

POLICY BRIEF

Overcoming the Challenges to the Effective Implementation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act in the Federal Capital territory (FCT)



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

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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”.¹ 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.² 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 million³ 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 children⁴, who are also “targeted for abduction by Boko Haram and are often raped, forced into labour, marriage, or

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 19th February 2021)

religious conversion, abused, exposed to sexually transmitted infections and are often pregnant upon escaping captivity.”¹

The Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act (VAPPA) is the most comprehensive and progressive law for 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”². 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)

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

⁶ Violence against Persons Prohibition Act, 2015

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.

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 Osun 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.

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”¹, 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 geopolitical 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

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

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 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.



The Act provides under Section 38 that every victim of violence is entitled to receive the necessary medical, psychological, social, and legal assistance through governmental and non-governmental agencies providing such assistance.

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

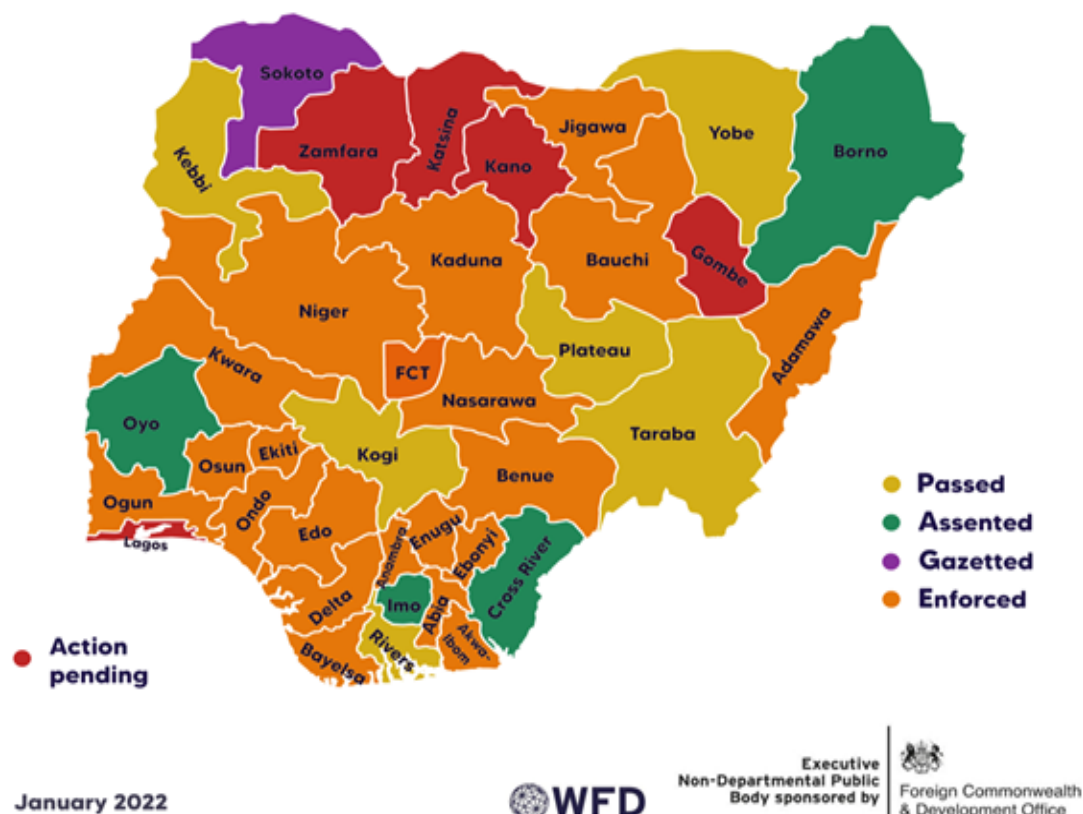
S/N	State	January 2021	January 2022
1.	Abia	VAPPL in place	VAPPL In place

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



2.4. FINDINGS FROM OSUN STATE

The process of adoption of the VAPPA was underway in Osun State at the time of mining data for the national research. From the information gathered on the field, the VAPP Bill had just passed the First Reading, study participants were not aware of the status of the Bill or the timeframe for the eventual adoption, there was limited knowledge of its content by stakeholders and members of the public, and information on the VAPP Act was not so much in the public space.

