (3) of the CFRN, 1999 as Amended.

The Electoral Act that mandates INEC as an electoral umpire should be amended to reflect and implement the quota slots for women. INEC should be made to hold political parties to account in respect of full compliance to its party constitutions that allow for the adoption of party quota for elective posts within the party executive/delegates positions and also for fielding and sponsoring candidates for the general election. Political parties can change their constitution to allow one female senator from each state. This is not a new kind of fair representation as this was how the 6 geo-political zones were initially introduced, not by any law. A former Minister for Women Affairs also recommended that every woman that gets to the National Assembly should be given an automatic second ticket to enable them build on their experiences and consolidate. These changes will provide the required legal and policy framework that will snowball into effective participation of women in Government through elective and appointive positions.

A former Minister for Women Affairs recommended effective lobbying of gate keepers such as the National Assembly, by hosting them to explain and allay their fears on some knotty clauses in relevant upcoming bills. She also suggested that women are funded and mobilized in large numbers to National Assembly, instead of different individual lobby groups going at different times, as going as a coalition is always more successful. She concludes that a retreat for female National Assembly members and other female political leaders should be organized on women's rights and agenda, to help them focus on critical issues.

There is a dire need for capacity building for the National Assembly members, their aides and NASS staff on understanding the gender and human rights nexus, as they all play significant roles in the emergence of laws. The legislators rely on the clerks and their aides. Clerks bring up the agenda for each meeting, therefore there is need to engage them to understand the women agenda and allow them to contribute/take recognition of the bill.

In the same vein, a deputy director at the FMWA noted the need for capacity building for the ministry's staff, at the national, state and LGAs, to enable them discharge their duties effectively. She averred that there is no systematic way of building career in the sector as staff are transferred and posted at random without any considerations on whether they understand gender as a development concept. Transfers truncate capacity and experience

[143] See Punch Newspaper, Thursday, May 16, 2019 at p. 19 titled: " Only 62 women won elections in 2019, says INEC

[144] Oral interview conducted with an management staff at the Gender Unit of INEC on 29th April, 2019.

[145] Oral interview conducted with a deputy director at the FMWA on 29th April, 2019.

built from the field and should be minimized for consolidation.

The Civil society organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations and Women's Groups have a key role to play in the actualization of women's rights and equality. They should build women's movement bridges between women in party politics and the women's group so that they can pursue with united voice advocacy for legislative reforms to entrench affirmative action. They should work towards enhancing the capacity of female political aspirants to run and win elections. In this regard, there is need for awareness creation, political enlightenment and mobilization of women, including young girls to join political parties and use their numerical strength to change their fortunes within and outside the political parties.

The International/Donor Agencies should increase funding for social and legislative advocacy work towards law reform that will result in women's political empowerment. There is a significant funding gap for local initiatives and local organizations that may snowball into real change in women's aspiration in public life. Women in Nigeria need the support and pressure that the international community can bring to bear on the Government of Nigeria to abide by its international obligations to women's human rights. International/Donor Agencies should support women openly, not by following them to campaign grounds but by engaging with the government and traditional rulers earlier in the process, and asking questions on how to implement the 35% affirmative action in the gender Policy. They should be on ground before elections to engage the government and the INEC and get them to commit to take certain decisions that will favour women during the electoral process. They should follow up on women who lost elections to know what went wrong and how they can be helped.

Furthermore, International/Donor Agencies should engage in building the capacity of women on political participation and the capacity of CSOs in the process of law-making, so that they will be better equipped to engage the parliament. They should engage local consultants to write a program that seeks to achieve 30% women in legislature – 10% at the national level and 20% in the states – as well as develop the Nigerian women grooming program. They should also support women in parliament to ensure great effectiveness and mobilization within the parliament that will facilitate passage of gender sensitive legislations, especially laws on affirmative action. The AU, ECOWAS and other international agencies should endorse affirmative actions for recognition on certain things.

A former Minister for Women Affairs recommends sensitization and educating the public to distinguish between lobbying, political involvement and prostitution, as the confusion discourages women from political involvement. She further suggests that “we need to be careful in our choice of words. To most men, equality of women means women's superiority. It may be wiser to use equity – as strategic fairness. This will make them put down their guards. There may also be a need to re-coin lobbying and use another word to express it, to avoid misunderstanding it.”

