

# POLICY BRIEF

## Overcoming the Limitations to the Implementation of the Bauchi State Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law



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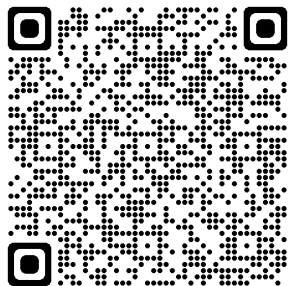
# POLICY BRIEF

## Overcoming the Limitations to the Implementation of the Bauchi State Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law<sup>1</sup>



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# 01. INTRODUCTION

Violence against women (VAW) is defined as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life”.<sup>1</sup> It has been identified as the most pervasive human rights violation in the world, and it is estimated to cost countries up to 3.7% of their GDP – more than double what most governments spend on education.<sup>2</sup> An offshoot of gender inequality, violence against women is a significant cause of female morbidity and mortality, may be physical, emotional, sexual, psychological, or economic harm, and it takes place in the private or public arenas, affecting 1 in 3 women in their lifetime. Considering Nigeria’s estimated female population of over 106 million<sup>3</sup> as of January 2022, that translates into about 35 million women. Recent happenings such as the lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated the cases

of violence against women, particularly sexual violence. The UN brief of May 2020 revealed that during this time, the increase in reports of domestic violence cases in April 2020 was more profound in three states under total lockdown (Lagos state, Ogun state, and the Federal Capital Territory). The number of cases rose from 60 in March to 238 in April, an increase of 127%. Furthermore, women and girls are disproportionately affected by insecurity – Boko Haram insurgency, banditry, kidnappings, herder-farmers conflict, armed robbery, and so on – and an estimated 79% of internally displaced persons are women and children<sup>4</sup>, who are also “targeted for abduction by Boko Haram and are often raped, forced into labour, marriage, or religious conversion, abused, exposed to sexually transmitted infections and are often pregnant upon escaping captivity”<sup>5</sup>.

The Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act (VAPPA) is the most comprehensive and progressive law for ad-

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1 UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*, 20 December 1993, A/RES/48/104, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f25d2c.html> [accessed 10 February 2021]

2 World Bank. 2019. Gender-based Violence (Violence against Women and Girls) <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/socialdevelopment/brief/violence-against-women-and-girls>

3 <https://countrymeters.info/en/Nigeria>

4 Displacement Tracking Matrix. (2017). Displacement Tracking Matrix: Nigeria Round XV Report 2017. Retrieved from <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/56254> (assessed on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021)

5 <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/results-baseline-survey-gender-based-violence-borno-state-nigeria>

addressing the silent pandemic of violence against women and girls in Nigeria. The main thrust of the VAPPA is to “eliminate violence in private and public life, prohibit all forms of violence against persons and to provide maximum protection and effective remedies for victims and punishment of offenders; and for other related matters”<sup>1</sup>. It guarantees maximum protection to all citizens by prohibiting all forms of violence and harmful traditional practices against women or men, boys or girls occurring in private and /or public spaces.

The Act is the first criminal legislation which expanded Nigerian criminal jurisprudence by recognising various forms of related crimes hitherto unacknowledged. Accordingly, the definition of rape was expanded beyond penetration of the female genitals and mouth, to forced sexual action on a male. It addresses a broad-spectrum of violence - physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, economic, and psychological abuses, as well as discrimination against persons, particularly women and girls. These include child abandonment, rape, incest, defilement of minors, forced eviction of a spouse and children, harmful widowhood laws and practices, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced financial dependence, attacks with harmful substance, political violence, among others. It also sets appropriate punishment for convicted perpetrators. For instance, the offence of rape may attract life imprisonment,

subject to the circumstance and the discretion of the judge. The offender will also be listed in the sexual offenders’ register as a deterrent to others. Similarly, the Act makes provisions for effective remedies for victims of violence – rehabilitation support, and compensation, among others. According to Section 38 (1) of the Act, victims of violence are entitled to material, medical, psychological, and legal assistance from governmental and non-governmental agencies providing such services. Additionally, they are afforded opportunity to acquire skills in any vocation of their choice and access to micro credit facilities.

