



# **Lawyers Alert Findings on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights SHRH Violations in Nigeria**

**In partnership with**

**AMPLIFYCHANGE**

## **PREFACE/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This report is a compendium of reported violations of the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of Sexual Minorities in Nigeria. The data is drawn from inputs made into the online rights violation documentation tool developed by Lawyers Alert at <http://colahr.org/lawyersalert/index.php>.

The tool is situated on the website of the Coalition of Lawyers for Human Rights, COLaHR, a critical partner to Lawyers Alert in our free legal assistance project. COLaHR is a creation of Lawyers Alert, the Nigeria Bar Association, the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), and Nigeria's National Human Rights Commission, NHRC. It engages with several agencies, notably the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and works with Nigeria's National Agency for the Control of AIDS, NACA. It is a national network of lawyers, with reach across the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. Situating this tool on the website of the network is therefore a necessity.

We are well aware that the findings here may not represent the entire facts nationally as it relates to Nigeria as a geographic entity. The project that birthed this tool is focused in 12 states. Again, persons who suffer violation of sexual rights hardly report same for varying reasons. In our case, the strengthening grant project supported by AmplifyChange, laid enormous emphasis on legal literacy and empowerment. Empowered citizens therefore largely made inputs into the tool, which analysis is the basis of this report. Given therefore, that not all citizens are empowered, we do not pretend these findings are exhaustive.

Notwithstanding, these findings are critical owing to their veracity and mode of collation. Violations were mostly documented even as legal assistance was given and physical verification carried out. Perhaps these findings are therefore the most authentic in terms of verification and scientific analysis. The web tool developed wherein violations are entered, are automatically analyzed along age, location, types, trends etc. SRHR Programming and law reform cannot be better informed than when situated against the findings in this report.

This report is the result of a one year project supported by AmplifyChange, wherein violations are collated in general terms as it affects women and key populations. Going forward, Lawyers Alert will begin to issue more specific reports on a half yearly basis.

It is hoped that the document will help to highlight the dangers that vulnerable groups are exposed to. It is disaggregated by a range of indices clearly depicted in pie charts to enhance comprehension and assimilation at a quick glance. It should also be stated that the data represented in this report is based only on that obtained from the online portal.

Lawyers Alert believes the report will prove to be an invaluable resource base for those who desire accurate and current data regarding the subject matter and it is further hoped that this data will be used to enhance and promote a more robust legislative process where SRHR is concerned.

Lawyers Alert is indebted to several persons and organizations, who referred cases to us, assisted us technically and/or financially in the course of developing and putting up the online platform. Cases referred to us were massive in terms of efforts at populating the tool. Women community groups proved invaluable, alongside positive persons and organizations, sexual minority groups and Female Sex Workers.

We acknowledge AmplifyChange for believing in this project and supporting it. Paula Anderson has been remarkable. We are indebted to UNAIDS for the immense technical support advanced, Mianko Ramorosen has been an inspiration. The National Agency for the Control of AIDS in Nigeria, NACA, has engaged with us severally on this tool and must be acknowledged too. Rapid Response has been particularly encouraging and supportive alongside several others who have shown/are showing interest with particular reference to target populations they work with.

Be assured we will continue to analyze and share reports half yearly.

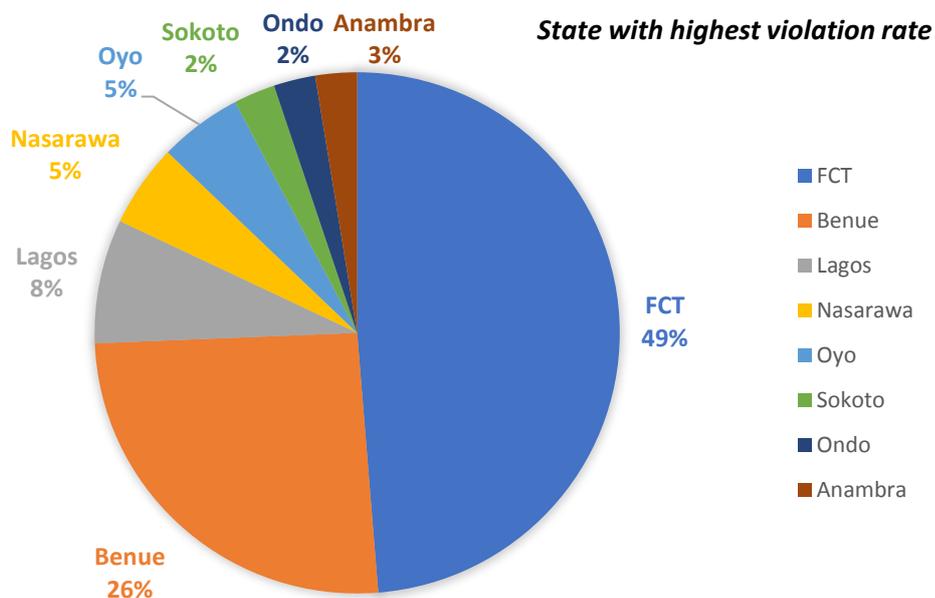
Rommy Mom Esq.  
President, Lawyers Alert  
July, 2017

## STATES WITH THE HIGHEST VIOLATION RATES

Data compiled from states with the highest violation rates: out of 36, it is quite evident that Nigeria's Federal Capital has the highest with almost half of all reports coming in from there. A distant second is Benue with about a quarter of the reported violations. The third is Lagos coming in at 8% while Anambra presents the least number of reported violations. FCT, Benue, and Nasarawa states, all fall within the North Central axis of the country while Sokoto state is in the North East. Anambra is in the South east while Oyo, Ondo, and Lagos states are all South-Western states. Going by the percentages presented, the northern states alone represent a whopping 82% of the entire number of reported cases.