Finally, there is a need to check gender-based violence during elections. Intimidations, threats and violence should not be used to scare female aspirants, candidates, voters, and electoral officers. Political stalwart can be asked to help groom women. For example, 100 women can be handed over to Chief Bola Tinubu for mentorship and grooming. There could be a target to bring women into the state houses of assembly, with a view to bringing them to the National Assembly.

[146] Oral interview conducted with a former majority leader HOR on 29 th April, 2019
[147] Oral interview conducted with a former majority leader HOR on 29 th April, 2019

6.2 Women's Economic Empowerment

Financial inclusion is very important for women. In teaching women empowering skills for livelihood, there is need to also build their capacity in marketing skills, how to engage in meaningful cooperatives and how to access soft loans. It is good to ensure accountability and documentation of soft loans and find out what they will use the funds for. There is also a need to monitor and follow through with participants after skills acquisition.

Cooperative groups are a good place to revolve funds as they act as guarantors for each other. It may also be better to purchase land, equipment or seedlings and provide such requirements for women than to give them cash, as their husbands may force them to use such soft loans for family matters.

There is also need to quantify the unpaid work done by women for child care and household management and count such sums as part of women's economic contributions to the households. There is need to teach women who engage in harvesting and processing to pay themselves and factor in their salary as part of the production cost. Given the practice of purdah in the north, some of the interventions should target skills that do not warrant excessive movement like kwilikwili processing, Shea butter processing, etc. to help them make income to assist their households.

6.3 Ending Sexual and Gender-based Violence

From the oral interviews with the staff and members of FIDA, Legal Aid, and CWO, adequate funds to create awareness and also execute the recommendations are very necessary in ending SGBV. There is need for strong institutional framework on Gender and Women Affairs as Ministry of Women Affairs needs to strengthen its workforce to effectively deal with SGBV in Nigeria. There should be effective implementation of extant laws, including the recently enacted Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act, and other domestic and gender-based violence prohibition laws at national and state levels. Advocacy and sensitization is required at all levels towards zero tolerance for SGBV, including educating women on what to do and referral mechanisms to access. The relevant State governments should be sensitized on the need to adopt the VAPP Act. Intervention funds should be provided to carry out campaigns and create awareness on the negative effects of Gender-based violence in Nigeria, especially at the grassroots where cultural practices encourage SGBV.

Training and economic empowerment of women should be on the front burner, as most gender-based violence is as a result of women's low economic status and inability to access and afford legal options to enforce their rights. The need for counselling and rehabilitation of victims of SGBV is also important, as this will encourage other victims to seek help. A former Minister for Women Affairs identified the need to fund safe shelters for women and other groups, like FIDA, that provide pro bono services, for sustainability. Where the perpetrators of SGBV are adequately and timely punished, it will encourage victims of SGBVs to speak out.

There is also need to fund media platforms that are gender sensitive as this gives women a platform to voice their views and challenges and also steers discussions on women rights and issues.

148 Oral interview conducted with a deputy director at the FMWA on 29th April, 2019.
149 Amina Mohammed via a recorded Skype call to the AWLN, Nigerian Chapter launch on 2nd May, 2019.
150 Oral interview conducted with a former majority lea der HOR on 29th April, 2019
151 Oral interview conducted with a former majority leader HOR on 29th April, 2019
152 Oral interview conducted with a former majority leader HOR on 29th April, 2019
153 Oral interview conducted with a former majority leader HOR on 29th April, 2019

6.4 Access to Justice

It has been observed that large numbers of women are regularly subjected to violence in the family and communities, including by the agents of state without remedies. An attorney at the WACOL legal aid notes that women suffer in silence, mostly mentally depressed and confused, and not knowing how to go about in seeking redress. According to WACOL legal unit, the huge number of cases begging for intervention reinforces the need to fund programmes on access to justice as a strategy towards advancing gender equality and enforcing women's human rights. As it were, funding for laudable legal aid programme, including training of paralegal to provide assistance in local communities is inadequate. Expected actions for interventions are needed for pro poor legal aid and assistance, including strategic litigation to women to improve access to justice. Free legal aid and legal representation is crucial and without it many women whose rights have been violated would never have access to court of law to seek remedy.