Since it was enacted in 2015, the Act has the force of law in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and in twenty-three (23) states across Nigeria where it has been adopted into law.

The Act recognizes as punishable a wide range of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) offences including forced financial dependence or economic abuse, harmful widowhood practices, genital mutilation, abandonment of children, harmful substance attacks, and incest. Furthermore, due to its all-encompassing nature, the Act does not just protect women and girls from violence, it can also be used to improve the participation of women in politics and other positions of power. This is because violence and discrimination are amongst the reasons why women get excluded from politics and other aspects of public life.

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1 Violence against Persons Prohibition Act, 2015

Prior to the enactment of the VAPPA, there was no comprehensive legislation on violence against women at the national level. Nigeria only had disparate pieces of legislation, which did not address violence against women or gender-based violence uniformly across the country. A few states had passed legislation on domestic violence, harmful traditional practices, or gender-based violence. A few others had attempted to do so unsuccessfully. Much of the existing legislation was outdated, not sufficiently comprehensive, not specifically directed to this grave problem, and not adequately enforced. The coming together of more than fifty-five (55) different groups and individuals under the umbrella of the Legislative Advocacy Coalition on Violence Against Women, (LACVAW), eventually helped mobilise action to improve the legislative landscape for violence against

women in Nigeria in 2002. The result of that activism was the signing into law of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act on May 25, 2015, after about thirteen (13) years in the legislative process. The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in persons (NAPTIP) is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the law at the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

This policy brief gives an update to the status of the uptake of the VAPPA by the 36 states and provides information on the current status of the Bauchi State Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law specifically. It is aimed at guiding decision makers and relevant stakeholders in facilitating effective engagement towards successful implementation of the law in the state.



***Violence against women (VAW) is defined as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life”***

## 02. OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF THE VAPP ACT AND RELATED LAWS

Between January and March 2021, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) commissioned a national research in twelve (12) states of the federation to assess the impact of the VAPP Act in Nigeria, five (5) years after it was enacted. Titled “The Impact of the Violence against Persons (Prohibition) Act and Related Laws in Nigeria”<sup>1</sup>, the project aligned with WFD’s objective of promoting inclusion by ensuring gender equality and protecting women and girls from violence. The increased number of cases of violence against women and girls in particular in the context of COVID-19 and the frequent cases of perpetrators of gender-based violence facing insubstantial punishment provided the need for research on the uptake of the VAPPA by the states as well as the implementation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law (VAPPL) in states that had already domesticated the Act across the country. The research is the first national impact assessment of the Act since its enactment.

Originally designed to focus on the implementation of the Act in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and in eleven (11) out of the eighteen (18) states across the six geo-political zones where it had been domesticated at that time, the study assessed the adoption, successes, and challenges of the implementation of the Act, identified the factors that promote or limit the implementation of the Act, as well as the gaps that need to be addressed to ensure the Act achieves its objective of prohibiting violence against citizens, especially women, and promoting gender equality in the Nigerian society. It was also aimed at assessing the level of citizen participation and engagement in the adoption and implementation processes of the VAPPA.

The study was undertaken in Abia, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Bauchi, Cross River, Edo, Enugu, FCT, Kaduna, Lagos, Osun, and Plateau States. It was however noted during the planning process that contrary to available data, three (3) of the selected states - Cross River, Osun, and Plateau - were only in the process of domesticating the VAPPA, while the domestication process was yet to start in Lagos State as of January 2021. Although those four states did not have a VAPPL in place yet, they had various legislations to protect women and girls

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1 <https://www.wfd.org/2021/12/07/the-impact-of-the-violence-against-persons-prohibition-act-and-related-laws-in-nigeria/>



from violence. Therefore, for ease of analysis, the study integrated related anti-violence against women and girls laws into the research framework by identifying major pieces of legislation for protecting women and girls from the various forms of violence in those states. It assessed the legal and policy frameworks to determine how adequately the laws protect women and girls from violence; it also elicited information on the processes being undertaken to domesticate the Act.

The national research also identified best practices in the focal states, and generated recommendations to encourage rapid progress in the implementation of the VAPP Law of the states and /or its adoption by the states yet to domesticate it, while contributing to existing body of knowledge on the impact of anti-violence against women and girls' laws in Nigeria.