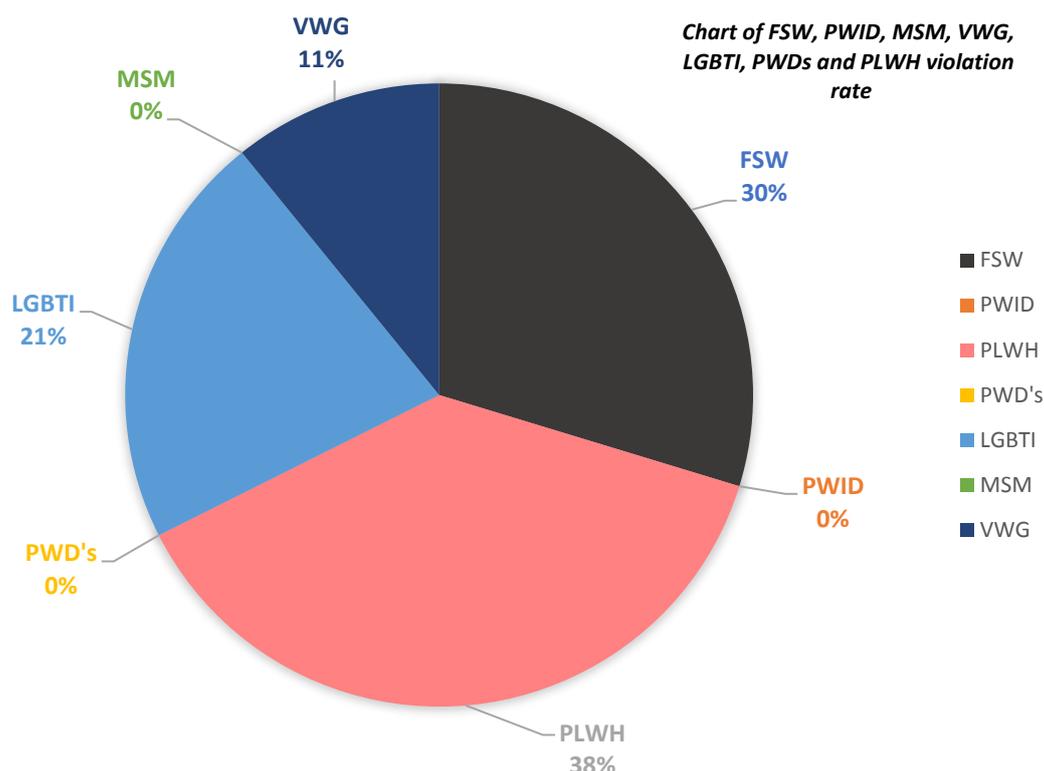
Partly responsible for this could be the fact that the FCT (49%), Benue, and Nasarawa, had intensive legal literacy carried out, and vulnerable groups empowered in knowledge of their rights. This has the effect of citizens actually recognizing violations when they occur. For less informed citizens, violations are thought of only as physical and certainly not emotional nor psychological.

The lesson learned from this experiences shows that for Nigeria to effectively capture SRHR violations, knowledge of these rights must lie with citizens. Strong SRHR movements is the best vehicle in this regard.



## VIOLATION ANALYSIS BASED ON GROUP

The chart presented below depicts violations based on the various groups affected. It shows that Persons Living with HIV, **PLWH**, have reported the highest number with **38%**, followed by Female Sex Workers, **FSW** with **30%**. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex **LGBTI** group comprise **21%**. Note: LGBTI also includes Men who sleep with Men, MSM. It is pertinent to note that violence against women and girls, **VWG**, has remained at an uncomfortably high percentage of 11%. Were Female Genital Mutilation and some anti-women cultural acts also appreciated as violence against women and girls, the percentage would be much higher. Rape and sexual molestation, on the other hand, are often not reported owing to attendant stigma.



It should be noted that of all these groups, PLWH may be the most proactive owing to years of interventions in the HIV sector which have given rise to a highly sensitized group of persons where rights violations are concerned. This simply means PLWH may be reporting the highest number simply because they are the most aware.

Female Sex Workers' rights violations is a recent trend simply because, ordinarily sex work is not an offence in Nigeria. Some jurisdictions however, especially the Federal Capital Territory have undertaken deliberate acts of "ridding Abuja city of prostitutes" according to the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (<http://www.thepointng.com/task-force-arrests-89-prostitutes-in-abuja/>). This has resonated with several States, notably Akwa Ibom. This partly accounts for 30% violations against female sex workers.

