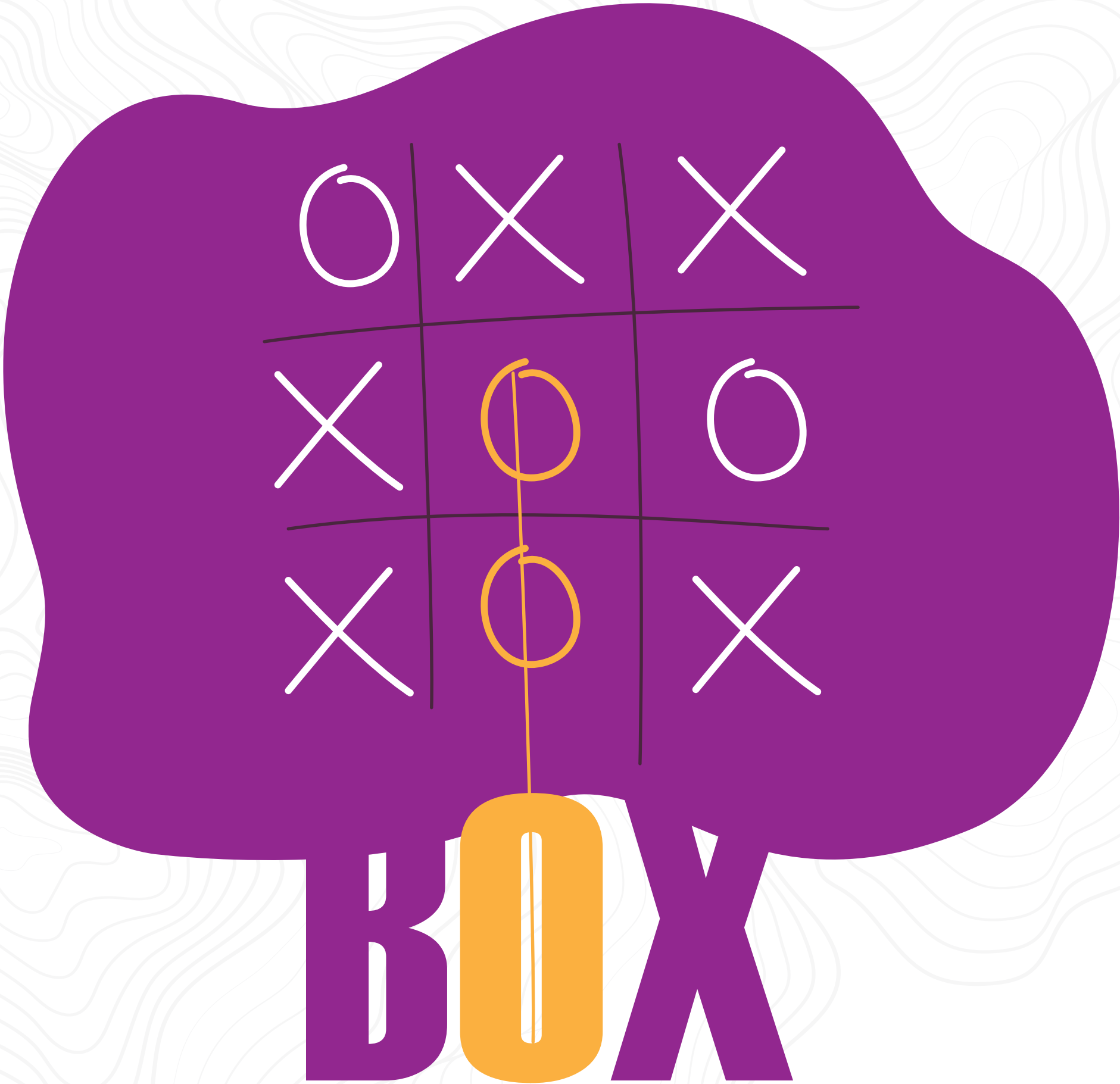


WVL-NIGERIA PROJECT:
DOING THINGS
OUTSIDE THE





Our Innovation Journey

For Global Affairs Canada, innovation in international assistance is a process, mindset and means to enable new or improved locally driven solutions for better results and greater impact, which benefit and empower the poorest and most vulnerable, including women and girls. Innovative solutions can include business models, policy practices, approaches, partnerships, technologies, behavioural insights, financing mechanisms or ways of delivering products and services.