## 2.1. KEY FINDINGS

The national research revealed that:

- ❑ The VAPPA does not offer a universal coverage to all Nigerian women and girls as the uptake by states was generally low across the country.
- ❑ The culture of silence and concealment; stigmatisation; trivialisation; threats and intimidation; and inadequate funding of necessary structures and mechanisms for implementing anti-violence against women and girls' legislations are key constraints to the achievement of the significant success in the fight violence against women and girls in Nigeria.
- ❑ More cases of violence against women and girls are reported and taken up in places where the relevant implementation structures are put in place.
- ❑ Although the VAPPL seems to have helped in the decrease in the incidence of violence against women and girls in some states, the implementation can still be observed to be largely weak.
- ❑ The Sexual Offenders' Register (SOR) is an effective deterrent to perpetrators in states where such has been established, updated, and publicised.
- ❑ The VAPPA and related laws are more effectively implemented in states where the First Ladies take a keen interest in and contribute to efforts aimed at eliminating violence against women and girls.
- ❑ The intersection of disabilities, violence and gender is not often considered in the implementation of the VAPPA/VAPPL. As such, response mechanisms do not prioritise persons with disabilities who usually experience VAW differently.
- ❑ Institutions and personnel expected to be involved in the implementation include the police, the judiciary, desk-officers, relevant ministries and agencies. However, they are challenged by lack of capacity in terms of training, funding, effects of corruption, and corrupt practices.



- ❑ Though some level of awareness of some of the VAPPL and anti-violence against women and girls' laws has been created, many of the research participants do not know of their existence or the mechanisms to implement them.
- ❑ Ignorance, cultural beliefs and practices, misinterpretation of the major religions, misinformation, poor socialisation, and poverty are the major barriers to the effective implementation of the VAPPA/VAPPL and other anti-violence against women and girls' legislation.
- ❑ There is a general satisfaction with the VAPPA as an all-encompassing legal instrument. However, study participants largely faulted the implementation within the FCT and in states where it is in force for reasons of lack of political will, paucity of funds, lack of infrastructure, and low capacity among implementing officers.
- ❑ The simplification and popularisation of the VAPP Act and related laws help keep children, especially the girl-child, in school.
- ❑ Active collaboration between state actors and non-state actors enhances the level of effectiveness of the VAPPA/VAPPL.
- ❑ The VAPPA/VAPPL is rarely used to promote women's political participation.
- ❑ The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) is not adequately resourced to solely lead the implementation of the Act in the FCT effectively.
- ❑ There are still gaps in the laws, specifically relating to response and coordination in some of the states, and what specific penalties are attached to specific violations. These need to be reviewed and clearly designated.
- ❑ The challenges to the implementation structures set up by the government ranged from lack of synergy, intimidation, slow judicial process, to inadequacy of interventions specific to various needs or categories of victims.
- ❑ Poverty remains one of the factors that heightens the vulnerability of women and girls to all forms of sexual and gender-based violence.

## 2.2. BARRIERS TO THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VIOLENCE AGAINST PERSONS PROHIBITION ACT/LAWS AND RELATED LAWS

The study also highlighted some of the barriers to the success of the VAPPA. These include:

- ❑ Ignorance: For 39% of the research participants across the research sites, ignorance was the major barrier to the utilisation of the laws by the citizens.
- ❑ Cultural beliefs and practices: 25% of the study participants confirmed that patriarchal traditions and cultural beliefs ascribe power and control to men and boys. Therefore, VAWG has been normalised in most communities.

- ❑ Lack of political will by governments at the national and state levels was identified by 23% of the respondents as another barrier to effective implementation of the laws. What this means is that it is not enough to enact a law, the political will to ensure its successful implementation must be evident.
- ❑ Misinterpretation of the major religions is a limiting factor in the opinion of 9% of the respondents.
- ❑ Other factors such as misinformation, poor socialisation and poverty were highlighted for consideration when discussing the barriers to the implementation of the VAPPA and related anti-VAWG laws by the last 4% of the survey population.

