

POLICY BRIEF

Overcoming the Limitations to the Implementation of the Akwa Ibom State Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

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Overcoming the Limitations to the Implementation of the Anambra State Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law¹



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¹ Prepared by Bunmi Dipo-Salami and Florence Bassey

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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 religious conversion, abused, exposed to sexually transmitted infections and are often pregnant upon escaping captivity.”⁵

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

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)

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”¹. 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.

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 Akwa Ibom 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”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 was 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 domestica-

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

tion 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. Howev-

er, 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 patri-

archal 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 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.

2.4. Findings from the national research on Akwa-Ibom State

The VAPP Law of Akwa Ibom State came into force in 2020 in the wake of the upsurge in sexual violence occasioned by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is in full implementation as government has put a mechanism in place to coordinate, facilitate and network with service providers and non-state actors to see to the successful implementation of the Law.

From the in-depth interviews conducted with key informants, it was revealed that the government has put in place a robust implementation mechanism for the effective implementation of the VAPP Law. The Ministry of Justice is the regulatory body through the Office of the Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice. A Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Response Unit was put in place to respond to cases of SGBV in the State in real time. Similarly, there is a toll-free helpline that victims can call from anywhere in the State and be directed to nearby service centres to receive support. The unit also coordinates, facilitates, collaborates, and networks with all relevant ministries, service providers, NGOs, law enforcement personnel, the media, healthcare providers, different coalitions, and others to respond to cases of gender-based violence in the State as well as to realise the objectives of the VAPP Law. In addition, the unit follows through on sexual violence cases, from when a report is made to when the perpetrator is arrested, arraigned, and is prosecuted, with a focus on getting justice for the survivor. It is also responsible for entering the name of the convict into the Sexual Offenders' Register. In essence, the government has provided a platform for the participation of relevant stakeholders to ensure the effective implementation of the Law in Akwa Ibom State.

Some of the successes of the VAPPL include:

- ❑ The implementation of the VAPP Law has given room for speedy justice compared to when the State was using the Criminal Code. For instance, findings from the FGD revealed how a 21-year-old girl who was raped by her father since when she was 14 years was able to access instant justice using the VAPP Law. There was also another case where a 3-year-old child who was raped by a 23-year-old man was given a speedy justice as the rapist was given a deserved jail term.
- ❑ The Law has been used to secure the conviction and severe punishment of perpetrators.
- ❑ There is confidence in the government's willingness and ability to protect citizens from all forms of violence going by the structures created and effectiveness in the implementation of the Law. Thus, citizens are convinced that government is not fooling around, a situation which serves as a deterrent, especially for perpetrators

of domestic violence who hitherto abused their wives and forcefully collected their property with impunity.

- ❑ Since the VAPP Law has criminalised so many discriminatory practices that people used to take for granted, more women are now speaking out and seeking justice as they believe they can always get one.
- ❑ The SGBV Response Unit has established a strong synergy with line ministries, departments and agencies of government as well as service providers right down to the local governments to effectively handle cases of sexual and gender-based violence.

2.4.1. Challenges to the Implementation of the Akwa Ibom VAPPL

Findings from fieldwork show that the lack of gender-responsive budgeting is a major challenge to the effective implementation of the VAPP Law. This is because CSOs, families of survivors of sexual violence, or the line ministries through the support of development agencies and organisations bear the costs of healthcare, representation, and reintegration of survivors of SGBV. This makes the process of seeking justice burdensome and not encouraging. In the opinion of the study participants, with adequate budgetary allocation in place, more women and girls would be willing to come forward and report cases if they realise the process would not be an expensive venture.

Although the Akwa Ibom State VAPPL provides for the protection of persons from political violence, the implementation does not incorporate the use of the law to promote women's inclusion in political processes. Women can still be prevented from taking part in politics using means other than political violence.

The follow-up assessment undertaken in the state shows that Akwa Ibom continues to work to sustain the achievements recorded since the VAPPL came into force in 2020. Since the research was concluded in March 2021, the 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.

