



REPORT OF MEETING ON PARTNERING WITH THE GU & PDSS ON GBV & SRHR IN NIGERIA

Date: 17th of September, 2020
Time: 09.00 am – 03:00pm
Location: Miango Rest Home, Plateau, Jos
Host: Lawyers Alert

- **Overview/Meeting Objectives**

The meeting had the following objectives;

1. To understand the challenges of the GU&PDSS (Resources & Technically).
2. To Develop a road map on addressing these challenges.
3. To enhance participant skills in understanding their roles and best ways to address issues of SRHR and GBV in a Human Rights and Satisfactory manner.
4. Modus for monitoring, documentation, working together.

- **Agenda Item #1:** Arrival and Registration of participants

All participants present at the meeting were duly registered. Representatives from the Police Duty Solicitor Scheme of the Legal Aid Council (Plateau & FCT), the Gender Unit of the Nigeria Police Force (Plateau & FCT) and CS groups were in attendance.

- **Agenda Item #2 & #3: Opening Prayer / Introduction and Expectations**

The Programs Director, Lawyers Alert, welcomed all participants and a participant led all in an opening prayer to begin the meeting proper. All Participants present introduced themselves and gave their expectations.

- **Agenda Item #4:** Welcome Address and Setting the Agenda

A representative of the Gender Unit (GU) of Nigeria Police Force gave the welcome remark during the course of the meeting and thanked all participants for their availability. The Programs Director, Lawyers Alert while setting the agenda explained to all participants the reason for the meeting and why we were gathered. The meeting was principally to understand our areas of work , challenges we encounter and how best to provide services to survivors of violence especially women and girls. She urged all participants to actively participate in the meeting and wish us a fruitful deliberation.



Fig 1: The Programs Director, Lawyers Alert setting the agenda for the meeting

- **Agenda Item #5 : Goodwill Messages**

This session was taken by the Director Police Duty Solicitor Scheme (PDSS) of Legal Aid Council (Plateau State). She stated that the PDSS is desirous of a better working relationship with the GU and Lawyers Alert towards providing the necessary support to women suffering GBV. She also stated that there is a need to gather knowledge from other organizations present in order to utilize the knowledge in servicing the target groups. She welcomed everyone and encouraged all to make contributions in achieving the meetings objectives.



Fig 2: Director PDSS, Legal Aid Council, Plateau State.

- **Agenda Item #6 : Keynote Remarks/ Objectives**

This session was handled Lawyers Alert. The speaker explained in clear terms what brought about this initiative and what this intervention seeks to achieve. It

was explained that the intervention was aimed at strengthening the GU and PDSS who are state actors so as to better service women who visits police stations to lay complaints on issues of GBV. Another outcome of this intervention is that women groups would be aware of the existence of the GU and PDSS in police stations. In summary, she explained that the meeting had the following objectives; To strengthen the capacity of the GU and PDSS, to create awareness on the existence of these state actors to enable our beneficiaries and target groups enjoy seamless access to services, to understand the challenges faced by each organisation in delivering their mandate and to brainstorm towards mitigating identified challenges, to monitor and document GBV, to strategize on better ways of partnership towards servicing survivors of violence.



Fig 3: Program Director, LA giving the keynote remarks and meeting objectives

- **Agenda Item #7 : Tea Break**

All participants had a break for tea.

- **Agenda Item #8 : Understanding Gender- Based Violence (GBV) and our roles in addressing issues of GBV**

This Session was handled by Lawyers Alert. The facilitator explained what GBV means, its types, who are most at risk and ways of providing assistance of survivors of GBV in a human rights compliant manner. This session was followed by questions and answers towards addressing grey areas.



Fig 4: Cross section of participants at the meeting.

- **Agenda Item #9 : Present and ongoing challenges in delivery of their mandate**

This session was handled by the GU and PDSS, as each organisation took turns to identify challenges they face in delivering their mandates. Below are some of the challenges stated:

1. Religious /traditional bodies (lack of sensitization)
2. Political/family interference
3. Lack of sensitization of the society
4. Zero confidentiality
5. Fear of stigmatization
6. Technical knowledg of personnel & Health Workers
7. Lack of facilities /infastructure
8. Lack of funding
9. Gathering evidence
10. Low judicial system
11. Security
12. Lack of safe homes/shelter
13. Lack of man power
14. Lack of documentation/Standard Operating Procedures
15. Delay in Reporting
16. Lack of synergy between state actors
17. Media reporting in a human rights non- compliant manner
18. Lack of technology



Fig 5: The GU representative to the left and LA representative to the right facilitating the session.