### 2.3. UPDATE ON THE UPTAKE OF THE VAPPA BY SUB-NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

Prior to the research, the Act had only been domesticated by twelve (12) states and by the time the report was presented, the figure had increased to fifteen (15). There has been a significant leap in the number of states that have domesticated the Act to twenty-five (25) since the national research was commissioned in January 2021.

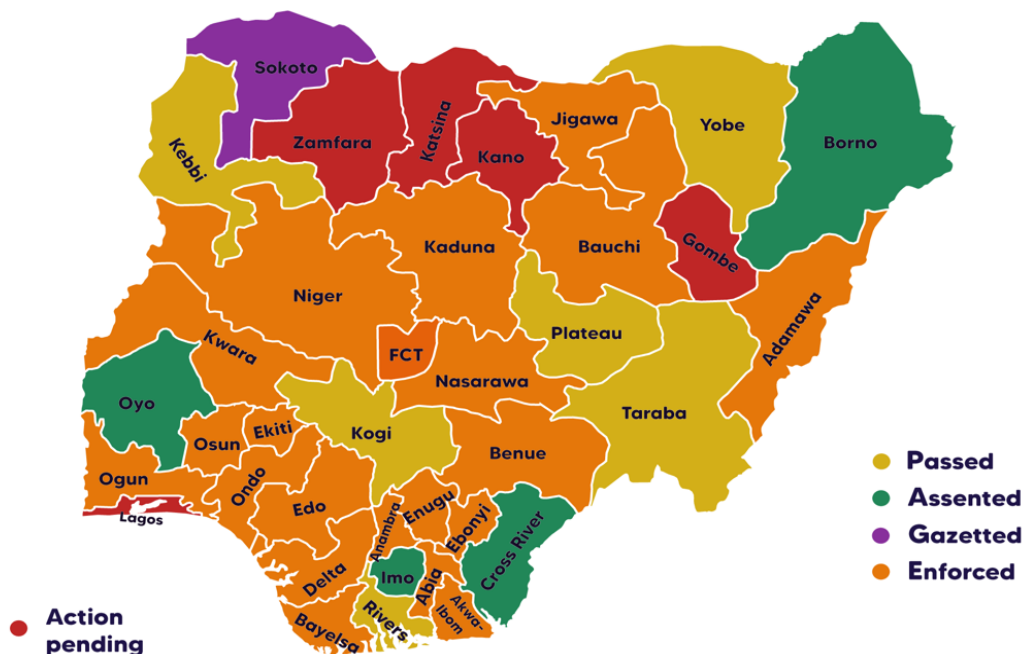
#### Status of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act in Focal States

S/N	State	January 2021	January 2022
1.	Abia	VAPPL in place	VAPPL In place
2.	Akwa Ibom	VAPPL in place	VAPPL in place
3.	Anambra	VAPPL in place	VAPPL in place
4.	Bauchi	Amendment of VAPPL in process	Amended VAPPL awaiting assent
5.	Cross River	Domestication in process	VAPPL in place
6.	Edo	Amendment of VAPPL in process	Amended VAPPL in place
7.	Enugu	VAPPL awaiting gazette	VAPPL in place
8.	FCT	VAPPA in place	VAPPA in place
9.	Kaduna	VAPPL in place	VAPPL in place
10.	Lagos	No Action towards domestication	Amendment of anti-VAW laws in process
11.	Osun	Domestication in process	VAPPL in place
12.	Plateau	VAPP Bill awaiting assent	VAPP Bill awaiting assent

At the time of preparing this Brief, six (6) states had passed their VAPP bills and are awaiting assent by the governors of their respective states. There are five (5) states yet to pass the VAPPA into law – Gombe, Katsina, Kano, Lagos, and Zamfara.

The success recorded within such a short period has been facilitated largely by the efforts of state and non-state actors, particularly the Honourable Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development, Dame Pauline Tallen who has been a strong pillar of support to women’s rights organisations and international development agencies working on domestication and adoption of the Act; putting the domestication of the Act on the front burners by civil society actors, especially women’s organisations and groups; the accurate data on the uptake of the Act shown by the national research findings; the engagement of development partners, including WFD with the Nigerian Governors’ Wives Forum (NGWF); and the dedication of members of the Erelu Bisi Fayemi-led NGWF to ensure universal adoption and effective implementation of the Act by the 36 states to protect women and girls from GBV in the states so that the lives of women and girls can be more meaningful.