Source: https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/priorities-priorites/fiap_ia-paif_ai.aspx?lang=eng

For the Women's Voice and Leadership Initiative, development innovation is about finding new ways of tackling the barriers to gender equality and supporting the empowerment of women and adolescent girls. It also means encouraging, promoting, and scaling up these ideas when they are successful. Demonstrating the effectiveness of innovation requires both experimentation as well as innovation to show proof of impact.

On the Women's Voice and Leadership – Nigeria Project, innovation was both mainstreamed into conceptualizing project designs by women's rights organizations and as a standalone granting stream.



Mainstreaming Innovation in Project Design

During onboarding and targeted training sessions, project partners acquired knowledge and skills on how to integrate innovative practices into their management, programming capacity, and/or organization's sustainability, adopt innovative approaches to meet their annual work plan targets and use of new knowledge in being innovative in engaging policy makers, legislative instruments, and framework towards changing social systems.

Actions of partners on innovative approaches to management, programming capacity and policy engagements were as follows:

Women Radio (WFM 91.7 MHz), the first women centric radio station in West Africa and a WVL project partner based in Lagos/Ogun States, used her platform to advance the need for increased women's participation in Politics and Leadership through HerVoice program. 'HerVoice', a radio program designed specifically for the WVL-Nigeria project had 792 productions, 120 radio episodes, 480 radio jingle spots, 72, audio-visuals and 120 IEC materials. Unlike mainstream media, Women Radio dedicated 100% to providing a platform to support women-led organizations address issues on women inclusion and leadership. The program also addressed issues on Gender Based Violence, Women Economic and Financial Inclusion among others topical women's rights related issues. As a feminist organization, they shared their power and space with other sister women rights organizations and supported the increased visibility of their efforts on the WVL project through the HerVoice 60 secs audio-visual on all social media platforms and gathering over 368,000 engagements.

Fahimta Women and Youth Development Initiative (FAWOYDI) in Bauchi State, established a Women's Leadership Forum (WLF) at the community level which is a collective of female politicians committed to advancing the interests of potential candidates for political positions. This forum acts as a center for grassroots women, connecting them with forums at the local government level and a coordinating body at the state level. It is housed within the Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Development.

Center for Gender Economics, Africa (CGE Africa), innovatively channelled her programming towards addressing the social marginalization of elderly women. Their intervention christened Promoting the Socio- Economic Inclusion of Elderly Women through Well-being Parties in Lagos State, for women 50 years and above, encouraged actions that would improve well-being, increase elderly women's knowledge about volunteering, improve their employability status. They also worked with relevant stakeholders to ensure elderly women's inclusion in politics, economics and access to social protection plans. Worth of mentioning among their innovative activities was the formation of Senior Women Association (SEWA) and the initiation of a football tournament, themed 'My Football, My Therapy'. the elderly and intends to make it a bi-annual or quarterly event which would include the participation of more elderly women from more communities if more funds were raised.

Abbah-Aisha Women Initiative (AAWI), a CBO in Kebbi State, provided training to 35 women and girls on utilizing local farm residues, such as maize foliage, husk stocks, millet bran, rice bran, cowpea hays, and groundnut hays, to produce livestock feed. This initiative helped reduce the cost of breeding livestock and purchasing feed, thereby enhancing their economic activities and resources, and further improving their livelihoods. Additionally, 22 women received training on rice processing using local technology, resulting in reduced production costs, and enabling them to generate profits.

