



Inclusion Watch

A monthly newsletter publication of Mothers and Marginalised Advocacy Centre MAMA Centre



Mothers and Marginalised Advocacy Centre



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About MAMA Centre

The Mothers And Marginalised Advocacy (MAMA) Centre was established and registered with the Nigeria Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) on 5th November 2014 with the registration number CAC/IT/NO73269 as a Non-Governmental, non-profit making, non-partisan organisation with primary mandate to engage government on legislative and policy advocacy to eliminate threats to socio-economic and political status of the marginalised groups and advance their socio-economic and political rights towards self-determination, self-reliance and self-sustenance in Nigeria.

MAMA Centre works to ensure empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of their political, socio-economic and health status and self-sufficiency towards achieving inclusive and sustainable development. Through its engagement strategies—advocacy, capacity building, research and networking, the organization works to ensure full participation and partnership of women and men in productive and reproductive life, including shared responsibilities for the care and nurturing of children and maintenance of the household

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INTERNATIONAL WOMENS' DAY: Mama Centre demands equal opportunities for women



Grantees in a group photo at the Voice Nigeria Grant Inception Workshop with MAMA Centre in attendance in Abuja.

As the world commemorates the International Women's Day, the Mother and Marginalized Advocacy Centre calls for increased priority for the full-fledged inclusiveness of girl child, women and other marginalised groups in socio-economic and political policies and decisions in the country.

We are concerned as a nation with the highest population in African continent, no fewer than 38 percent of its women lacking formal education as against 25 percent for men and only four percent of women have higher education against the seven percent of their male counterpart.

It is worrisome that girl-child school enrolment in the

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EDITORIAL

STILL ON RECURRING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The Mothers and Marginalised Advocacy (MAMA) Centre is seriously concerned about the prevailing but poorly addressed violence, abuses, dehumanization, brutalization against women all levels in Nigeria.

The continued gender neglect and non-prioritisation of respect and dignity for women by policy, legislative and judicial realms exacerbates recurring degrading treatments against women especially by Police personnel and other operatives across the armed forces.

This fact was buttressed in a recent unjustified physical assault launched on a pregnant mother by a sitting Senator, Elisha Abbo at an adult toy shop in Abuja. The lawmaker representing Adamawa-North senatorial district descended on the woman after she pleaded with him not to physically assault the shopowner whom the senator had accused of insulting him.

Similarly, the intensity of women subjected to rape, undignified torture, mental and physical abuses on daily basis across all levels of armed forces with deliberate silence or pretentious intervention by relevant authority has indeed buttressed the fact worst case scenario will surface.

The overbearing disproportionate responses by Nigerian security forces personnel towards civil cases involving women are among the ruthless in the world for their intentional use of excessive force and extra-judicial killing, verbal attacks and psychological intimidation reportedly mounted on women at both formal and informal sectors.

A good example of ill-treatment and abuses against women was the recent case of over 100 innocent women arrested, assaulted and sexually harassed in Abuja during an unlawfully

raid carried out at night clubs and hotels in Abuja metropolis by operatives of the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) Joint Task Team, which is comprised of the Department of Development Control, Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB) and the Social Development Secretariat (SDS).

We find it worrisome that innocent women were arrested and massively raped by the operatives without protection. The operatives also reportedly used water sachet nylons picked on the street and were inserted into the women's private parts in absence of condoms.

Although, the acting Inspector-General of Police, Mr Adamu Mohammed said men of the Nigeria Police Force who involved in the mass raping of the women would be punished, however, no official or public statement has been made on the arrest or punishment of the perpetrators of the awful act weeks after the inglorious incidence.

The police have on numerous occasions severely beaten, sexually assaulted, or shot to death ordinary women who failed to pay the bribes demanded.

We therefore, demand prompt and full implementation of Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act (VAPP), 2015, to effectively address agitations for protection of persons against different forms of violence which have in recent times become a recurring decimal in Nigeria.

We also call for appropriate sanction and punishment against erring persons including military or policy personnel found guilty of violence against women.

INTERNATIONAL WOMENS' DAY:

Mama Centre demands equal opportunities for women

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Northeast and Northwest were 20 per cent and 25 per cent respectively, while Southwest and Southeast were 85 per cent, and South-South was 75 per cent, as reported by Word Bank data in 2017.

Majority of girls and women face real-time poverty, gross inequality, molestation and injustice, denying them effort to acquire meaningful skills and contribute positively towards the nation's development; with less than 39 per cent of the total female population is literate as against the 63 per cent of literate male population.

We are worried that delayed implementation of 35% Affirmative Action for Women by governments at all levels discourages appreciable participation of women as leaders and decision-makers in households, communities, and in the public and private sphere in the nation's political decision making.

We are not unaware that since democratic rule in 1999, women are under-represented in all key political decision making bodies in Nigeria which metamorphosed in the 9th National Assembly, where women secured only 6.2 per cent (seven female senators) of seats (out of 109 senators) in the Senate while men constituted 93.8 per cent; and 22 women as against 338 men in the House of Representatives.

We condemn persistent discrimination and atrocities against women include poor

education, poor nutrition status, violence and brutalization, vulnerability and low pay employment.

We therefore demand appreciable effort at all levels to recognise girls and women as equal players in the game of life whilst empowering, up-skilling and investing in them for a better world.

We demand full implementation of 35% Affirmative Action for Women by governments at all levels to encourage adequate participation of women as leaders and decision-makers in spheres of life including politics, health, households, and communities as well as public and private sectors.

We call for re-presentation by the 9th Assembly and passage into Law, the Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill at the Federal and State levels in order to domesticate the CEDAW and AU Women's Protocol.

We also call improved access to education and elimination of gender gaps in education, public awareness and sensitization on the provisions of the Rights of Women.

Signed:

Barr. Ola E. Onyegbula
Executive Director