

IMPACT REPORT: OUTPUT 3 Women and Girls in Peacebuilding and Conflict Management



Background and Context

Surveys undertaken in 2012 and 2013 indicated that around 30% of women in Nigeria had experienced some form of physical, sexual or emotional domestic violence during their lifetime¹. Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) is endemic in Nigeria, varying only in type and extent by geographical, cultural and conflict context. This violence takes many forms, from genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C) and domestic violence to sexual violence, kidnap and rape and forced early marriage. In the southeast over 50% of women have experienced FGM/C, whilst the figure in the south west is higher at nearly 61%. Nearly half the women in the north are married by 16 and expected to have a child within a year. Certain groups of women and girls are more likely to experience violence. A study of girl hawkers in Anambra state found that 70% had experienced sexual abuse. Research in Plateau State found women and girls with disabilities more likely to experience violence but less likely to escape, be believed and access services. High levels of VAWG in Nigeria are perpetuated by a lack of legislation -the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Bill (VAPP) was only recently passed after 14 years- and a widespread and deep-rooted culture of silence and acceptance of VAWG.

Gender in Nigeria Report, DFID, 2012

43% of men and **28%** women believe that there are times when a woman deserves to be beaten.

NSRP's Annual Perception Survey data (APS) highlights differences in levels of VAWG across NSRP states. In the 2017 APS, domestic violence was a **cited cause of violence** amongst 34% of respondents (spontaneous and prompted). In prompted responses it was cited as joint first (along with violent crime and terrorism). The data also highlights significant differences across states, Delta (38%), Kaduna (52%) and Bayelsa (74%) are above the average by a significant margin.

In Nigeria, as in other contexts, levels of VAWG are exacerbated by violent conflict. Nigeria is experiencing rising, persistent and worsening violent conflict. Conflict affects women and girls differently to men and boys. The women of Nigeria have paid a heavy price for violent conflict: experiencing displacement, sexual violence, torture, kidnapping, sex trafficking and trauma. Abductions and forced marriage to Boko Haram fighters has become a feature of the north east, with at least 2,000 women and girls kidnapped between January 2014 and April 2015 alone. Violent conflict may also aggravate existing trends, for example around early and forced marriage. There are reports of men coming to camps for internally displaced persons in Maiduguri to choose wives from among the girls present.

A range of evidence exists on the impact of armed conflict on VAWG, not only in terms of its use as a weapon of war, but also on Intimate Partner Violence, and other forms of violence².

¹ Gender in Nigeria DFID and the British Council 2012:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/566193/CIG-Nigeria-Women.pdf

² See for example Herbert, S (2014) Links between gender-based violence and outbreaks of violent conflict.

GSDRC Helpdesk report; Horn et al (2015) 'Women's perceptions of effects of war on intimate partner violence and gender roles in two post-conflict West African Countries: consequences and unexpected opportunities'

<http://conflictandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1752-1505-8-12> and Hossain et al (2014) 'Men's and women's experiences of violence and traumatic events in rural Côte d'Ivoire before, during and after a period of armed conflict' <http://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/4/2/e003644>

This evidence demonstrates the complexity of the inter-relationship between conflict and VAWG. Data³ also shows that often GBV does not subside post-conflict, and certain types of gender-based violence (GBV) may increase.

Despite making up half the population and experiencing violence in their households and communities in a very gendered way, women and girls have very limited participation in peace building and conflict management in Nigeria. Women are crucial in easing tensions, promoting dialogue for peace and rebuilding the country; yet they are consistently excluded in formal peace and governance processes at every level. Nigerian women are all too often absent in dialogue on violence reduction and peacebuilding. There is limited, if any, high-level political leadership prepared to argue the case for redressing pervasive gender inequalities. Norms of seclusion in some parts of Northern Nigeria deny the majority of adolescent girls and women opportunity to meet with other women, discuss their needs and priorities and learn about available services and their rights. Women's CSOs exist and are keen to do more, but have lacked the capacity and funding to reach out to secluded poor women and to represent their views.⁴

NSRP's Annual Perception Surveys provide evidence of women's limited participation in conflict management and peace building. Amongst all respondents, there was a far lower number of female than male respondents involved with any of the institutions listed. On average, over the years, only 3-4% of female respondents are involved with any listed institutions, whereas male respondents' participation in these institutions ranges between 13-19%. Women's participation in these groups was clustered around youth groups (13% in 2017) and women's groups (30% in 2017). However male participation in youth groups is higher than female participation (35% in 2017) (Annual Perception Survey 2017).