'Glow Up' sessions, an innovative psychosocial support initiative that facilitates the healing process for female survivors of domestic violence, using make overs, spa and beauty treatments, photoshoot sessions among others, was conceptualized by the Women's Rights and Health Project's (WRAHP) in its Ireti Resource Center 'Glow Up' sessions are now one of the products offered in the center as they serve female survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). WRAHP introduced the Rotter Incomplete Sentence Blank College Form in therapy session for survivors. The tool is administered on survivors that present signs of anxiety, depression, and stress. Another innovative methodology that WRAHP employed in the course of her work is the use of Dance and Exercise therapy where survivors were taken through different techniques during the Safe Space session. They also institutionalized Board and Senior Management Retreat and Capacity Building for improved performance.

In other to build the capacity of VSLA groups and to reduce the number of monitoring visits, the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOWMAN) in Bauchi State, got volunteers from the project communities who are currently Local Government Area assistants to take on the responsibility of carrying out monitoring visits to communities, which has helped in reducing the cost of transportation due to fuel price inflation.

The Nigerian Feminist Forum (NFF), before exiting the project as a project partner, used disruptive messaging for its social media campaigns to elicit responses & increase engagement on Feminist issues that are deemed uncomfortable for public discuss. The NFF also organized and moderated Feminist 101, a virtual platform of over 80 young feminists across the country including members of the LGBTQI community where issues of import are discussed.

NECA's Network of Entrepreneurial Women (NNEW) in Lagos State, facilitated the formation of GBV prevention and response task forces in 2 major markets in Lagos. This would be the first-time markets would have to curb the menace of harassment and abuse of a sexualized nature towards female traders and buyers. Three convictions were secured from efforts made by these task forces within a few months of its formation.

Gender and Development Action-Centre for Training and Development Activities (GADA-CETDA) in Cross River State, introduced live streaming via their social media platforms during the airing of the 'Orange Show; @orangewithAbenmire' on Hit95.9FM Calabar. The Orange Show is a WVU-Nigeria project funded radio program with an objective to provide sensitization and awareness on all gender-related programs with particular focus on the active women/girls' participation in politics, leadership, and decision-making, using the power of media through radio. The live streaming contributed towards an increase in engagements on topics being discussed during each live streamed show.

Women in Politics Forum (WIPF) created and ran a website (www.nigeriawomenaspirants.com) developed to create visibility for all female political aspirants in Nigeria, focusing on the 2023 general elections. The objective of the website was to profile female political actors ahead of the general elections and beyond. It served to stimulate conversations around women's dwindling political participation in Nigeria.

Zaki's Gems Support Foundation (ZGSF) a CBO in Kebbi State, started a consultancy service to raise funds for payment of staff/volunteers and to fund some activities, this is an innovation for handling issues related to management and serves as a sustainability plan for the organization.

In improving management practices, Christian Women for Excellence and Empowerment in Nigerian Society (CWEENS) in the FCT, increased productivity of staff by increasing teamwork and promoting togetherness. This was done through separation of a work process into several tasks, with each task performed by a group of people.

Almanah Hope Foundation, a CBO in Lagos State, created a WhatsApp group for the participants of the Review and Learning meeting to enhance communication fostering a collaborative and supportive community where they can exchange information, updates, and insights related to their businesses and empowerment initiatives.

Women Aid Collective (WACOL) in Enugu State runs a 24-hour online counselling platform where survivors of Gender Based Violence have access to round the clock psychosocial support services on demand.

Women of Wisdom (WOW), a CBO in Lagos State provides an online platform via a closed Facebook page for her members to market their business products. This online virtual marketplace has recorded up to 1,200-1,900 women participating per time.

Neighborhood Care-well Foundation (NCF): Introduced the Cross River State Interfaith GBV/VAWG Safeguarding Taskforce and the development of GBV/VAWG messaging guidelines for Christian and Muslim faithful. They also established a Program Management Team (PMT) to provide oversight of the implementation of their projects.

A Well-Informed Adolescent (AWA), a CBO in Cross River State's ISupportHer club, made up of a membership of 40 young men, was formed to motivate positive changes in attitude towards violence against women among boys and Men in Ediba Qua and Akai Effa communities in Calabar, Cross River State.

