

State of Women's Human Rights in Nigeria

In response to Nigeria's second Universal Periodic Review (UPR) due November 2012, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Nigeria in collaboration with the Kudirat Initiative for Democracy and Alliances for Africa present the following CSO report to intervene in the process.

Violence against women is rising in Nigeria with the Police reporting in 2011 that only 28% of rape cases were reported. Domestic violence in particular has been tolerated by the society as a private affair and largely ignored by the police leading to impunity and injustice against women; also the proliferation of small arms in Nigeria has facilitated violence against women and human rights abuses against women.

The Human Rights Council recommendation to Nigeria in 2009 during Nigeria's first UPR included recommendations to pass laws to protect women; also highlighting CEDAW (Convention on Elimination of All forms of discrimination against women) as a priority treaty that Nigeria should domesticate. In addition, that Nigeria repeals laws that discriminate against women and enact laws and procedures that provide protection to women against violence. The recommendations also stress the need for an effective legal and justice system that is responsive to women's needs and secures access to the justice.

We recognize efforts by some states in Nigeria that have enacted laws to prohibit Gender-Based Violence especially Domestic violence. These states are Ebonyi, Ekiti, Jigawa and Lagos States. We also commend the National Human Rights Commission for regaining "A" rating.

We therefore call on the HRC to strongly refer Nigeria to the state of discrimination and violence against women in the country and make the following recommendations:

1. That the Violence Against Person's (VAPP) bill currently before the National Assembly is passed into law.
2. That the Gender and Equal Opportunities bill which seeks to domesticate CEDAW be enacted into Law at Federal and State level as an urgent priority
3. That multisectoral approach is applied in providing holistic services to victims/survivors of violence against women and girls. This would ensure effective delivery of services including medical, psychological, psycho-social, trauma rehabilitation, economic empowerment and legal services to women who need them in pursuing justice for crimes committed against them
4. For provision of a working legal aid programme to increase women's access to justice through the provision of support before, during and after trial.
5. That Nigeria enact a national law on prohibiting FGM in line with UN Resolution L21 passed by the UN on 26 November 2012 as a model law for states yet to pass laws prohibiting FGM,
6. That Nigeria should adopt a strict control of small arms and domesticate all ratified treaties on small arms control

This Report is submitted by the following stakeholders:

AfA – Alliances for Africa

KIND – Kudirat Initiative for Democracy

WILPF – Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

04 March 2013