"Witness protection programme" and promoting friendly court rooms is also important. Public interest litigation, if embarked upon by rights advocacy groups and women's rights NGOs, will strategically help to challenge discrimination in law and in practice. There should be targeted training of community paralegals who will play a key role in providing basic information and assistance, including advice to poor women. Trained paralegals will help to demystify the court system and fear ordinary people have to come to court either as a litigant or witness. They can also mediate in cases and make referrals. In addition, training /sensitization of administrators in the justice system, especially for judicial personnel of lower courts, police and prosecutors should be targeted, to increase their understanding of gender issues and the need for gender justice.

6.5 Recommendations for Substainability of Women Coalitions

I. A former Minister for Women Affairs identified shared interest (on women's rights and issues) to be agreed on; trust and openness – need to shun competition and the desire that everyone must be a leader in the group – as qualities that sustain coalitions. Leadership can be rotated amongst the member groups. She also noted that women groups are beginning to imbibe these cultures and work better.

ii. A former majority leader of HOR recommended adequate communication between the management of the coalition and the women groups/members, to keep them informed on what is going on.

iii. Sincerity of purpose and integrity are also important, especially for leadership of such coalitions, in order to reinforce vital aspects of trust building.

iv. Coalitions should discard the NGO models and structures, avoid membership and provide flexible platforms with no strict attendance, where interactions are issue dependent, not donor dependent.

v. Coalitions and networks should be allowed to evolve or engendered and driven by people with collective interests at all levels, especially at the Local Government level closest to the people.

[154] Oral interview conducted with a former member of HOR on 2nd May, 2019

7.0 Conclusions

Unarguably, the global movement for the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment has caught up with Nigeria and women's rights activists and gender focused organizations are pushing daily across sectors, ethnic, class and religious divides to mainstream critical issues of concern to women and girls in Nigeria into national political and development agenda as well as policies and programmes in order to create enabling environment for women to enjoy their human rights like their counterparts elsewhere in the world. However, it has been observed that women rights organisations in Nigeria are struggling to get funding for advocacy and service delivery on matters related to women's' rights, particularly issues concerning: women's political and economic participation, sexual and gender-based violence, access to legal aid and support services amongst others. Why is it so? This question has been explored and answered through the desk review and in-depth analysis of key informants' interviews done nationally and in the selected focal states for this project. The findings are both revealing and a demonstration of the urgency of the proposed intervention in order to reverse the situation towards gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all spheres of life.

In the final analysis, it is about accountability to gender equality and if women's organization and coalition are to implement their core mandate, they need the crucial funding to scale up social and legislative advocacy, including service delivery that will promote, protect, respect and fulfil women's human right, including freedom from discrimination, eradication of sexual and gender-based violence and ending women's poverty.

Legal, civil, political, economic and social rights recognized in international and regional instruments must be implemented at the municipal level to benefit women and girls subject of those rights.

Nigeria, as a state party to these treaties, is obliged to ensure its effective domestic implementation by all arms of government – executive, legislative and judiciary – saddled with administering gender justice, restorative justice, enforcement of women's rights so that law in the books is de facto respected and realized. As it were from the stock taking and preceding analysis, women and girls in Nigeria are massively victims of surreptitious and continuing violation of their rights. The impunity of sexual and gender-based violence has reached unprecedented and alarming proportions and calls for concerted action from those interested in raising the stake of gender accountability. It is through coalition, institutional mechanism and building capacity of women's organisation, including provision of much needed funding/resources, that we will propel the long desired and overdue transformation of mainstreaming women interests in the political economy of Nigeria. For now, where the power is, Nigerian women are not. Access to capital, including land that is an important means of production has continued to elude women, contributing to feminization of poverty and women's low status.

8.0 Next Steps

I. Disseminate PEA report with the facilitation of the consultant in a stakeholder's forum for validation, sensitization and mobilization of support for intended programmatic intervention proposed by AAN.

ii. Consultants to produce final version of the PEA based on possible feedback by AAN and other stakeholders post national validation event.

iii. AAN to develop specific action(s) in response to the findings from the PEA carried out.

iv. Ensure that the action(s) and implementation strategies respond effectively to critical issues highlighted as it relates to status of women in politics, economy and on the vexed problem of sexual and gender-based violence.

v. Select partners at focal states for the implementation phase of the action based on highlighted funding priorities.

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