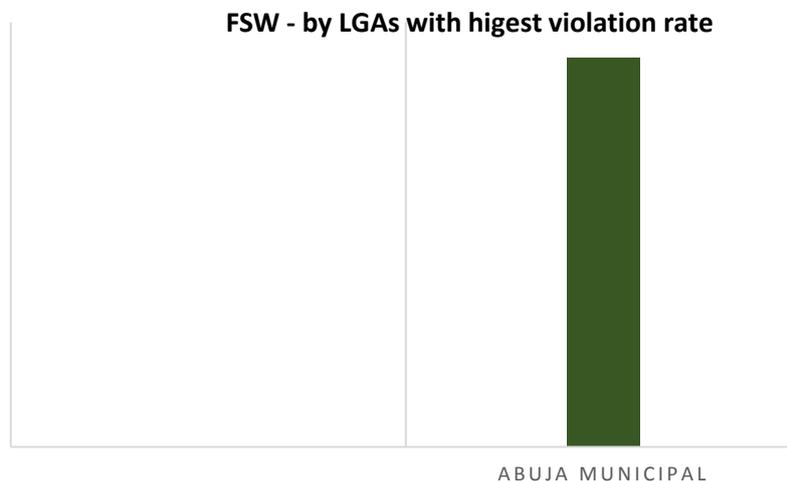
The Same Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act 2013, which criminalizes same sex relationships and conduct in Nigeria, has been a trigger to the violations of the rights of these populations. It largely accounts for the high percentage of violations.

## VIOLATION ANALYSIS BASED ON LGAS, AGE & GROUPS

In ensuring findings are grassroots and community focused, Lawyers Alert is situating findings within the 774 local governments in Nigeria. Local government is the tier of government closest to the peoples and at the grassroots. The thinking is that programs, policies and laws can be tailored and surgical in addressing issues in their locations and be context specific.

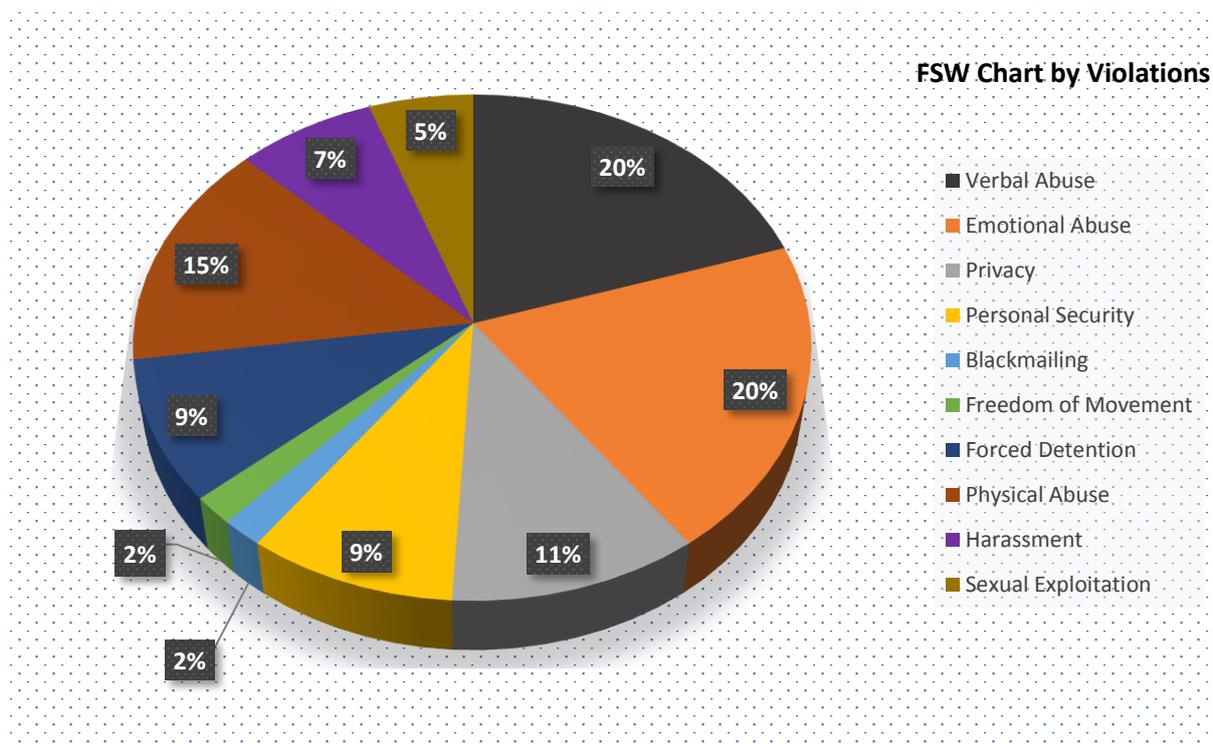
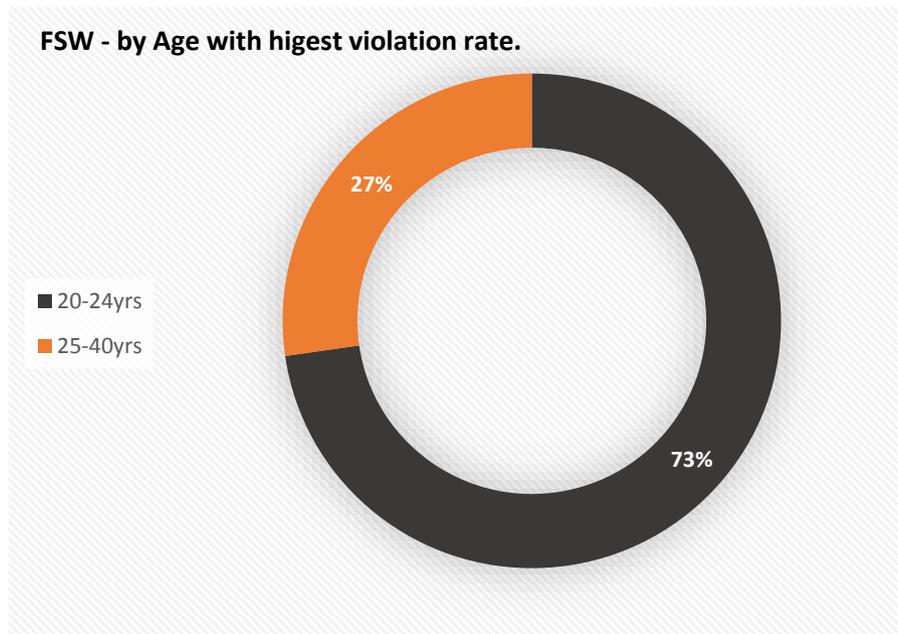
### a. Female Sex Workers, FSW