Kungiyar Tallafin Mata Development Initiative (KTMDI) in Kebbi State, engaged 30 male gender champions and organized a high-level meeting with council of Ulamas (religious leaders and enforcers of culture) as a strategy to increase the engagement and support of men on women participation in decision making processes in a highly patriarchal Kebbi State. The meeting provided a platform to promote active and fruitful dialogue on how men can be catalysts for enhancing women's participation in politics with the goal of drawing out best practices and lessons learned to support the push for women's participation at the community level.

Some CBOs working under the management of Child Care and Adult Protection Initiative (CCAPI) entered partnership with local women's groups, and this has revolutionized the way women in the community create economic opportunities for themselves by producing, in a few instances, custards and cocoa powder, these women are not only raising money for their village saving loans, but also inspiring others to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams. Through innovation and collaboration, CBOs are empowering women to take charge of their financial future and make a positive impact in their communities.

As part of resource mobilization efforts, Women Empowerment and Peace Building Initiative (WEPBI) in Enugu State launched a paid leadership academy for girls mainly to finance the organization while building the leadership skills of prospective female students to participate in leadership spaces. If successful, this strategy will be documented and shared with other partners for learning.

02

The Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF)

The SIF was designed to support new innovations and initiatives from LWROs, networks, movements beyond the 18 LWROs and 72 CBOs under the multi-year granting stream. The purpose of this grant (SIF) was to discover and support novel ideas and interventions that will contribute to WVL project's overall goal. The SIF provided three important value additions for the project:

i

The SIF targeted innovative ideas from LWROs, Networks/Movements which served as a catalyst for new ways of doing things within the women's rights movement in Nigeria.

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The SIF provided broader reach for the project as it was not limited to WVL project states or recipients of the multi-year grant. It supported actions at any level, so long as it was innovative and aligned with WVL project goal

This grant was provided to organizations through a competitive Call for Proposals mechanism, where interested organizations provided a brief concept note outlining their request. For the purposes of awarding the SIF Grant, a grant selection committee was set up. The committee was responsible for defining the parameters of specific calls; developing criteria for concept selection; as well as reviewing and selecting grantees.

Over the course of the project's lifetime, 15 organizations across Nigeria were awarded with grants to implement Strategic Innovative Interventions. Interventions implemented ranged across addressing Gender Based Violence/Violence Against Women and Girls, Women's Economic Empowerment programmes, Women's Political Participation & Leadership, Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR), Maternal Health and Girls Education among others.



Below are interventions implemented using the innovation grants:

Virtual Girl Power Initiative:

The aim of the project was to use virtual platforms to address the root causes of adolescent girls' and young women's vulnerability in rural communities. This was targeted at girls who live in the poorest communities and are at risk of dropping out of school, early sexual initiation, unintended pregnancy, early marriage, sexual violence and sexually transmitted infections.

Being a pilot phase, twenty-five (25) adolescent girls within the ages of 13-19 from five (5) rural communities in the Federal Capital Territory were selected and equipped with smartphones. The introduction of the smart phones was to ensure their effective participation in the programme which depended heavily on the Microsoft Teams App, Microsoft Word App, WhatsApp, and an active e-mail address.

Through bi-weekly one-hour virtual meetings using the Microsoft Teams App, the girls were taken through the training modules which introduced them to concepts of Gender, Sexual and Gender Based Violence, Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights; life skills such as Negotiation, Self Esteem, Public Speaking, Financial Education, and Vocational Skills. With interactive assignments and activities, the girls were able to internalise learnings. To ensure the commitment of participants, the main criterion for graduation from the program is the extension of mentorship by the trainees to more girls in their various communities.

The trained girls became peer mentors within their communities, and through the skills acquired from the training, they engage in part-time vocations (such as dress beading, make-up, and tailoring) to support their education. They have become efficient in the use of computer and mobile applications and have built a network of girl champions within their communities. Besides the 25 direct beneficiaries, the project reaches 50 additional girls as indirect beneficiaries who all function as Girl-Champions in the five communities. The girls became more enlightened, and now lead a productive lifestyle which reduces their vulnerability level. This project was implemented by Yes to Life for Women and Children.

