SFH YOUTH-FOCUSED NEWSLETTER

THIRD EDITION

#SFHYouth

VIOLENCE (GBV)

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

Addressing

Among Nigerian Youths
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.

Addressing 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, 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
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.

**Did you know?**

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

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.

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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 or report to the appropriate channels. 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.

**Peer to Peer Facilitation**

**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. Gender-Based Violence is a serious problem in Nigeria. Is there legislation that deals with it?

A. Yes, there are legislative frameworks that provide a legal framework to deal with GBV. Some of them include: The Nigerian Police Act, 1990; the Nigerian Criminal Code Act, 1990; the Nigerian Penal Code Act, 1998; the Nigerian Criminal Procedure Code Act, 2007; the Nigerian Constitution Act, 2010; and the Nigerian Family Court Act, 2012. These laws provide a legal framework to deal with GBV.

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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, striping 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!!!

Adebiyi Adesunkanmi

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

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

“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

Quotes

Did you know?

Eyes from my Heart

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

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