In addition to the Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended), and the Criminal Code of 2005, Osun State has three major laws to combat VAWG. These are:

1. Female Genital Mutilation Law (2005).
2. Child Right Law (2007).

3. Protection against Domestic Violence Law (2013).

The mechanisms for implementation of the existing laws, according to the feedback from the FGDs and the KIIs are through the Police, as well as the Office of the Public Defender, and the Citizen Mediation Centre which are both under the State Ministry of Justice. Those responsible for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are majorly the Civil Society Organisations and some community-based organisations versed in the area of GBVs. The FGD participants commended the Justice Development and Peace Makers (JDPM) for its efforts in this regard.

The existence of the anti-VAWG laws and efforts by the state government, have helped state and non-state service providers record some successes in terms of getting justice for survivors. Cases of GBV have been successfully prosecuted using existing anti-VAWG laws. A case in point was that of the prosecution of Professor Richard Akindele who was accused of sexual harassment. He was sentenced to two (2) years imprisonment. Effective cooperation of relevant agencies in prosecuting cases by the Ministry of Justice through its directorates like the Office of the Public Defender (OPD), Citizens Mediation Centre (CMC) and the Public Prosecution Department (PPD) was also cited as positive impact of the availability of the anti-VAWG laws in the state.

Community leaders identified poor perception of existing laws, lack of awareness of VAPP Act and that of the process of adoption of the VAPP Bill as well as the low participation of women in political activities in the state as key barriers to effective implementation of the existing anti-VAWGs. Findings from the research also showed significant gaps in the availability of anti-VAWG laws and VAPP Act across respondents. Moreover, it was revealed that GBV victims still bear the costs associated with the costs of healthcare; representation and reintegration in pursuits of access to care, and such pursuits are often impeded by stigmatisation, discriminatory and limiting religious beliefs and sentiments, and the lackadaisical attitude of law enforcement agencies. Government support to survivors is insufficient and often times ineffective, and NGOs rendering support to survivors do not benefit from any form of assistance from the state government. In addition, there is lack of capacity among law enforcement officers, and some officers of the judiciary as to the implementation and application of the provisions various anti-VAWG laws in the state. Furthermore, the study showed that communities are not being sufficiently engaged in the fight against VAWG, and the awareness of the various anti-VAWG laws and the VAPP Act is poor, thereby limiting for meaningful progress to happen in ending violence against women and girls at that level. Finally, it was noted that media outfits are not doing enough in terms of investigating occurrences of VAWG and holding government and implementing agencies accountable.

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

The process for the domestication of the VAPPA by the government of Osun State was concluded with the signing of the Osun State VAPP Bill into law by the governor on October 11, 2021. The VAPPL became the comprehensive law for protecting women, children, and other vulnerable groups from violence in the private and public spheres, widening the scope of violence and strengthening the weight of punishment for offences. In addition to the provisions of the VAPPA, the law covers issues such as judicial protection of victims of SGBV against publicity and substance abuse induced SGBV, among others. The copies of VAPPL are available for purchase by the public, though the procedure for procurement from the Office of the Clerk at the House of Assembly is seen to be cumbersome.

The following structures have been put in place to ensure effective implementation of the Osun State VAPPL:

- i. The GBV committee comprising of relevant MDAs is headed by the First Lady.
- ii. The Women Clinic under the Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Development
- iii. A referral centre located in the office of the First Lady admits complaints, with a toll-free hotline
- iv. Zonal offices for GBV complaints lodging and swift intervention
- v. The Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Development, in collaboration with the Ministries of Information, Health, Finance, is saddled with the responsibility of providing knowledge and skills necessary to deliver high quality care to GBV survivors.
- vi. Family Courts and Magistrate Courts for the prosecution of SGBV case.

Since the VAPPL came into force in the state, there have been various interrelated initiatives undertaken by state and non-state actors to further the implementation of the law. These include:

☐ **Capacity Building**

There have been capacity enhancement programmes for different stakeholders by

civil society organisation. One of such was organized by lawyers and law enforcement agencies organized by UNFPA and Action Health Incorporated (AHI) with the objectives of popularizing the VAPP law among the duty bearers, strengthening legal responses to cases of violence against persons, and strengthening capacity in handling cases of violence against women and girls in the state with the use of the VAPPL. Beneficiaries were drawn from the State Ministry of Justice, Federation of Female Lawyers (FIDA), Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), the Nigerian Police Force, the Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps, (NSCDC), and the Peace Corps.

□ Sensitisation and Advocacy

The First Lady of Osun State has been leading the advocacy to end violence against women and girls in the state. Since the VAPPL came into force, she has partnered with local and international organisations like the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) to interface with different stakeholders such as legislators, CSOs, the media, traditional and religious leaders, law enforcement agencies, and the gender management committee of the state among others to create awareness on the provisions of the law and advocate effective implementation of the law.