Solar Powered E-learning System For Adolescent Girls In Senior Secondary Schools:

: The initiative, implemented by Nana Women and Girls' Empowerment Initiative, deployed an e-learning pilot project during the COVID 19 pandemic lockdown to keep girls living in hard-to-reach regions academically engaged as the schools remained shut. Given the success of the pilot phase, this model was modified and replicated using the SIF in two Girls Senior Secondary Schools in Kebbi state. The aim of the project was to improve the academic performance of adolescent Girls in Secondary Schools, to enable them to increase their interest in education and address their low self-esteem and life expectation which most times is to be married off as shaped by contextual socio-cultural norms. This was also an avenue to improve the pass rate of girls in national school leaving examinations with a view to increase girls' enrolment into higher institutions in Kebbi State.

Thus, the innovation adopted the use of H5P software that enabled the conversion of final school leaving certificate examination curriculum (WAEC and JAMB) into interactive content in English and Hausa languages, making learning fun and enjoyable for 165 girls from 2 schools with the goal of building their agency to appreciate, 'own' and have control over their lives. The project leveraged on existing solar powered computer rooms installed by the government in both schools but had not been in use. The computer centers became an e-learning safe space for the girls.

So far, the project has been a great success as the girls trained have developed more interest in learning and passing their exams. Their self-esteem has improved and some of the now have career aspirations. They have also begun mentoring other girls on how to use the e-curriculum thereby developing leadership skills. The initiative has gained massive acceptance by the Kebbi state government and school authorities as demands have been made for scale up to 1200 girls by June 2021. The partnership has begun to provide a sustainability pathway for the project.

GIRL MEE Mobile APP

Implemented by Teens Lead Initiative in Oyo State, the project developed a Mobile Application that helps girls track their menstrual period and provides information about their sexual reproductive health and rights.

The Girl MEE Mobile Application also has accessible helplines for girls to report cases of sexual/domestic violence and made provision for online counselling sessions. This was done in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission who serve as a referral point for reported cases on the App. For accessibility purposes, content on the app was designed in English and Local (Yoruba) languages, and it operates as an android package kit APK which functions with or without an internet connection, making it relevant even in hard-to-reach communities.

The development of the App was in a bid to complement the sensitization efforts of various civil society partners on SRHR of adolescent girls. It is believed that the adoption of technology to provide localized and strategic SRHR information targeting adolescent girls in their schools and communities can improve education and empowerment of girls.

Since the launch of the App in December 2020, it has been downloaded by 520 users 40% of whom visit the App bi-monthly and has been used to sensitize 2500 girls ages 12-19 in 12 secondary schools in Oyo state. The App currently has 250 active users; 82 women (ages 23 – 55) and 168 adolescent girls/post-teens (ages 16- 22). In addition to the launch of the App, 500 sanitary pads and 2000 facemasks were distributed to adolescent girls as COVID-19 palliatives.

Beneficiaries and users of the App have reported increased knowledge of their bodies, their sexual and reproductive health rights as well as improved self-esteem. Given the uniqueness of the App and the positive impact recorded, relevant stakeholders have demonstrated acceptance of the App. One of such stakeholders is the National Child Protection Network which has adopted the App for use by members of its Network. The Girl MEE App is available for free downloads on Google Play Store.

Use Of Short Film And Stage Theatre To Create Awareness On Postpartum Depression And Maternal Health:

This project focused on using film and drama to raise consciousness around Postpartum Depression; a silent epidemic affecting the mental health of women. Total Stage2Screen produced a short film titled “Untold” which was used for advocacy and awareness creation on the subject matter and to promote positive mental health for pregnant women and nursing mothers. The video amplified the different misconceptions about signs of depression in new mothers and the devastating effect of late realization and support.

Using the video show approach, the project reached 261 women in 7 communities selected from 3 LGAs in Plateau state. Through advocacy and awareness creation, the project garnered support for counselling and care for pregnant women and nursing mothers. This was further enhanced by the set-up of mobile counselling units to provide counselling support for nursing mothers in communities where the awareness was carried out. Men also gained knowledge on the subject matter and gave their commitments to support their wives and relatives who have and may experience postpartum depression.

