



Addressing
**GENDER
BASED
VIOLENCE
(GBV)**
Among Nigerian Youths

HEALTH CALL!!!

To **BUZZ** where our welcome
is a health call

WHO WE ARE

We are BUZZ, a publication of Society for Family Health (SFH). SFH is a leading public health NGO in Nigeria, working in partnership with the government, local and international donors and partners in the delivery of health programmes aimed at malaria prevention and control, delivery of safe water systems, prevention and treatment of HIV& AIDS, improvement of maternal, neonatal and child health services and access, expansion of family planning access, provision of tuberculosis prevention & treatment services, etc.

SFH is providing comprehensive basic healthcare packages to disadvantaged youths and children within and outside healthcare facilities. We are institutionalising a youth and family health strategic framework across all our programmes and increasing adolescents' access to youth-friendly services.

BUZZ is our youth-focused newsletter that brings to you updates on all our youth programmes and interventions, it is also aimed at informing donors and youth-led organisations of opportunities to partner

with SFH and will be providing general tips to living a healthy, youthful and productive lifestyle.

In this **third edition** of BUZZ, we aim to provide information on **Addressing Gender Based Violence (GBV) among Nigerian Youths.**

Did you know?

1 in 3 women have experienced physical or sexualized violence in their lifetime. - WHO 2017



Addressing GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) Among Nigerian Youths

Gender-based violence (GBV), is one of the most oppressive forms of gender inequality, posing a fundamental barrier to the equal participation of women and men in social, economic, and political spheres.

GBV is a violation to human right, it undermines the health, dignity, security and autonomy of its victims and can be regarded as a global issue yet it remains shrouded in a culture of silence. Victims of violence can suffer sexual and reproductive health consequences, such as unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, traumatic fistula, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, and even death. It knows no social, economic or national boundaries.

Worldwide, an estimated one in three women will experience physical or sexual abuse in her lifetime (OCHA, 2019).

There is a high prevalence of GBV in situations such as political instability and insecurity. The term "sexual and other forms of gender-based violence" comprises not only rape and attempted rape, but also sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, forced early marriage, domestic

violence, marital rape, trafficking and female genital mutilation (WHO, 2011).

According to UNICEF 2017, about 15 million adolescent girls (aged 15-19 years) globally have experienced forced sex at a point in time. While women and girls are at greater risk of being violated, men and boys also experience gender-based violence. Despite the burden, GBV is grossly under reported because of stigma, lack of support systems and resources. Moreover, some victims are of the opinion that nobody will believe their story because our society shames victims for being abused. GBV is not to be concealed and requires actions at all levels. It requires viable support systems for the victims, prosecution of perpetrators and advocacy to the government.

SFH has been raising awareness on GBV and creating support systems for victims through



Peer to Peer Facilitation

the MTV Shuga Naija Peer education project and other youth-focused programmes which it implements. MTV Shuga project is a peer education intervention targeted at youth aged 15-24 years, with high prioritisation on females.

This project is centered on friendship, relationships and family planning, and will be implemented from August to December 2019 with an extension in-view. SFH has been educating and addressing issues on GBV, HIV/AIDS and safe sex using the MTV Shuga Naija series and Peer2Peer facilitation in Lagos state. The project creates Safe Spaces that enables young adolescents (in and out of school) to discuss issues such as GBV among their peer groups and peer educators freely. Affected victims get referrals that afford them

of counselling, legal support and other forms of services that may be required. The goal of the project is for young adults to have quality information, positive change of attitude towards sexual and reproductive health issues affecting them.

Educating adolescents in an environment that is responsive to gender differences and void of all forms of violence and abuse is a way of terminating the chain of violence, equipping adolescents with education, life building skills, negotiation skills, knowledge and power of assertion, reducing female vulnerability and expanding their opportunities, access to social, health and economic resources is integral to putting an end to the monster that stirs at the face of the youth.