The collated data has been further broken down into the following demographics: Local Government Areas, Age, and groups. The graph below indicates that the FCT has the highest violation rate with regard to Female Sex Workers based on Area Council (Local Government) representation. The FCT has only 6 of these and of the 6, the Capital city Abuja can be seen presenting the highest rate. Again, this could be a factor of proximity to the seat of government and security personnel wanting to be seen to be effecting laws.



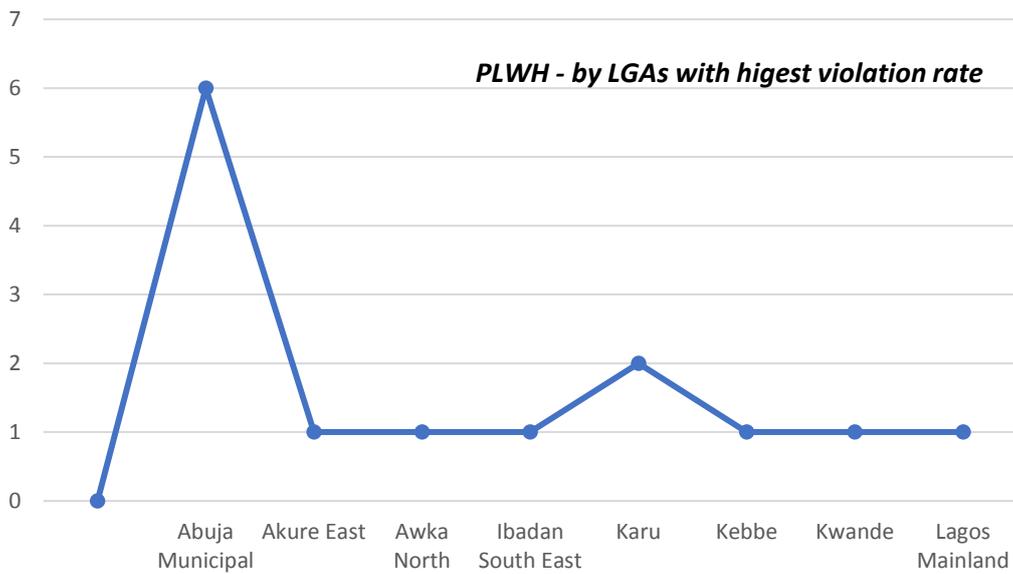
*Above Graph shows for FSW which ABUJA MUNICIPAL in FCT as the highest violation rate.*

Disaggregation by age, as shown in the pie chart below on the other hand, reveals that the **25 - 40-year** group has the highest violation rate with **73%**. While **20 - 24 years** represent **27%**. This could simply be a result of which age group has the highest number of workers or which age range is more likely to report such violations or be knowledgeable of channels for seeking redress.