On social media, the video recorded 12, 867 views and 32 engagements. A good number of those reached stated that they were ignorant of the subject matter before the awareness. Media houses also gave free slots to Total Stage2Screen to carry out radio and TV programs on Postpartum depression giving the project a wider reach.

A compilation of responses and comments from WhatsApp, Facebook and Youtube came from women who had gone through PPD and were not aware, and women who have knowledge of postpartum depression and are glad that the silence is broken, and someone is telling their story. These women spread across different senatorial districts in Plateau (Jos South and Jos North) from different social classes (middle and low class) and different religions (Islam and Christianity).

Use Of Storytelling To Advocate And Gather Support For Increased Women Political Participation:

Women Foundation for Improved Living Standard employed the use of folk tales and storytelling to address non-inclusion of women in local, state, and national governance in Anambra state.

The stories, documented and produced in English and Igbo languages, were used to amplify the contextual barriers to women political participation, thereby creating awareness and gathering support to change the narrative for women and girls. These stories were carefully selected according to context and field tested before the commencement of airing on radio and TV.

A unique effect of this is that women at the grassroots were able to stir up thought provoking conversations based on the stories. The feedback revealed that the stories evoked emotions and brought home the plight that lack of women's participation in leadership brings to women and the nation at large. Critical stakeholders sensitized publicly pledged support for women inclusion in governance; written commitments were obtained from stakeholders to show their support for women inclusion in governance; and at least, 50 women have indicated interest to contest for political positions in the upcoming 2023 general elections in Anambra state. This feedback was obtained using an end of project assessment survey. Through physical sensitization, radio, tv, and the print media, this project reached a total of 4000 persons.

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Reintegrating Adolescent Mothers into Schools (REAMS) program

Teenage Network targeted 20 unskilled out-of-school adolescent mothers and facilitated their re-enrolment in school through the Reintegrating Adolescent Mothers into Schools (REAMS) program. This was made possible through rigorous advocacy to the school management board committee, parents/guardians, school administrators, and guidance counsellors in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). To ease the experiences of the girls in school, 14 Guidance counsellors were selected and trained in the targeted schools to support the re-integration of the adolescent mothers in school.

Ten (10) Adolescent mothers have successfully been reintegrated and are in school within first school term. An additional five girls were enrolled towards the end of the project, though yet to resume since schools are on holiday. However, all preparations have been made for them to start school within the next school calendar year.

An unintended outcome of this activity is the enrollment of children of some of the adolescent mothers in school. Studies have shown that children of uneducated mothers are less likely to go to school. During the recruitment exercise, Teenage Network observed that 60% of the children of the out-of-school Adolescent Mothers are also not enrolled in school. However, due to the impact of the REAMS Project, 25% of the readmitted adolescent mothers have now enrolled their children in school.

Despite setting a target of reaching 20 adolescent girls, Teenage Network was only able to re-enroll 15 girls due to lack of cooperation of parents of adolescent mothers- mainly their unwillingness to commit to sponsoring the girls' school based on their status, and fear of subjecting them to stigmatization. Future projects like this will require prior behavior/perception change interventions towards adolescent mothers among communities' members.

Stand To End Rape (STER) conducted a research project tagged “Vulnerable and Outside the Margins:

From Challenges to Informed Inclusion” to address issues that militate against Nigerian women having full participation in the Nigerian political space.

The research which took a quantitative approach and engaged 720 respondents, confirms that women in the political space experience actual violence while participating in politics, supporting a candidate, engaging in political activism, or simply exercising their civic rights to vote. While this perpetration is glaring, Violence Against Women in Politics offenders are not held accountable despite the existing laws and multiple punitive mechanisms that exist across different institutions. There is often a double standard for electoral violence cases involving women's political participation, relegating them to second-class citizen status. Impunity can make such offenses viable tactics both in campaigning and in post-election agitation.