NSRP's approach has been to recognise violence against women and girls as one form of violence prevalent in Nigeria and therefore an essential element of a programme that seeks to reduce conflict and violence.

The NSRP Intervention

The overall NSRP purpose (or outcome) was the '*Application of improved policies and practices that help to manage conflict non-violently more often in NSRP target states*' which feeds into the impact the programme aimed to deliver: '*The negative impacts of violent conflict on the most vulnerable are reduced in NSRP target states*'

NSRP supported conflict management initiatives through four inter-related areas of work – each taking place at Federal, State and Local Government Area (LGA) levels. The four work areas (outputs) were: (1) Security and Governance; (2) Economic and Natural Resources; **(3) Women and Girls**; and (4) Research and Advocacy, Media and Conflict Sensitivity.

Component Goal: Improved policies and practices for the reduction of violence against women and girls, and increased influence and participation of women and girls in institutions and initiatives relative to peacebuilding.⁵

³ Ward, J. and Marsh, M. (2006). Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in War and its Aftermath: Realities, Responses and Required Resources, Briefing Paper, United Nations Population Fund <http://www.gsdrc.org/go/display&type=Document&id=3583>

⁴ Ladbury, S. (2011) 'Religion, exclusion and violence in northern Nigeria'. Report for DFID Nigeria.

⁵ The initial programme ambition was to increase and achieve more influential participation by women and girls in institutions and initiatives relevant to peacebuilding and reduce the prevalence and impact of violence against women and girls. Experience found this to be over ambitious for a five-year timeframe and the programme emphasis shifted accordingly

A distinctive feature of NSRP has been its emphasis on strengthening women's role in peace building and conflict management and raising awareness and action on violence against women and girls (VAWG) as a dimension of conflict and violence. UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security, adopted by the UN Security Council Resolution in 2000 provides the foundation for NSRP's approach.

Interventions have been designed – and adapted over time through programme learning - to support the programme's purpose of improving policies and practices that help to manage conflict non-violently more often and contribute to the reduction of the negative impacts of violent conflict on the most vulnerable in NSRP target states. In addition, gender was embedded across all outputs, ensuring that all programme activities were designed to progress gender equality objectives (separate papers covers gender and conflict sensitivity mainstreaming).

The key deliverables under this programme component were:

- Financial, technical and capacity building support to the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (MWASD) to develop and deliver a first **National Action Plan** (2013-2016) and second **National Action Plan** in 2017 (2017-2020).
- Financial and technical support to State Level MWASDs resulting in **State Action Plans (SAPs)** prepared and endorsed by state governments in all eight NSRP states (Bayelsa, Borno, Delta, Kaduna, Kano, Plateau, Rivers, Yobe). State budgets have been allocated to fund delivery of five SAPs at the time of writing. Four Local Government Action Plans (LAP) have also been prepared and endorsed in Kano and Delta States and others are under preparation elsewhere. Notably the eight SAPs that have been developed nationally were in NSRP states
- **Women, Peace and Security Networks (WPSNs)** were established in all eight NSRP states and at federal level as NSRP's primary delivery mechanism for NAP implementation and monitoring. The WPSNs prime function is to support the NAP from the 'demand side' by driving forward sensitisation, domestication and monitoring. Sensitisation was conducted to promote awareness, networking, information sharing and collaboration between organisations with a stake in WPS, and to provide smaller lower capacity organisations the opportunity to learn from their larger counterparts. Critically, the WPSNs work closely with the state level MWASDs. NSRP support included leadership, training and capacity building through a convening CSO in each state.
- Design and piloting of a **Peace Club model** at the community level for young women and men to understand and act on the dynamics of conflict, violence and peace-building. Over the life of the programme, a total of 37 peace clubs (PCs) were piloted in target communities in five states: Borno, Delta, Kaduna, Kano, Plateau and Rivers. The peace clubs were operational from 2014, with Borno coming on stream later in 2015 due to earlier high levels of fragility, instability and inaccessibility. At their peak, over 11,700 participants were registered in PCs – 7,400 females and 4,300 males. Training and facilitation of the peace clubs was undertaken through selected CSOs in each state.
- Creation of a group of '**Observatories**' for VAWG data gathering and analysis managed by Fund for Peace (FFP) and implemented in five NSRP priority states (Borno, Kaduna, Kano, Plateau and Rivers). Each Observatory was driven by a multi-stakeholder Observatory Steering Committee (**OBSTEC**) bringing together government, CSOs and MDAs with a role to play in tackling violence. NSRP identified and supported co-ordinating CSOs in each state to build support for the OBSTEC amongst key state level actors, convene regular meetings, guide the OBSTEC and monitor achievements and