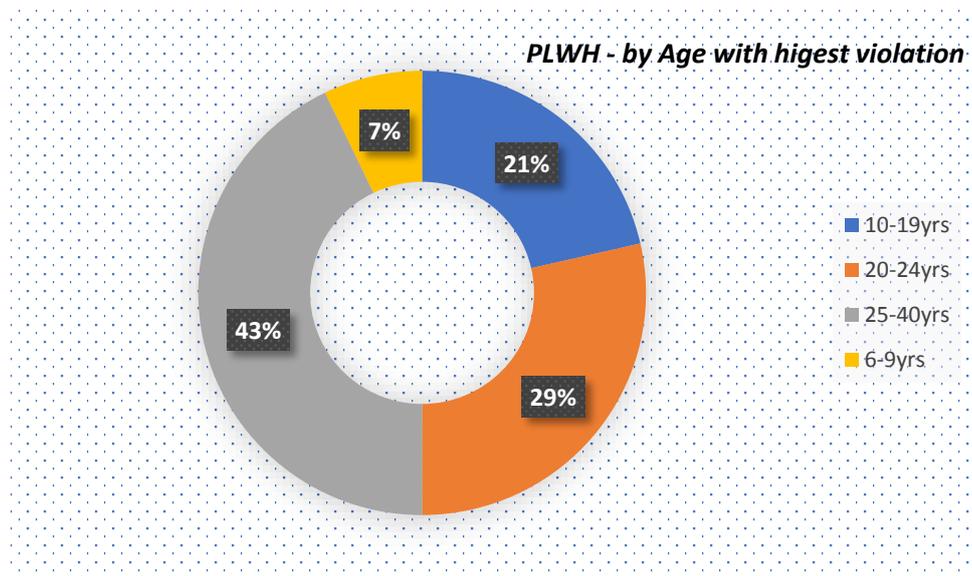


With regard to other rights violations, those reporting **Verbal** and **Emotional** violations indicate the highest rates with **20%**, followed by those reporting cases of **Physical Abuse**, **15%**, **Privacy** violations, **11%**, **Forced Detention** and **Personal Security** show **9%** each, while **Harassment** represents **7%** of the reports and **Sexual Exploitation**, **5%** **Blackmail** and **Freedom of movement** have **2%** each respectively.

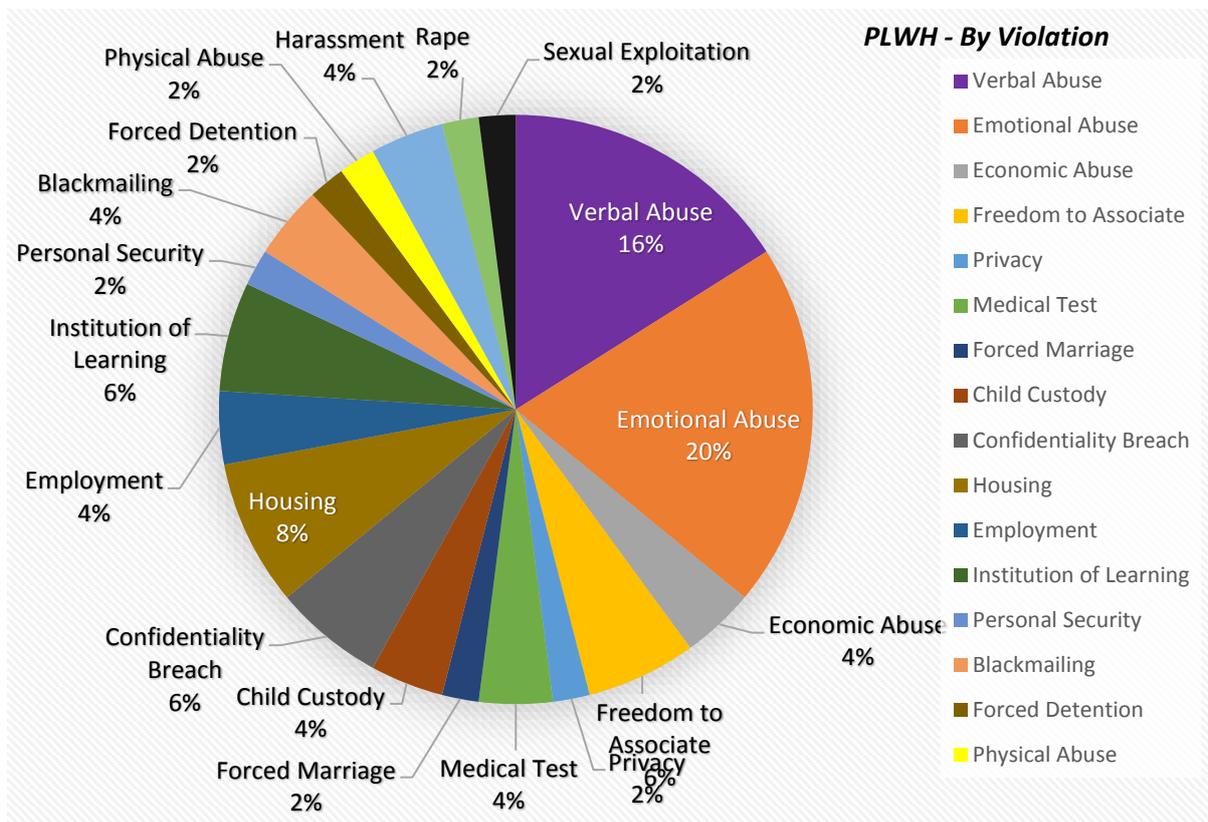
**b. Persons Living With HIV, PLWH**



The above chart shows that with regard to **PLWH**, again the **Abuja Municipal Area Council** in the **FCT** reports the highest number of incidents, followed by **Karu LGA** in **Nasarawa State**. **Akure East** in **Ondo State**, **Awka North** in **Anambra State**, **Ibadan South East** in **Oyo State**, **Kebbi** in **Kebbi State**, **Kwande** in **Benue State** and **Lagos Mainland** in **Lagos State** all show the same violation rate.