## The Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act **PAGE Scorecard**



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## 2.4. FINDINGS FROM THE NATIONAL RESEARCH ON BAUCHI STATE

The Executive Governor of Bauchi State signed the Bauchi State Violence Against Persons Prohibition into law July 2020. Both state and non-state stakeholders including the Ministries of Justice and Women Affairs, in collaboration with civil society organizations had campaigned and advocated for the adoption of the VAPP Act of 2015 for more than four (4) years before it was finally adopted. It was the first time that the stakeholders had been passionately committed to the enactment of a law in the state due to the upsurge of sexual violence as reported around the state, especially with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Bauchi pioneered the domestication of the VAPP Act in the North-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

According to the research findings, the mechanisms set out for the implementation of the Law, including the Standing Committee on VAWG made up of all relevant stakeholders like the Judiciary, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Women Affairs, and other stakeholders including the CSOs, CBOs, CDAs, and FBOs will play a significant role in the implementation of the VAPP Law. It is expected to serve as a monitoring and evaluation mechanism. In addition, the Office of the First Lady of Bauchi State which serves more like a response team, is regarded as invaluable to the effective implementation of the VAPP Law.

Assessing the benefits of the Bauchi VAPPL, the study showed that the process of domestication of the VAPP Act engendered the sensitisation of the society to the challenge of violence against women and girls especially in the urban areas. This was made possible because the CSOs involved in the process employed social advocacy as a tactic, thereby facilitating a high level of citizen engagement through series of radio programmes on free airtimes and live phone-in programmes; small cluster awareness with small groups of magistrate, lawyers, doctors, schools, traditional leaders, religious leaders, and with civil society organizations (CSOs) that work around ending violence against women and other vulnerable groups; polling and social media campaigns via Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp, among others. Consequently, there is a level of awareness and knowledge of the law, especially in the urban communities. However, majority of the participants from the indigent community, aged women and few from the youth groups have considerably low awareness on the existence of the VAPPL. In addition, with the law, women feel more protected by the government, engendering self-confidence, productivity and a general sense of worth with the assurance that they do not have to suffer indignities of discrimination, sexual violence and or harassment in silence anymore. Furthermore, the domestication of the VAPP Act into law in Bauchi State facilitated a reduction in the incidence of cases of VAWG in the State, according to as 76% of the respondents who believed that the adoption and implementation of the law reduces crime and sanitises the society.

### **2.4.1. STRUCTURES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE BAUCHI STATE VAPPL**

The study showed that the Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Girls which was hitherto domiciled in the Office of the First Lady was renamed as the Standing Committee on Violence Against Women and Girls in the Office of the Secretary to the Bauchi State Government as provided for in the VAPP Law. This was done to institutionalise the Committee to enable the State Government to continue to investigate and follow up on VAWG cases. Aside that, the State Governor had set the machinery for the establishment of a special court that would deal specifically with SGBV cases in motion. In the absence of the special court, specific courts have been temporarily assigned to deal with issues of VAWG. Furthermore, the research showed that the Bauchi State Government had commenced the construction of shelters for survivors of SGBV. These mechanisms set out for the implementation of the law especially the standing committee consists of all stakeholders necessary for effective implementation like the Judiciary, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Women Affairs, civil society actors such as NGOs, women's organisations, community-based organisations, faith-based organisations, community development associations, and so forth. The influence of the Office of the First Lady of Bauchi State which serves more as a response team cannot be overemphasized.

### **2.4.2. IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE BAUCHI STATE VAPPL**

Although the state has structures for implementation in place, the VAPPL of Bauchi was not in force at the time of the study due to some of the gaps noticed in the law. This included the fact that the crime of rape was left out, and some provisions were found not to be culturally sensitive. Consequently, the VAPPL was presented to the Bauchi State House of Assembly for amendment in February 2021.

### **2.4.3. CHALLENGES TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BAUCHI VAPPL**

Some of the challenges limiting the successful implementation of the law as highlighted by study participants include:

- Inadequacy of funds to fully establish the mechanisms and undertake all the inter-related activities stipulated in the VAPPL for effective implementation of the law.