impacts. The primary function of the OBSTECs was to coordinate the receipt of reports on VAWG and use the information gathered to advocate for improved policies, practices and services to prevent and respond to VAWG. The OBSTECs also provided support to survivors by linking them to services, helping them through reporting and legal processes and intervening with families and communities where needed.

- Provision of **small grants** to civil society organisations to help them innovate, consolidate and build on successful interventions that contribute to women, peace and security.

Overview of Approach



Achievements, Outcomes and Impact

ToC Outcome Level 3.1: Changes in policies and practices and the narrative around violence

Through supporting the development and delivery of two federal level **National Action Plans (NAPs)**, **State Action Plans (SAPs) in eight states**, and two Local Action Plans (LAPs), NSRP has played a key role in establishing a policy and operational framework to help the Nigerian government and wider Nigerian stakeholders take forward implementation of UNSCR 1325 in a meaningfully sensitised and localised way. NSRP's contribution to both the design and delivery of both NAPs provides a strongly evidenced example of highly significant impact. At federal level, partners and broader stakeholders interviewed as part of an external review of the first NAP commissioned by NSRP (NAP Review, 2017), universally acknowledged the critical coordinating, advisory and strategic role that NSRP played in both the first and second-generation NAPs. Financial support was significantly strengthened and facilitated through the forging and sustaining of relationships by NSRP at multiple levels.

Impact is illustrated, in the first instance, through the development of two successive NAPs with provisions relating both directly to women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict management and to tackling VAWG as an obstacle to women's participation. The MoWASD started the process of preparing a NAP in 2009, but due to a lack of technical and financial

support, it had not progressed. NSRP re-energised this process and a NAP document was launched in 2013.

At the 15th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, WPS stakeholders emphasised the need for a review of Nigeria's first NAP, as reflected in the communiqué of the forum. NSRP supported the process of refreshing the NAP starting with zonal consultations in December 2016 and the subsequent harmonization and validation activities. **A second NAP** was published in early 2017.

Partners and broader stakeholders universally acknowledge the critical coordinating, advisory and strategic role that NSRP played in both the first and second NAPs:

- **CSO representative, federal level:** 'NSRP have played a significant role in NAP delivery and are very important partners'.
- **Government representative, federal level:** 'NSRP support was one of the most consistent in ensuring the WPSN platforms were held. That in itself was a major success'.
- **CSO representative, federal level:** 'We always make reference to the success of NSRP to motivate other states'.
- **Director for Women and Gender Affairs, FM-WASD, at the publication of the second NAP 2017:** '... due gratitude also goes to the DFID funded Nigeria Stability Reconciliation Programme (NSRP) ... for being a consistent partner throughout the life span of the 1st

At the **federal level**, additional NAP related impact includes the development of **Gender Based Violence in Nigeria: National Guidelines and Referral Standards** produced in 2014 by the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Ministry of Health and supported by NSRP (technical and financial), UN Women, UNFPA and Fistula Care Plus as a result of the advocacy and activity attached to NAP implementation. In addition, on 25 May 2015, the **Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) bill** passed into law after the cumulative efforts of a 14-year-long process of activism by civil society over a span of four National Assemblies. Following an advocacy/strategy meeting supported by NSRP, with the Chair of the Senate Committee handling the Bill, the Technical Committee had to produce a report on the Public Hearing. NSRP provided support to this process through their engagement with five consultants from the Gender Technical Unit (GTU) of the National Assembly to fast track work and produce a draft Conference Report to be adopted in both Chambers.