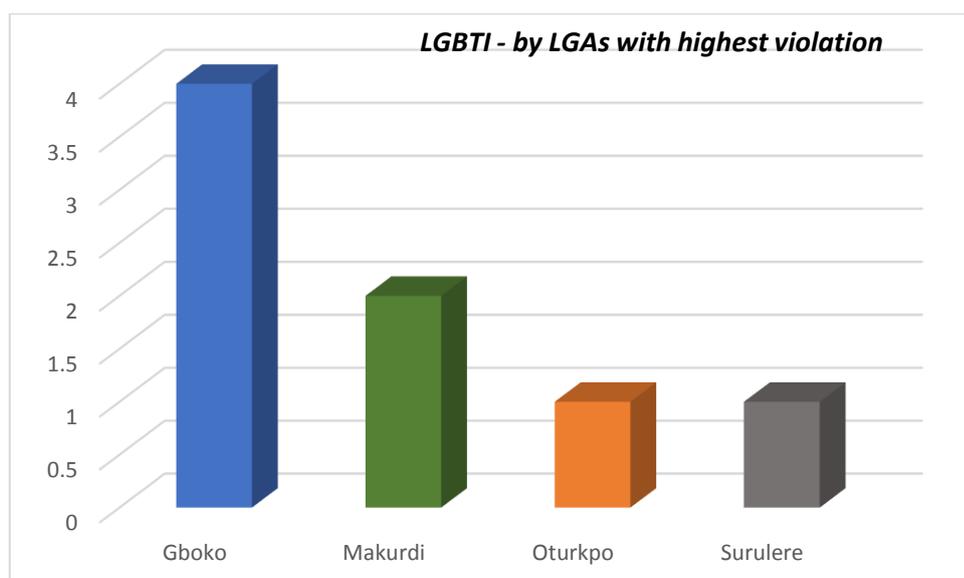


Disaggregated by age, the **6-9-year group** have the lowest violation rate for **PLWH** as shown above with a total of **7%**, followed by ages **10-19 years** with **21%** and ages **20-24 years** with **29%** while ages **25-40 years** report the highest violation rate in **PLWH**.



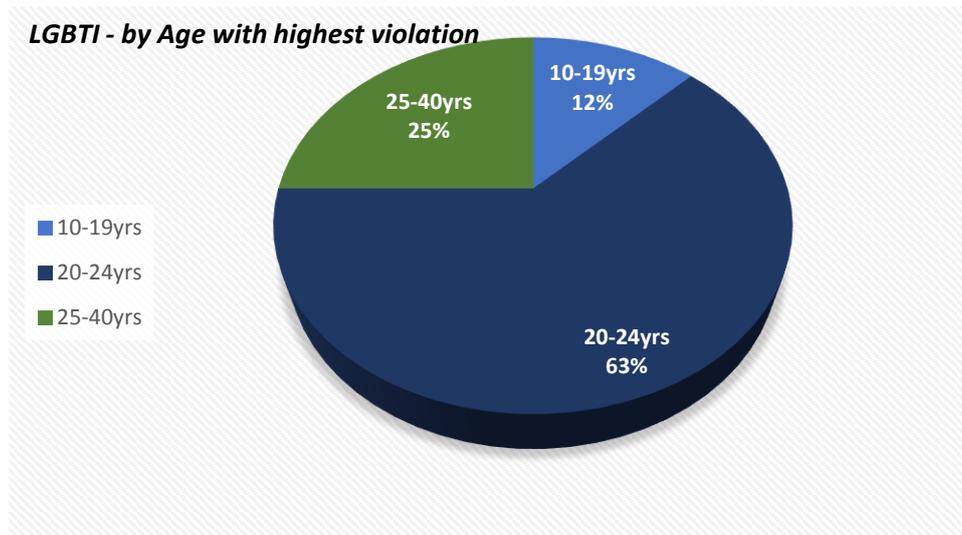
In the chart above, **Emotional Abuse** shows a **20%** rate of violation which is the highest of all followed by **Verbal Abuse** with **16%**, **Housing** **8%**, **Freedom of Association**, **Institution of Learning** and **Confidentiality Breach** present **6%** each. **Medical Tests**, **Child Custody**, **Employment**, **Blackmail** and **Harassment** come in at **4%** each. **Privacy**, **Forced Marriage**, **Personal Security**, **Forced Detention**, **Physical Abuse**, **Rape** and **Sexual Exploitation** are shown as **2%** respectively.