- ❑ Misogynistic patriarchal socialization that pitches men and some women against efforts to eliminate violence against women. As far as such individuals are concerned, power is a zero-sum game and women's freedom from violence only means that men have lost control over women.
- ❑ Discriminatory traditional and religious beliefs which foster misconception and misinterpretation of religious teachings at the expense of women and girls.

### **03. UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF THE VAPP ACT DOMESTICATION PROCESS BY THE STATE.**

Since the research was concluded in March 2021, Bauchi State has recorded significant milestones towards efficient and effective implementation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law of the state. The progress also validated and addresses to a large extent some of the barriers to the successful implementation of the law which were identified during the national research. The efforts of government show that the political will to protect women, children and other vulnerable members of the society is not in doubt. This commitment was demonstrated in the early days of the administration with the adoption of the VAPPL, evolving a governance structure, and identifying initiatives aimed at translating the provisions of the law into concrete actions that enables its implementation. The ultimate goal is the elimination of violence against persons in the state and impacting society positively. In addition, the government recognises the role of cultural gatekeepers in ending discrimination against women and girls, as well as strategies to facilitate actions that draw linkages of misogynistic patriarchy and underdevelopment. Moreover, the government is not unmindful of the importance of guaranteeing the success of the VAPPL with targeted funding and other resources for its implementation.

The follow-up assessment undertaken in the state revealed the following:

- ❑ With funding and technical support from the UN Women and UK Government, the Bauchi State Government launched a Costed Model Action Plan (CMAP) for the VAPPL on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2021. The CMAP provides a multi-sectoral approach to ending violence highlights intervention strategies with the most direct impact on

indigenes and residents of the state who are disproportionately affected by gender-based violence, especially women and children. With the activities and targets clearly defined, estimated costing prepared, and assignment of roles and responsibilities to critical stakeholders for its implementation, the CMAP is expected to ensure effective implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of the VAPPL. The CMAP is yet another step to demonstrate the commitment of the government to end violence against women and other vulnerable groups in Bauchi state. Its publication is a call to put a stop to discriminatory cultural norms and practices which have been found to constitute a breeding ground for gender-based violence as well as a barrier to development and peace.

- ❑ Budgetary allocation of the sum of N3.7 billion for the implementation of the Costed Model Action Plan (CMAP) announced by the state governor. This is aimed at addressing the gap between political will to end violence against women and other vulnerable groups, and the provision of adequate resources to actualize the commitment of government to that end.
- ❑ Inauguration of a Technical Committee for the implementation of the VAPPL made up of the Commissioner of Justice and the Attorney General who is the Chairman; Representative of Bauchi State Judiciary; Representative of the Bauchi State House of Assembly; Representative of the Ministry of Women Affairs; Representative of Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning; Representative of Ministry of Local Government Affairs; Representative of the Ministry of Health; Representative of Ministry of Information; Representative of Ministry of Education; Representatives of Commissioner of Police, the traditional and religious institutions, among others.
- ❑ Inauguration of an Advisory Committee on the implementation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Law to ensure the effective implementation of the law. The Bauchi State First Lady is the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee. Members include the Commissioners for Women Affairs, Justice, Local Govt Affairs, Budget and Economic Planning, Health; Chief Judge; Special Advisers on Multilateral Affairs, Legal Matters; Representatives of the Secretary to the State Government, Commissioner of Police and of the Emir of Bauchi.
- ❑ Establishment of the State Action Committee on SGBV by the Office of the First Lady and headed by the wife of the Deputy Governor for supporting actions by the government in eliminating gender-based violence in the state.



# 04. RECOMMENDATIONS

To address the challenges identified during the national research and in the course of the follow-up assessment, the following recommendations are proposed to ensure effective implementation of the Bauchi State VAPPL:

## SHORT-TERM

### *House of Assembly*

- ❑ The House Committee on Women Affairs should prioritise the success of the VAPPL in its oversight functions.
- ❑ Members of Appropriation sub-committee should demand adequate budgetary provisions for effective implementation of the Law.