There have also been sensitization and awareness creation initiatives by women's organisations working to end violence in different parts of the state such as Women Advocates Resource Development Centre (WARDC), HACEY Health Initiative, International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), Action Health Incorporated (AHI), and Women Against Rape, Sexual Harassment and Exploitation (WARSHE). The existence of the VAPPL will strengthen the annual Campaign Against Violence on Women in Politics 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”

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 fast-track effective implementation of the Osun State VAPPL:

Short-Term

Osun State House of Assembly

- ❑ Members of Appropriation sub-committee of the HoA should demand adequate budgetary provisions for effective implementation of the Osun VAPPL

Osun State Government

- ❑ 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 in Osun state.
- ❑ Relocate the referral centre in the Office of the First Lady to either the Ministry of Justice or the Ministry of Women Affairs for sustainability.
- ❑ Provide Zonal Offices with necessary infrastructure and equipment for for speedy response.
- ❑ Create and strengthen coordinated GBV response structures at the local government and community levels.
- ❑ Match political will with deliberate concrete action by making budgetary provisions for the implementation of the VAPPL. Adequate funding should be made available to the relevant agencies - Judiciary, law enforcement, Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Sexual Assault Referral Centres, 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 by way of training and retraining to equip agencies and ministries tasked with the duty of implementing these laws, prosecutors, and the members of the judiciary with necessary tools.
- ❑ Simplify and translate the VAPPL into the major local language in the state and

- pidgin. Make this available to all citizens as much as possible.
- ☐ Provide necessary logistics to the Police to respond prompt to reported cases. Set up monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure the funds are used for the purpose they were given.
 - ☐ Set up and run shelters to provide temporary safe houses for women and girls running from abusive environments across the state.
 - ☐ Declare a zero-tolerance to corruption across board and display political will to stamp VAWG.
 - ☐ Develop an emergency response policy with broad definition of emergency situations to include public health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic and SGBV. It should list the various emergency service providers, to include NGOs rendering services.
 - ☐ Coordinate prevention and response actions by various stakeholders.
 - ☐ Set up a response/implementation mechanism that would also be responsible for reporting, monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

Civil Society Organisations

- ☐ Embark on full-throttle sensitization and awareness creation on the VAPPL to advocate its effective implementation.
- ☐ Establish an advocacy coalition for the monitoring the implementation of the VAPPL and engender partnerships between CSOs and government at the legislative and executive levels.
- ☐ Monitor the implementation of the VAPPL and track release of funds to ensure judicious use for the intended purposes.
- ☐ Partner with traditional and new media organisations to hold the relevant government agencies accountable for the implementation of the VAPPL in the state.
- ☐ Simplify, translate, and popularize the VAPPL. Make copies available across the state.
- ☐ Support government to carry out the functions that will operationalize the provisions of the VAPP Act such as: setting up an offenders' register; development of guidelines for those operating as service providers in the state, set up a register for them and circulate same; appointment of 'Protection Officers' for each local government area to help the Court and Police in coordinating actions; and appointment of a Coordinator that will oversee actions towards ending violence against women and girls and report annually.

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 shelters for abused women.
- ❑ Enhance the capacity of partners to collect and interpret data reflecting diversity and inclusion.

Medium-Term

House of Assembly

- ❑ The House Committee on Women Affairs should prioritise the success of the VAPPL in its oversight functions

Osun State Government

- ❑ Set up anti-GBV School Clubs to address school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) in the state.
- ❑ Increase 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.
- ❑ Establish family courts in each local government or senatorial district.
- ❑ The Ministry of Information and the National Orientation Agency should embark on enlightenment campaign for gatekeepers - traditional rulers and religious leaders.

Civil Society Organisations

- ❑ Enlist the support of state and national assembly legislators, top government officials, and social media influencers in the campaign against 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 stop VAWG in the communities.

Development Partners

- ❑ Undertake research on good practices in GBV response at national and sub-national levels and produce factsheets.

Long-Term

House of Assembly

- ❑ Undertake periodic review the effectiveness of the VAPPL
- ❑ The House Committee on Women Affairs should prioritise the success of the VAPPL in its oversight functions

Osun State Government

- ❑ Integrate the VAPPL in the school curriculum when adopted. 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.
- ❑ Establish Specialised Courts and Practice Direction to guide the implementation of the VAPPL.
- ❑ Identify and establish partnerships with international development agencies and national CSOs.

Civil Society Organisations

- ❑ Continuous sensitization of the general populace on the VAPPL
- ❑ Media practitioners should increase their scope at public sensitisation of the VAPPL.

Development Partners

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