The research product is therefore a tool for policy influencing around addressing violence against women in politics in Nigeria. The research is very relevant in the current context of the rejection of the gender bill by NASS and the upcoming Nigerian general elections in 2023. The research was launched through a press briefing and disseminated on social media spaces including the Feminist hub. The press briefing broadcasted on 3 key national and sub-national TV stations and reported by 7 media houses, thus creating visibility to the report.

Media, Health and Rights Initiative of Nigeria (MHR) Love Matters:

Using a digital platform 'Love Matters Naija' MHR facilitated a non-therapeutic intervention that assisted Young Women and Girls to examine the context of the combined influence that psychological factors and the surrounding social environment have on their physical and mental wellness, and their ability to function. The platform which has over 1 million followers used innovation, digital media platforms, tools and methods, youth centered language, tone of voice, icons and graphic design to provide psychosocial support through digital counselling. The psychosocial support provided includes counseling and education – indirectly, through targeted content posts on the front page, and directly, with individuals through confidential messaging in the safe space enabled by their Facebook Inbox.

At the beginning of the project, a baseline survey was conducted to understand relationships, sexual and reproductive health, and the role of the interaction between both sexes in mental health and wellbeing. The goal was to glean the audience's understanding of what mental health issues are and how they can be identified. 50% of the respondents mentioned the awareness on the symptoms of mental disorders including fear, anxiety, toxicity, and depression. At the end of the project, results from a sample size of 300 people indicated 92% had learned something new which is a significant increase in knowledge, attitude and practice on issues pertaining to women and girls' SRH and wellbeing due to engagement with the Love Matters community. Additionally, 90% indicated reflective decision making informed by evidence-based content shared on the platform. Through social media engagement 4,415, 95 adolescents were reached directly on this project



“Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.”

– Girl, 19 years



“I've learned to put my mental health into consideration first when deciding and trying as much as possible to avoid things that will affect it. I've also learned to be in control of whatever gets to me.”

– Girl, 17 years

Addressing Discrimination against Single Mothers

The Differently Abled Foundation (DAF) in Ondo State implemented a project aimed at working against systemic discrimination against single mothers. The project includes a 13-week radio show that allows single mothers to have their say and promotes the idea that discrimination against single mothers is unacceptable. The project was successful in raising awareness about the malice and stereotypes against single mothers, and as a result, the civil service in Ondo State has adopted 6 months of maternity leave for all women. The objective of the project was to eradicate discrimination against single mothers, and through this intervention, the above achievements were made.

Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the Electoral Process

The Gender Strategy Advancement International (GSAI) in FCT, Abuja was funded for the Disabled Women Rights and Leadership Project. The project aimed to promote the political participation and rights of women and girls with disabilities and advocate for policies that benefit them. As a result of the project's intervention, this contributed towards the number of persons with disabilities obtaining their Permanent Voters Cards (PVCs) through arrangements made with INEC. Additionally, the project led to a change in attitude towards the electoral process among persons with disabilities, resulting in increased interest and participation, particularly among women. The project successfully sensitized over 150 persons with disabilities on their voting rights and provisions for their participation on Election Day.

Addressing Gender Based Violence through Sports

The Female Gender Empowerment Initiative (FGEI) in Kaduna State received funds for the Breaking the Circle of Gender Inequality through Sports project. The project aimed to increase awareness and educate women and girls on gender-based violence and the VAPP Law in Kaduna State, as well as establish an all-female basketball league. As a result of the project, basketball teams, coaches, and players showed a commitment to the improvement and agreed to use the reporting window of the VAPP Law. The teams also agreed to use the Protection against Sexual Harassment Act in their various teams as a follow-up to the project. The project was successful in raising awareness of gender-based violence and promoting the use of relevant laws to address the issue.

Addressing Maternal Mental Health

The Initiative for Women and Girls Right Advancement (IWOGRA) received funds for the Prevention and Management of Postpartum Depression in Women project. The project aims to prevent and manage postpartum depression in FCT by building awareness and support, generating evidence for system strengthening, and building resilience among women of reproductive age. The project seeks to increase knowledge and awareness of postpartum depression among community members through awareness sessions targeting women, men, girls, and boys. The project was expected to speak on the prevention and management of postpartum depression, enhance community awareness, and build resilience among women of reproductive age.



