Gender Based Violence: Intervention for Prevention and Management in Two Communities in Lagos, Nigeria

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Background

• Worldwide, an estimated one in three women will experience physical or sexual abuse in her lifetime. (WHO 2013)
• The prevalence of GBV in the patriarchal Nigerian society is high; with associated physical and emotional trauma.
• Poor reporting of GBV cases emboldens perpetuators and hinders the formulation of effective policies to support survivors and deter perpetuators.
• As part of efforts to intervene in this issue, WRAHP designed and implemented a 4-year intervention with support from the DFID funded Justice for all (J4A) programme with the aims of reducing prevalence through increased reporting of GBV incidence and support for survivors.
• The intervention commenced with a community survey to map the prevalence of GBV in the community and to identify key gaps for action.
Findings from WRAHP Community Survey (Baseline)

• 45% of citizens said they have recent experience of SGBV / Domestic Violence

• 46% of respondents felt the police were not better informed on how to handle cases of SGBV.

• 37% of respondents were not willing to report GBV cases to law enforcement agencies

• About 44% of those asked were aware of the existence of the Domestic Violence Law.

Based on these findings WRAHP formulated her intervention objectives, identified structures to engage with and set targets to be attained.
Project Objectives

1. To strengthen the capacity of Police Officers across three Divisional Police Stations (Ejigbo, Igando and Ikotun) for effective documentation, and case management of GBV in two LCDAs in Lagos State by May, 2016.

2. To strengthen community structures and increase the willingness of citizens to report GBV cases to the police in two LCDAs.

3. To strengthen the capacity of the media to report GBV incidents and raise awareness on GBV, including increased editorial coverage of the issue.

- Providing advice and support on sexual and domestic violence to over 15,000 women and young girls in 2 Local Council Development Area of Lagos.
- Working with Faith-based organisations, trade and vocational groups (Pepper Grinders, Hairdressers, Tailors, Market women, etc.)
- Working with Schools and family networks, community groups and local institutions
- Creating awareness on domestic violence, sexual assault and gender inequality using copies of the Lagos State Simplified DV law 2007
- Training of 36 Police Officers, 100 Men, 50 Teachers and 100 Pupils (Girls and Boys) from 20 Secondary Schools in the 2 LCDAs as Advocates against GBV
- Establishing a rapport system between police and community members through organising Quarterly Community police town hall meeting
Strategies for programme implementations:
The project intervention was a multi-versatile one and was built on four pillars based on the outcome of the baseline assessment.

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<th>The First pillar built the competency of community leaders to identify and manage GBV using mediation and prosecution for repeat offenders</th>
<th>The second pillar promoted community accountability to the Lagos State Domestic Violence Law that prohibits GBV and child abuse</th>
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<td>The third pillar promoted mutual respect between community members, community leaders, health care workers and the police through trainings on privacy and confidential handling of information as a show of respect for community members.</td>
<td>The fourth pillar was the training of community based associations to serve as community watch dogs, champions and campaigners against GBV for project sustainability.</td>
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Results Obtained from the Intervention

Direct Impact on the Project;

- The intervention significantly increased awareness of citizens in the target community on their rights, if they were victims of gender-based violence. The number of people who are aware of cases of gender-based violence has also decreased significantly, showing that the project may have had significant impact on reducing the incidence of gender-based violence.
- The project also increased willingness of citizens in the target population to report cases of gender-based violence.
- The project also brought on board a strong network of 3000 Men as advocates against SGBV in the two communities.
- In addition, the Police was better informed and more aware of how to handle cases of domestic violence, and were willing to prosecute if and when the need arise.
No of citizens who were aware of their rights: Baseline Survey 40, Endline survey 80
Willingness of Citizens to report cases of SGBV: Baseline Survey 20, Endline survey 80
Number of persons aware of any GBV cases: Baseline Survey 40, Endline survey 80
Better informed police officers on SGBV cases: Baseline Survey 40, Endline survey 80
Avenues for Reporting GBV cases

- Our students value the issue more because they heard about it from their peers

Principal of Christ Heritage School

We now take a different approach. We are not quiet now!

Mrs Oyewole, Head of Pepper Grinders Association, Ejigbo
**Indirect Impact of the Project**

An indirect outcome of this project was the increased awareness about the role of civil society in handling cases of domestic violence. There was a significantly large number of respondents willing to refer cases of gender-based violence to Civil Society Organizations with many referring to WRAHP as the appropriate organization to refer such cases to.

**Reporting of GBV by the Media**

The project also promoted media discussions on gender-based violence. Their involvement in radio and television talk shows including media exposure of victims of gender-based violence may have had some indirect impact on the larger community beyond the two immediate target communities. There is evidence to this as WRAHP had to handle a number of cases that was reported from communities outside the two target communities.
Table 1: Number of newspaper (Punch and Vanguard) publications on gender-based violence

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Recommendations from the WRAHP Experience:

• Need to train CSOs/NGOs to better understand better the reasons why citizens are reluctant to prosecute perpetuators of domestic violence and address the barriers.
• Need to further train and more police officers in effectively handling SGBV cases
• Need to engage more men as advocates in the fight against SGBV.
• Need to create more awareness in other areas of Lagos state and environs, where there are less access to information on Domestic and sexual Violence
• Need to build advocacy with the Lagos state house of assembly and Ministry of justice on the review of the Lagos State law on protection against Domestic Violence 2007.
• Need to develop a protocol for community structures, other NGOs and the local government working on gender based violence in the two LCDAs on how to mediate and formally document cases for the purpose of using the documentation as evidence in court in case there is a need to prosecute a second time offender
Other critical Learning in the Prevention & Management of Gender-based Violence

• **Multiple approach to perpetuators**: Persecution and prevention must be applied as concurrent approaches

• **Comprehensive psycho-social support for survivors**: In addition to survival skills, survivors also need empowerment to cope with the act of living.

• **Engagement with State Institutions for justice and psycho-social support**: Intervention require engagement with state structures for justice and psycho-social support

• **Strengthening Civil Society Organizations roles**: More training is required for CSO actors