### *Bauchi State Government*

- ❑ Assent to the amended VAPPL as passed by the House of Assembly.
- ❑ Match political will with deliberate concrete action by releasing funds for the implementation of the VAPPL as provided for in the CMAP. Adequate funding should be made available to the relevant agencies - Judiciary, law enforcement, Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Sexual Assault Referral Centres, shelters, and NGOs providing service to abused women and girls.
- ❑ Provide hotlines for ease of reporting of cases of violence against women and girls.
- ❑ Provide capacity building opportunities through training and retraining to equip agencies and ministries tasked with the duty of implementing these laws and the members of the judiciary with necessary skills.
- ❑ Simplify the VAPPL and translate into major languages and distribute widely for accessibility.
- ❑ Develop protocols and guidelines for GBV management and reporting.
- ❑ Establish sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) in the three senatorial districts to provide much needed psychosocial, legal, and medical support for survivors.
- ❑ Coordinate prevention and response actions by various stakeholders.
- ❑ Set up and run shelters to provide temporary safe houses for women and girls running from abusive environments across the state.
- ❑ Create and strengthen coordinated GBV response structures at the local government and community levels.

### ***Civil Society Organisations***

- ❑ Embark on continuous sensitization and awareness creation on the Bauchi VAPPL and the CMAP.
- ❑ Partner with the government for the successful implementation of the CMAP
- ❑ Simplify, translate into local languages, and distribute the Bauchi State VAPPL widely.
- ❑ Monitor the implementation of the VAPPL and track release of funds to ensure judicious use for the intended purposes.

### ***Development Partners***

- ❑ Provide strategic support to state and non-state actors working on different aspects of the implementation of the VAPPL.
- ❑ Engage with CSOs actively working to provide support legal, psychosocial, and medical as well as shelter to abused women.

## **MEDIUM-TERM**

### ***House of Assembly***

- ❑ Constitute a panel/committee to review the effectiveness of the VAPPL periodically.
- ❑ The House Committee on Women Affairs should prioritise the success of the VAPPL in its oversight functions
- ❑ Members of Appropriation sub-committee should demand adequate budgetary provisions for effective implementation of the Law.

### ***Bauchi State Government***

- ❑ Sustain the aggressive and regular state-wide awareness creation, using traditional and cultural medium where necessary.
- ❑ Establish specialised courts for sexual and gender-based violence offences in the state as planned.
- ❑ Establish a Survivors' Support Fund without further delay and provide clear management structure.
- ❑ Set up anti-GBV School Clubs to address school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) in the state.

### ***Civil Society Organisations***

- ❑ Enlist the support of state and national assembly legislators, top government officials, and social media influencers in the campaign against discriminatory practices

that fuel violence against women and girls in the state.

- ❑ Sensitise and collaborate with local level administration – traditional rulers and local government council leaders advocate the implementation of the VAPPL to eliminate VAWG in rural communities.
- ❑ Partner with the media in holding the various government agencies accountable for the implementation of the VAPPL.

### ***Development Partners***

- ❑ Enhance the capacity of partners to collect and interpret data reflecting diversity and inclusion.
- ❑ Undertake research on good practices in GBV response at national and sub-national levels and produce factsheets.

## **LONG-TERM**

### ***House of Assembly***

Constitute a panel/committee to review the effectiveness of the VAPPL periodically.

- ❑ The House Committee on Women Affairs should prioritise the success of the VAPPL in its oversight functions
- ❑ Members of Appropriation sub-committee should demand adequate budgetary provisions for effective implementation of the Law.
- ❑ Periodic review of the effectiveness of the Bauchi State VAPPL and amendment as appropriate.

### ***Bauchi State Government***

- ❑ Integrate the VAPPL in the school curriculum. Include the simplified version of the VAPPL in the reading list of primary school curriculum. This will go a long way in raising a next generation of anti-VAWG adults.
- ❑ Sustain advocacy through relevant government agencies such as national orientation agency (NOA) and the ministry of information as well as CSOs to create awareness. The sensitization should reach every nook and cranny of the state by employing traditional and cultural media in communities.

### ***Civil Society Organisations***

- ❑ Identify and engage with progressive religious leaders to change the narrative of discrimination and suppression of women in the name of religion and tradition.

### ***Development Partners***

- ❑ Enhance the capacity of lawmakers to periodically assess the effectiveness of the law and review as appropriate.



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