- **Agenda Item #10 : Roadmap to reserving the challenges above**

All participants suggested possible ways to mitigate the challenges identified above. Below are some of the suggestions made;

1. Religious /traditional bodies (lack of sensitization)
 - a. Advocacy visits to religious/ traditional bodies

- b. Engage the above bodies in meetings
 - c. Synergy between them and the police.
2. Political/family interference, Lack of sensitization of the society, Zero confidentiality, Fear of stigmatization, Gathering evidence were treated together.
 - a. Sensitization campaigns in schools, security agencies, markets, churches, etc
 - b. Media engagement (print and electronics). Radio jingles.
 - c. Visit to NOA
 - d. Engaging the national Assistance and state assistance.
3. Technical knowledge of personnel & H/W
 - a. Training and re-training
 - b. Resources (technical & funding)
4. Lack of facilities / infrastructure
 - a. Advocacy visits to relevant SMOH
 - b. MOU with hospitals to ease attending to SGBV survivors.
5. Gathering evidence
 - a. Visits and networking to relevant NGOs
 - b. Push for budget line in policy fund for GBV
6. Low judicial system
 - a. Advocacy visit to the judicial commission
 - b. Use of family court.
7. Lack of safe homes/shelter, Lack of manpower
 - a. Visit relevant NGOs for safe homes
 - b. Partner with organizations providing services
 - c. Restraining orders
8. Lack of documentation/SOP
 - a. Draft SOPs
 - b. Document ITR violations
 - c. TOR should be harmonized
9. Media reporting in a human rights non-compliant manner
 - a. Train the media on reporting in human rights compliance manner

- b. Visits to relevant media houses.
10. Lack of technology
 - a. Create a platform for relevant agencies.
 11. Delay in Reporting
 - a. Funding
 - b. Sensitization
 12. Lack of synergy between state actors
 - a. Develop partnership with correctional centers
 - b. Orientation for personnel
 - c. Inviting these actors for meetings
 - d. Create a platform for relevant agencies to meet frequently.



Fig 6: Participants making suggestions towards addressing identified challenges.

- **Agenda Item #11** : Process for rendering assistance to woman from close report of resolution

The GU and the PDSS both gave a brief overview of the processes involved from the start to end of any case of GBV reported to them. This was followed by a question and answer session towards strengthening success areas and re-strategizing on areas with gaps.



Fig 7: Head of GU, Plateau State, giving an overview of how GBV cases are handled.

- **Agenda Item #12** : How Lawyers Alert and Partners can come in

A representative from Lawyers Alert once again explained LA mandate and our areas of work. It was also emphasized that there exist a need for reportage and documentation of violations associated with GBV to enable us have scientific evidence for tailored advocacy and engagement with relevant authorities. Lawyers Alert will assist in sensitizations and provision of free legal services to survivors of violence. Lawyers Alert will use findings as gathered in this collaboration and partnership reach out to necessary actors for addressing gaps and challenges, alongside the use of our existing relationship with the media to promote the work of the GU and PDSS in the advancement of the rights of women and girls in Nigeria.

- **Agenda Item #13 : Development of women satisfactory index**

The Women Satisfactory index tool was edited to speak to the Plateau State context. All participants prepared made inputs, suggestions and corrections towards the production of unified document.

- **Agenda Item #14 : Next steps and way forward**

The GU and PDSS appreciated LA for this timely intervention and looked forward to a lasting working relationship. It was suggested that the GU and PDSS work closely in the state using the road map developed to serve survivors of violence. It was also suggested that other security agencies be invited for similar meetings in the future and there is a need for us to also bring religious leaders to forums like this. Participants emphasized the need for trainings and re-trainings on GBV for the GU and PDSS.



Fig 8: Cross-section of participants at the meeting.

- **Agenda Item #15 : Vote of thanks.**

Representatives from the GU, PDSS and Lawyers Alert took turns to express their appreciation to everyone present and for the output from the meeting. Participants were urged by all three representatives to keep in touch and look continued working relationship.

- **Agenda Item #16: Lunch/Close**

All participants had lunch and departed to their various destinations.



Fig 9: Group photograph of participants at the meeting.

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