**C. Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex, LGBTI**

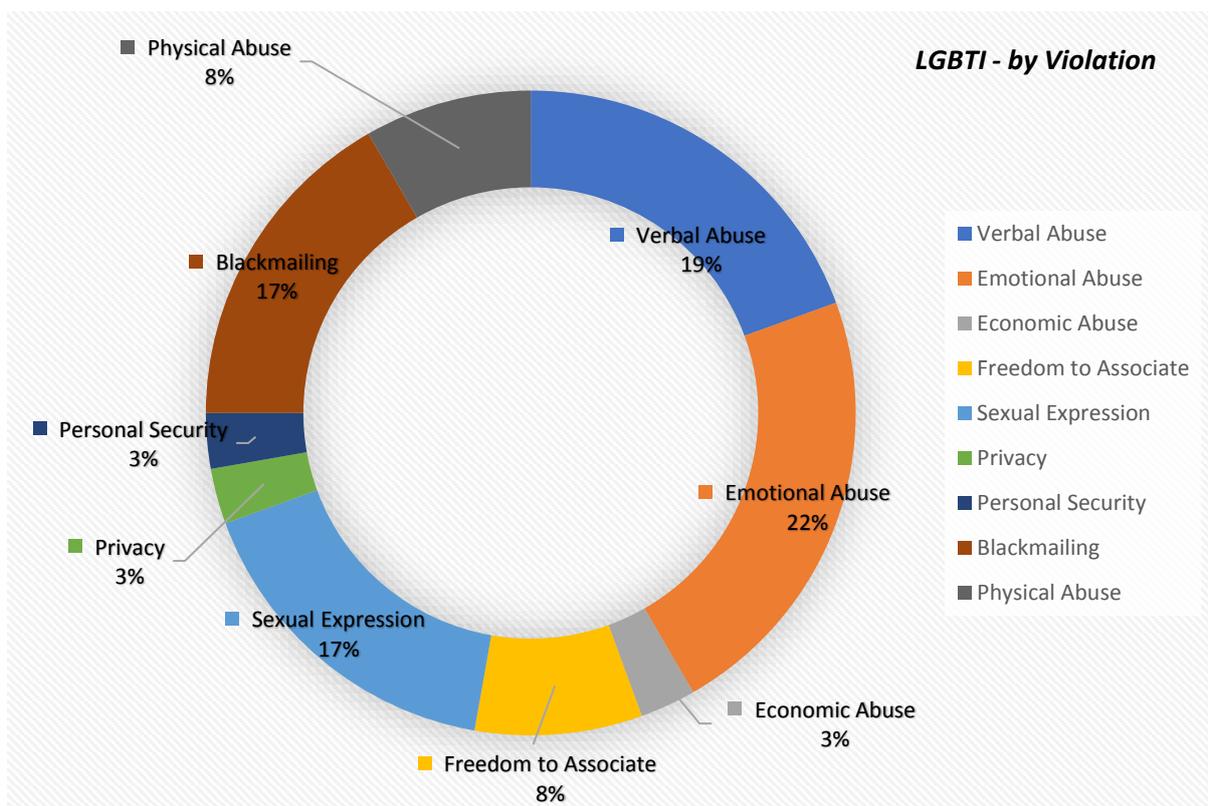


In all, three local government areas in Benue state represent the highest volume of reported LGBTI cases. This owes partly to the intense rights awareness campaigns

carried out by COLaHR in Benue state. Of this number, **Gboko** reported the highest violation rates in **LGBTI**, followed by Makurdi, also in **Benue State**. **Otukpo** also in **Benue State** on the other hand, and **Surulere** in **Lagos State** indicate an equal number of reports at just under 1% each.



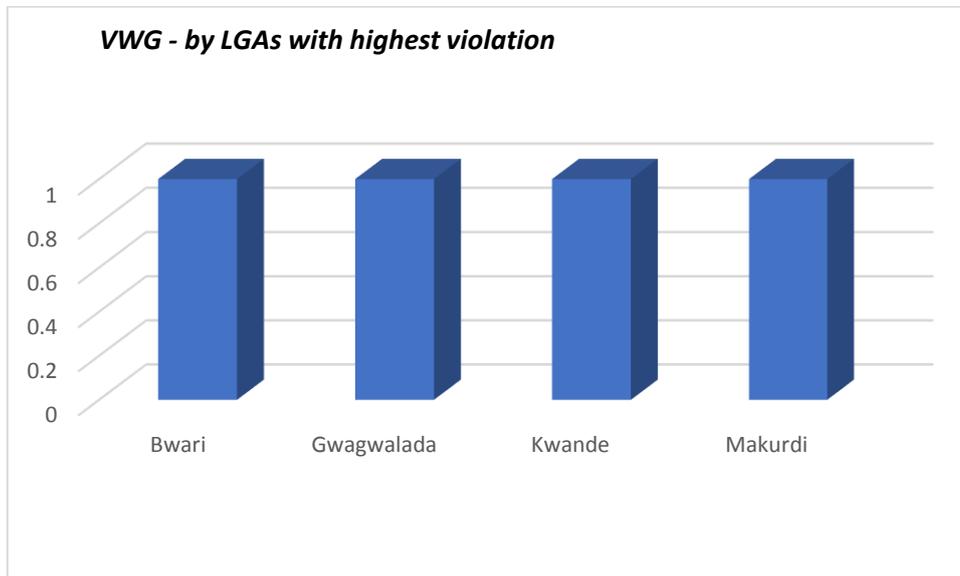
Ages **20-24 years** have highest violation rate with **63%**, followed by **25-40 years** - **25%** and Ages **10-19 years** show the lowest in violation rate which is **12%**.