The Law and Gender-Based Violence

Legal Corner with Mike Chidubem

Below is an excerpt of an interview with Mike Chidubem, a Legal and Human Rights Specialist at Society for Family Health based. This interview is focused on understanding GBV and its legal implications in Nigeria.



Q. What is gender?

A. Gender is the biological compartment in human beings. It can be described as a perception given to an individual by society, culture and religion. A man is tagged male because he wears blue, a woman is tagged female because she wears pink which should not be the ideal.

Q. Why do people find it difficult to report GBV?

A. A lot of victims do not report because of the concept of dependability. They fear that if they report, their source of livelihood would be cut-off.

They fear that if they report, their source of livelihood would be cut-off.

Previously, reports on Gender-Based Violence revolved around women, children and young ones but now, there have been reported cases of violation against men. GBV occurs when there is an unequal/uneven distribution of power among gender. The key factor that fuels GBV is a sense of vulnerability and as such, any vulnerable individual is at higher risk of experiencing GBV. Women and children are more vulnerable to GBV because there is a high dependency on men for livelihood and support. This makes reporting harder.

Furthermore, due to the poor awareness and literacy levels, majority of the victims do not know their rights, which makes them accept violation as the norm and so, they do not speak up.

The society discriminates and stigmatises the victims. Some parents are hostile to their children creating fear in them, so the children find it difficult to communicate their pain and ordeal to their parents. Even when they do, parents may not believe them and are often dismissive because it is often regarded by most parents as a thing of shame.

Q. How should rape be reported?

A. Victims can tell close relations or neighbours that can provide social support while they come to report to the appropriate channels.

GBV is a criminal offence, therefore perpetrators should be reported to the first and highest custodian of civil law which is the Nigerian Police. Other channels of reporting GBV include: the department of citizen rights at the Ministry of Justice, Human Right Commission, Legal Aid, Federación

Internacional de Abogadas (FIDA) which translates to International Federation of Women Lawyers, SFH etc.

Some cases are discarded because of lack of evidence. In the case of rape, washing up the victim immediately after the incident is destroying the evidence. Within the first hour of rape, after reporting to the police, a doctor's report is required which is regarded as the proof of rape.

Police need to also be trained on what to do in cases of rape, and the importance of post exposure prophylaxis and post coital contraception options such as Postinor 2.

Q. What are the penalties dished out to perpetrators?

A. Depending on the form of GBV, the penalty can vary from 3 days in detention to 21 years' imprisonment.

Q. Who is to be blamed for GBV?

A. Everybody is to be blamed for GBV. The perpetrator has the larger chunk of the blame. The perpetrator needs help because rape is a mental issue; it is not about the satisfaction but the force and pain inflicted on the victim that gives the perpetrator joy. The society is also to be blamed for condemning the victim and not taking firm actions against the perpetrator thereby fuelling the perpetrator to become a serial rapist.

Did you know?

Only 1% of victims ever sought professional help. - **UNICEF 2017**



Echoes from my Heart

My story: Speak up, only you can stop your rape/abuse

Lay with me, my quiet boy. Tell me your worries. That deep burn that is eating you up from within. Why do you shy away from your aunt and stare at her with revile? Is there anything your dear mom should know? Sit on my lap, my sweet Mary. You look so pale like a hibiscus flower plucked off its stem. Where have I gone wrong? With bitter tears soaking the teddy you've made your companion. Tell it to me, I'm here now to listen. I will be your ear all night as much as your lips would mutter and tell me what feasts on your soul.

Dad, the defense you ordered for me has become a thorn in my flesh, stripping off all my goodness like taking the peels off an unripe fruit. If all my affairs with him were a movie, the pause button of the controller has been masticated, he comes to me every noon after school in your absence in the guise of a caring teacher, but he is the image of a sheep worn by a wild dog. My innocence blown to the wind like the chaff of the groundnut, dashed off into the wind by the chewer. I tried so hard to speak but there was no one to listen, I confided in my thoughts. Waiting for the next noon after school to be defiled again. How can the enemy be so close? Closer than the clasp of the tooth on the lips in error. Such pain!! Speak up and find closure!!!