According to information provided by the Ministry of Justice which has the mandate for implementation, cases of violence reported on a daily basis reduced from about 15 to 10 in the second half of the year, a decrease of 33%. This was attributed to a combination of

related factors, such as the development of a coordinated response framework, the establishment of the SGBV Management Committee comprising officers from line ministries, and the intervention of the CSOs coalition on SGBV made up of the Community Partners for Development, FIDA, and the Family Empowerment and Youth Re-orientation Path Initiative (FEYReP) among others. Moreover, the SGBV Response Unit in the Ministry of Justice which is the mechanism for coordinating and networking with service providers, non-governmental agencies, and others to respond in real time to GBV cases and for monitoring and evaluating the activities of non- state actors to ensure implementation of the law in the state was upgraded to a full department in May 2021. In addition to its responsibilities, the SGBV Response Department was given the task of developing a strategy plan and a referral pathway to enable strategic response to SGBV in the state. Furthermore, the Department is partnering with relevant CSOs and the few development agencies in the state for the implementation of VAPPL. As part of its strategy to ensure uniformity in GBV prevention and response activities, it has a register that capture details of each relevant CSO and its services and regularly involves each CSO based on its own specialised service. It provides technical assistance and training to CSOs that have registered with the department. Additionally, the department is working with traditional rulers and religious leaders, and equally planning to make capacity training activities for these sets of stakeholders on regular basis due to the changing nature and tactics employ by perpetrators of GBV. Media advocacy is also undertaken regularly by state and non-state actors.

Lack of central data collation, inadequate funding which affects response by law enforcement agencies¹, lack of state-wide sensitization, the interference of gate keepers such as community and religious leaders are some of the major challenges to the successful implementation of the Akwa Ibom State.

1 <https://ifm1059.com/2021/12/03/sustaining-the-implementation-framework-against-sexual-and-gender-based-violence-in-akwa-ibom/>

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 successful implementation of the Akwa Ibom State VAPPL:

SHORT-TERM

House of Assembly

- ❑ Members of Appropriation sub-committee of the HoA should demand adequate budgetary provisions for effective implementation of the Akwa Ibom State VAPPL.

Akwa Ibom State Government

- ❑ Develop protocols and guidelines for GBV management and reporting.
- ❑ Establish sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) to provide much needed psycho-social, legal, and medical support for survivors in Akwa Ibom state.
- ❑ 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 trainings and retraining to equip agencies and ministries tasked with the duty of implementing these laws, and the members of the judiciary with necessary skills.
- ❑ Translate the VAPPL into the major local languages in the state and pidgin. Make the simplified and translated versions available to all citizens as much as possible.
- ❑ 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.
- ❑ Provide necessary logistics to the Police to respond prompt to reported cases and ensure speedy dispensation of justice. Set up monitoring and evaluation mecha-

nisms to ensure the funds are used for the purpose they were given.

- ❑ Set up run shelters for abused women to provide temporary safe place for women and girls running from abusive environments and to protect survivors from allies of perpetrator/ and or perpetrators whose cases are currently in courts.
- ❑ Declare a zero-tolerance to corruption across board and display political will to stamp VAWG.
- ❑ Coordinate prevention and response actions by various stakeholders.

Civil Society Organisations

- ❑ Undertake intensive sensitization and awareness creation across the length and breadth of the state on the VAPPL to advocate its effective implementation.
- ❑ 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

- ❑ Members of Appropriation sub-committee should demand adequate budgetary provisions for effective implementation of the Akwa Ibom State VAPPL.

Akwa Ibom State Government

- ❑ Set up anti-GBV School Clubs to address school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) in the state.
- ❑ Designate response to violence against women and girls as an emergency service.
- ❑ 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.
- ❑ Set up a response/implementation mechanism that would also be responsible for reporting, monitoring, evaluation, and learning.
- ❑ Establishment of Specialised Courts and Practice Direction to guide the implementation of the VAPPL and related laws.

- ❑ Embark on rural-centric initiatives, such as the use of local town-criers in the remote villages; engage progressive traditional rulers and religious leaders and community champions and influencers as champions.
- ❑ Establish a Survivors' Support Fund without further delay and provide clear management structure.

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.
- ❑ 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.
- ❑ Partner with traditional and new media organisations to hold the relevant government agencies accountable for the implementation of the VAPPL in the state.

Development Partners

- ❑ support legal, psychosocial, and medical as well as shelter to abused women.
- ❑ 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 anti-VAWG laws in the state.
- ❑ The House Committee on Women Affairs should prioritise the success of the VAPPL in its oversight functions.

Akwa Ibom 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.

Civil Society Organisations

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

Development Partners

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

