

REPORT ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN NIGERIA

SUBMITTED TO

**THE OFFICE OF THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL IN GENEVA DURING THE
31ST SESSION OF THE UPR WORKING GROUP**

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BY

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Established in 2008

**Recommendations on the Human Rights Situation in Nigeria
Submitted to the Office of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva during the
31st session of the UPR working group
(November 2018)**

Women's Rights and Health Project is an innovative national human rights and health focused project with headquarters in Lagos State Nigeria. The organization as a member of the coalition of Nigerian Human Rights CSOs on UPR supports the creation of awareness on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and the National Action Plan for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (NAP). Women's Rights and Health Project also works with other Human Rights CSOs to focus attention on the situation of human rights in Nigeria and the implementation of the NAP and other recommendations made at the UN Human Rights Council.

As a member of the coalition in the south-west zone, Women's Rights and Health Project actively supports the tracking of all 32 recommendations made during the first review and produces report for the zone.

Since the last UPR of Nigeria in (2013), the realities of human rights protection in the country as a whole and the geo-political zones remain very dismal. While some progress has been recorded in the domestication of some human rights protection and legislation, the protection from domestic violence law, the security of lives and properties against kidnapping and violence remain very dismal. Issues as kidnappings, ritual killings and cult activities continues to violate the rights of community members.

Women's Rights and Health Project (WRAHP) requests the Human Rights Council to urge the government of Nigeria to fulfil its pledges and meet its commitments and also improve security of lives and property and facilitate the attainment of other commitment remaining unmet.

The following are the concerns on the human rights violations in Nigeria and recommendations to address them.

1. Domestic and Gender Based Violence

Reported cases of domestic and gender based violence are still on the increase in Nigeria, and sadly Government and relevant agencies are not giving adequate attention to the issue. Only three (3) states out of the 36states Government have enacted laws for protection against domestic and gender-based violence. Most of this violence bothers on issues of rape and defilement, which mainly affects women and girls. Most of the case are never officially reported by the victims due to fear of stigmatization. This fact is evident in a recently published news report of a school administrator who was violating a 2-years old pupil in a private school in Lagos State. This incident demonstrates the fact that more needs to be done in providing protection for human rights especially with regards to engaging a broad sector response. However innovative approaches like the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team

(DSVRT) should be scaled-up and adopted by states who have legislation on prevention of sexual and gender-based violence.

Recommendation

- The Nigerian Government ensure all states enacted laws for the protection against domestic and gender based violence.
- Government should Strengthen legal protections that protects Victims of domestic and gender based violence.
- Accelerate the Justice system and processes of perpetrators to ensure transparency and protection of Human Rights.

2. Security

Nigeria is a signatory to UN human rights treaties and mechanism relating to security and protection of the human person. However, these treaties are yet to be fully enforced due to poor funding and low political will. The security situation in Nigeria calls for serious concern on the part of government. Every geo-political zone in Nigeria experiences one form of threat or the other. Issues ranging from Kidnapping, Boko Haram, Ritualist killings, Herdsmen Attack, Militancy, is still on the increase.

In some cases, powerful allies of key political actors have been linked to heinous crimes including violence and murder, yet these ones continue to operate with impunity due to the perceived protection of their political associates. However, there have been some progress resulting from public outcries related to the operation of these groups. One such group that operated with impunity in Lagos State was the dreaded Badoo Cult. This cult was effectively curtailed with the arrest of the sponsor who was linked to a notable politician. While this seems to signify progress, much more needs to be done especially in the area of improving access to justice mechanism and provision of adequate security by law enforcement agencies.

Recommendation

- Government should strengthen the Policing Systems, to protect the lives of Citizens.
- Enact and implement a comprehensive policy to address the problems arising from the activities of herdsmen.
- Ensure adequate mechanism to handle issues of extra judicial killings with specific penalty to culprit.

3. Right to Health

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for their health and wellbeing of their family, this includes food, clothing, housing, medical care, necessary social services, and the right

to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond their control.

Government has long sought to provide Health for all, but due to various socio-political challenges, healthcare services in Nigeria are still very poor and health for all is still far from been fully realized. Untrained Traditional Birth Attendants are still responsible for over 35% of deliveries, thereby sustaining high rates of maternal mortality. Also there are little achievements on plans to scale-up efforts to eradicate or combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other infectious diseases. Although there is a slight improvement from the 89 per 1,000 live births of 2007 as shown in recent world bank reports.

Recommendation.

- Strengthen healthcare policies to ensure healthcare capacity of
- Accelerate the review of the National Health policy Bill to ensure the accessibility of healthcare service by all its citizen.
- Ensure 10% budgetary allocation and releases towards addressing HIV&AIDS and other endemic diseases.
- Government should enact and implement policies to regulate the activities of Traditional Birth Attendants to reduce the incidence of maternal and child mortality

4. Women and Children:

Nigeria ratified CEDAW in 1985 and promised to ensure the domestication of the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in its national law. However, this obligation and recommendation to fulfill it has not been met. The Child Rights Act has been passed in 6 states even though the National Parliament has not passed any law on violence against women. Violence against women and children is still a major issue in Nigeria and government attention is urgently needed. More than 50% of internally displaced persons in Nigeria are women and children who have been left without adequate shelter and healthcare facilities in the IDP camps. These women and children are constantly faced by sexual abuse and molestation even by those who are supposed to protect their rights. However, the available laws on sexual violence aids impunity, as offenders are not prosecuted and burden of proof weighs heavily on women. Presently in Nigeria, there are no shelter homes for displaced individuals, and this is makes them vulnerable to sexual abuses, malnutrition, and diseases.

Sexual abuse of children and maltreatment of children is also on the increase, without prosecution of the perpetrators.

Recommendation

- Accelerate the speedy passage of the Violence against Persons Prohibition Law (VAPP) by all States and ensure full compliance with the Child Rights Act at all levels in Nigeria.
- Accelerate the implementation of the recommendations of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
- Ensure adequate persecution of perpetrators of Sexual abuse and maltreatment of Children.
- Government should ensure that adequate shelters and healthcare facilities are built to rehabilitate these women and children.

5.Education

Education is a fundamental human right, and should be protected. Everyone has Rights to education which is a potential for economic growth, Yet, many people in Nigeria especially women are still being denied the right to formal education. Women plays an important role in the society, and therefore should have a right to education. The decline in the standard of education in Nigeria is very alarming and calls for serious concerns. Primary education is still currently under threat, parents can no longer afford to pay the fees for their children, as a result of recession and unemployment. This has a tremendous negative impact on the family and society in general.

Recommendations

- Strengthen the capacity of the educational sector, to encourage a healthy learning environment.
- Ensure equal rights to education for all women
- Ensure affordable basic education fee for all children.