Adebiji Adesunkanmi

Quotes



"To talk about this, so that victims do not feel like victims, but like heroes who survived horrible things". **UNFPA**

"No power on earth has a right to take our property from us without our consent". **John Jay**

"You should not have taken advantage of my sensibility to steal into my affections without my consent". **Alexander Hamilton**

Did you know?

Societies with skewed population ratios due to 'son preference' are likely to have increased instances of sexual violence and human trafficking. - **UNPF 2018**

VOICES FROM THE STREET



Voices from the Street Sexual assault/rape who is to be blamed?

I feel the society should be blamed, because the family of the victim will say let's cover it because it is a shame.

- **Ademuyiwa**

The victims, perpetrator and the society is at fault. Rape leads to discrimination and then leads to mental ill health.

- **Mercy**

The perpetrator is at fault; I am aware of the services available to victims. Some rapists do it for some diabolic reasons

- **Francis**

I feel that rape is a spiritual problem

- **Daniel**

It is not easy to assess the causes of sexual assault/rape. It's not always dichotomous. Most of the time, it's the perpetrator. But in my point of view it's the society that has to be blamed! Increased alcohol advertisement, music videos with half naked ladies,

glorifying half naked ladies on social media. Hollywood, Nollywood showing sexual scenes in movies, musicians using vulgar words in music etc. It can go on and on. This things sharpen the way people think and act. Hence, I believe that the society is to be blamed!

- **Selasie**

The perpetrator should be punished with heavy deterrent at all cost. The victim sometimes may be blamed if he or she isn't vindicated

- **Dare**

Some parents do not believe their children. Nobody should be a victim, not to talk of twice. Society needs reorientation

- **Oyinye**



1. What portion of women globally are likely to be victims of violence in their lifetime?

(a) 3 in 100 (b) 1 in 3 (c) 1 in 5 (d) 1 in 10

2. The victim is the cause of GBV

(a) Never (b) Often (c) Sometimes (d) Always

3. I will speak against GBV

(a) Strongly agree (b) Agree (c) Neither agree nor disagree (d) Disagree (e) Strongly disagree

4. Who is a perpetrator in this context?

(a) someone who helps a victim (b) someone the victim talks to (c) someone who carries out any form of GBV on another person (d) someone who is muscular

5. Violence can be manifested in many different ways, including (check all that apply):

(a) Physical assault (b) Emotional or psychological abuse (c) Social or economic abuse.

6. The most important things I learnt were

Freebies awaits the first five correct entries to be sent to buzz@sfhnigeria.org

Spotlight for the month

This month, our spotlight is on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (November 25). It is marked with 16 days of activism (November 25- December 10) with the theme, "Orange the World: Generation Equality Stands against Rape!"

The 16 Days Campaign is a strategy for individuals globally to call for the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence against women. It is also to increase accountability by making rape universally illegal while strengthening the law enforcement agencies to investigate the crime and give support to the victim.

Photo Sessions from MTV Shuga



Peers watching an episode of MTV Shuga during a peer session



Peer Educator facilitating a session



Peers reflecting after watching an episode of MTV Shuga series



Peers watching an episode of MTV Shuga during a peer session

Did you know?

Violence against adolescents is usually perpetrated by a familiar face. - **UNICEF 2017**

Did you know?

In developing countries, 214 million sexually active women of reproductive age who do not want to get pregnant are not using a modern contraceptive method - **WHO, 2019.**



SFH Youth-Focused Newsletter

STAY IN TOUCH

Buzz would love to hear your thoughts, questions and contributions, send us an email at buzz@sfhnigeria.org

Your comment or question might just be included in our next publication.

For partnership and sponsorship as well as information on our interventions, products and services, contact:

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#SFHYouth

<http://www.sfhnigeria.org/youth-programming/>