Climate Change and Women Empowerment

The lack of awareness about climate change and its impacts on communities, and the need to empower women using alternative clean energy products led to the request for SOF funding by Community Advocate for Rural Development (CARD). Through the WVL project SOF funding, CARD innovatively engaged Takwashinge Kuliyansa Community in Bauchi state, increasing awareness among women about the impact of climate change and the importance of adopting renewable energy solutions. The CARD team also contributed to empower women with access to renewable and clean energy products, enabling them to improve their quality of life, enhance safety, and reduce dependence on traditional, polluting energy sources.

This climate change and women empowerment campaign utilizes various mediums such as community interactive sessions, schools' campaigns, and community rallies to disseminate information about the causes, impacts, and solutions related to climate change. By engaging with people of all ages, this approach ensures a wide reach and educates many about the urgency of addressing climate change.

CARD introduced alternative clean energy products to 20 women in the community as part of the solution and these products provide women with access to clean and renewable energy sources, reducing their dependence on harmful traditional sources. The products also provided these women with a new source of income generation, supporting economic empowerment for women and enhancing their status within their families and community. This has led to positive social change and over the period of six months, the women VSLA group has witness an increase in number.

A range of solar products, from small-scale solutions like solar lamps to larger installations such as solar panels for households and community buildings were introduced to the women. Some of the items given to the women includes Solar lamps, Solar run, clean cook stove, Briquettes, Record keeping book, Purse and Receipt.

Women were also introduced to the planting of trees as a sustainable method of supporting climate change. Monitoring data information collected by CARD showed that 9.75% of women are now planting and nurturing trees in the community.

The strategic innovation funding provided to CARD contributed to empower women in Takwashinge community with knowledge on climate change and fostered a genuine commitment to environmental conservation and community development.

Enhancing access to Self-Reliance and Healthy Rehabilitation for Female Inmate and Ex-Inmates

A major perennial violation of the rights of incarcerated women and girls in Nigeria's custodial centers was the lack of adequate sanitary facilities for the special needs of female inmates. Access to sanitary pads has been a challenge for female inmates in Nigeria who need this to maintain a healthy and hygienic rehabilitation experience in correctional facilities.

Because there is little or no support from the Correctional Service on this subject, and the few donations from humanitarian organizations are not sustainable hence the request for SIF funding by Female Inmates and Returned Citizens (FIRC) to build the capacity of female inmates and empower them to produce their own sanitary pads. FIRC's is a cooperative society and non-governmental organization established in 2020 and led by returned citizens (female ex-inmates) in Nigeria.

The project contributed to addressing the ugly narrative surrounding the management of menstrual health among incarcerated women and girls in custodial centers. It also contributed to enhanced access to self-reliance opportunities and healthy rehabilitation for incarcerated women and girls specifically in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

To ensure sustainability, FIRC during monitoring visit engaged the controller of the custodial center who committed to ensuring sustainability. A hall for the training on production of sanitary pads was allocated by the controller of the Port Harcourt Maximum Security Custodial Centre because of this intervention.

With part of the SIF funds FIRC procured two '2' sewing machines, one '1' weaving machine and materials to produce the sanitary pads which were delivered to the female section of the custodial center for the use of the female inmates' training and production activities.

The schedules of the training and production sessions provide a sense of responsibility and engagement in a productive activity, thus acting as psychological boost to the female inmates. 28 female inmates at Port Harcourt Maximum Security Custodial Centre were trained on sanitary pad production and health education.

The above interventions were implemented in Amanbra, Bauchi, Kebbi, Lagos, Ondo, Oyo, Plateau States and the FCT by 15 Local Women Rights Organizations (LWROs).

Based on types and outcomes of all innovative interventions implemented by women's rights organizations, it shows that doing things differently especially if locally driven and designed to fit context, bring the desired results to fore. Opportunities for experience sharing and learning for adoption or adaptation of the WVL-Nigeria project's experience will be explored.



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