NSRP was instrumental in the development of State Action Plans (SAPs); a key feature of implementation (and associated impact) of NAP domestication. It is

important to note that the only **State Action Plans (SAPs) to date are in NSRP-supported states**. The development of SAPs has also led to additional processes of domestication and ownership at the local level, leading to the development of Local Action Plans (LAPs) in two

Partners interviewed for the NAP review further emphasised the ways in which NSRP engagement is supporting indirect impact/reach beyond their operational states:

CSO representative, federal level: 'NSRP is only working in 8 states but at the national level they are engaging with organisations who have national coverage, which expands their areas of influence and the network. We get technical support from NSRP; so even if they are not on the ground where we're working we're getting their support and we can then disseminate that to other states'.

local authorities: Wase, LGA, Plateau state in July 2016, and Fagge LGA, Kano State in October 2016. A number of additional LAPs are currently under development in additional local authorities and states. **Concepts of NAP domestication and localisation have critically, been incorporated as a key feature in the refreshed 2017-2020 NAP**, which includes specific commitments for zones, states and local authorities to develop equivalent and aligned action plans and priorities

At the end of the most recent NAP reporting period (January to May, 2017), NSRP recorded that six 'policy outcomes' had been cumulatively 'achieved' at the federal level over the lifetime of the programme: supporting the development of NAP documents; advocacy around the passing of the VAPP Bill; establishing a Women Situation Room to respond to all forms of gender based violence and monitoring the level of women's participation in the 2015 elections; drafting and producing referral guidelines for Gender based violence in Nigeria; exchange programmes established with other countries to share experiences of NAP design and delivery; and initiating a compendium of outstanding women peace builders.

At state level, in Plateau the Gender and Equal Opportunities Act (GEOA) was passed in early 2015 and authorities at both "state and local government levels are adequately sensitised on the utility of the UNSCR 1325, PSAP, GEOA, VAPP and WPS bills"⁶. It is also well documented that WPSNs have supported a wide range of WPS/NAP/SAP focused advocacy, centred around commemorative events.

ToC Outcome Level 3.2: Communities and platforms are empowered; their voices are heard and their capacity and resilience to manage conflict improved through inclusive and sustainable mechanisms

WPSNs

The WPSNs have **played a key role in pushing forward the development and implementation of a State Level Action Plan** in each of the eight states in which they have been established. Critically, WPSNs work closely with the state level MWASD (in many cases the MWASD are represented in the network's quarterly meetings). WPSN members interviewed for the NAP Review in 2017 emphasised the centrality of their relationships with the ministries in supporting the delivery of their work. In Rivers, the convening CSO is actually co-located in the MWASD. WPSNs have played a central role in driving forward SAP development at all stages of the process, from development and government endorsement to the securing of an allocated budget for its implementation.

⁶ NSRP monitoring tool

Borno WPSN plays key role in securing global attention and release of Chibok girls and UNSCR 2349:

The efforts of the Borno WPSN are highlighted with regard to their advocacy and engagement around the abduction of 276 schoolgirls by the Islamic extremist group *Jama'atul ahl al-sunnah li da'awati wal jihad* (JAS), otherwise known as Boko Haram, in Chibok, Borno state in April 2014. The Borno WPSN travelled to Chibok and subsequently delivered the first international press conference confirming the abduction had taken place. One year on, the network travelled again to Chibok – by then a no-go zone for virtually all development actors – to meet with the girls' families and revive public awareness of the abduction.

'... due to the brave actions of the Borno WPS, the abduction of the Chibok girls was brought to light nationally and internationally, and the network continues to pressure the government to take action to free the girls who are still missing. However, network members put themselves at considerable risk in travelling to Chibok and speaking publicly about the abduction'.