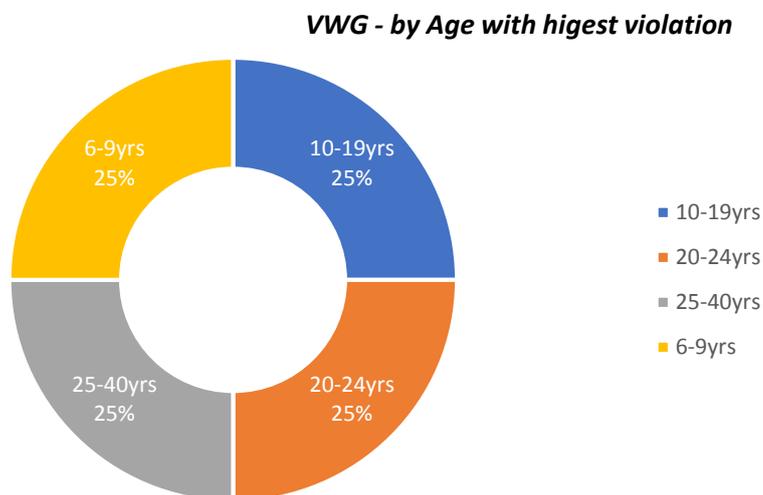
In the chart above, **Emotional Abuse** has **22%** which is the highest rate, while **Verbal Abuse** shows **19%** followed by **Sexual Expression** and **Blackmail** show **17%** each, while **Physical Abuse** and **Freedom to Associate** are **8%** each. **Economic Abuse**, **Privacy**, **Personal Security** are the lowest with **3%** each.

There are no reports for **Medical Tests, Medical Procedure, Forced Abortion, Childbirth, Maternal Healthcare, Quality Healthcare, Family Life, Traditional Practices, Denial of SRH, SRH Access, Affordable SRH, SRH Information, CSE, Legal Literacy, Freedom of Movement** and **Sexual Exploitation** are **0%** each.

**d. Violence against Women and Girls, VWG**

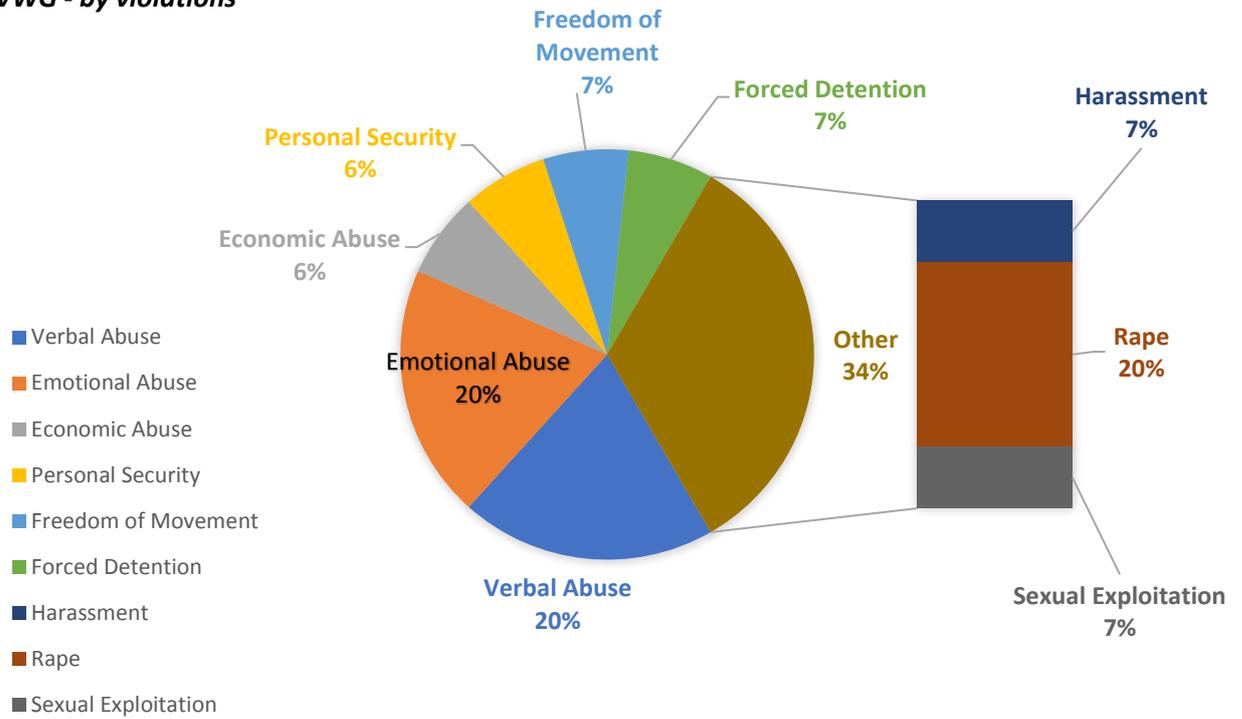


In the **VWG** chart shown above, **Bwari** and **Gwagwalada** both in the **FCT**, also **Kwande** and **Makurdi** in **Benue State** all have an equal violation rate.



The above chart shows that across the **VWG** age range, an equal number of violations have been reported at 25% each

## VWG - by violations



**Rape, Verbal Abuse** and **Emotional Abuse** represent the highest rates at **20%** each, while **Freedom of Movement, Forced Detention, Harassment, and Sexual Exploitation** show **7%** each. Reports for **Economic Abuse and Personal Security** stand at **6%** each.

## CONCLUSION

The above findings are intended to be the first of a series. Going forward, Lawyers Alert, will continuously release these reports with a focus on specific groups. Our reports will however, remain within the realm of Sexual & Reproductive Health & Rights which have remained a challenge in Nigeria especially with regard to women.