In addition, the Borno WPSN participated in a meeting hosted by the UN Security Council (UNSC), during which the Borno SAP was showcased after NSRP was contacted prior to this meeting by the UNSC and asked to provide inputs. This outcome featured in the recommendations of a new resolution UNSCR 2349.

Other 'success stories' that can be attributed to the work of the WPSNs include **in Plateau**, where the WPSN have supported the drafting of a WPS Bill (the first of its kind) and been working to get this passed in the State Assembly, building on their strategic relationships with MWASD and other peace and security stakeholders at the state level. **In Rivers**, the WPSN has been instrumental in establishing and supporting the running of a physical safe space which has also provided a platform for increased reporting around GBV. The WPSN has played an active role in referring cases to the observatory.

In conclusion, NSRP have built something of a '**WPS infrastructure**' through the WPSNs and the relationships built with the MWASDs at state and federal level, creating a strong foundation to take the WPS agenda forward in a meaningfully localised way even after the programme's completion. The NAP Review 2017 found that WPSNs have strongly voiced their intention to continue operating in support of SAP implementation (where possible and within available means). Ref V4C if not referenced in the recommendations

Other **donors and institutions now entering the WPS space have also adopted models and approaches established by or with NSRP support**. For example, UN Women are implementing the *Promoting Women's Engagement in Peace and Security in Northern Nigeria*⁷ in three states (Adamawa, Plateau and Gombe) with a specific output focused on creating a conducive environment for the delivery of NAP. The NSRP-led WPSN model has also been adopted and replicated in other states where UN Women are working (NAP Review 2017 interview with UN Women 2017)

Peace Clubs

Whilst WPSNs have become important platforms to promote women's peace and security at state level, **Peace Clubs** have had their own successes in **demonstrating a community level model** for building the capacity and resilience of young women and men to manage conflict in an inclusive way.

⁷ This is an EU funded programme: <http://africa.unwomen.org/en/where-we-are/west-and-central-africa/nigeria/northern-nigeria-women-peace-and-security>

Qualitative and anecdotal evidence⁸ suggests that the peace clubs have had important, positive impacts for both the individuals who have participated and for the wider community, though, with the exception of Kano, their impact has been limited to the local level to date.

Peace Clubs have served as **spaces for participants to build their self-confidence and rights awareness, particularly girls**. In Rivers, a survey of peace club participants, found 80% 'strongly agreed' with the statement that the training was very important and relevant, and 57% 'agreed or strongly agreed' that meetings helped them build their self-confidence.

CSO, Kano State

"You cannot imagine how the girls gained self-confidence, the strength to speak up, how this grew week by week through attending the peace clubs."

Peace Clubs: Protecting and Promoting Women's Rights and Resolving Conflict in Rivers State

In 2015, club members worked with the Centre for Environment, Human Rights and Development (CEHRD) to establish a Community Mediation Centre in Bokana, Degema LGA. The Centre typically deals with 1 to 2 cases a week and is run by club facilitators and older peace club members who have been trained by CEHRD as mediators. 26 participants were trained as mediators in 2015 and 2016. Cases are restricted to domestic disputes to safeguard club participants; however, the Centre has established a relationship with local police stations so that more serious or complex cases can be referred. Cases from the mediation centre were also referred to the Rivers Observatory (191 cases from 2015 to 2016).

The Rivers Peace Clubs plays an active role in promoting women's involvement in local government. In 2016, CEHRD reported that 71 male peace club members had pledged their support for increased female representation in local leadership bodies.

The learning from peace clubs has been applied by participants in their own communities. A total of **353 individual or group initiatives contributing to community peace building or addressing VAWG were undertaken over a three-year period** (September 2014 to June 2017). Examples from Delta and Rivers State illustrate how peace clubs have served as platforms for advocacy activities and increased reporting of VAWG. The Peace Clubs have also played an important role in VAWG. In Rivers, for example, nearly 200 reports were forwarded to the Observatory through the peace clubs.

A focus on leaving no one behind resulted in the **piloting of a peace club model with the Women and Disability Self Reliance Centre (WWDSRC)** in Kaduna, resulting in 95 disabled boys and 65 girls living with disability being trained. WWDSRC led the Kaduna peace clubs in conducting advocacy and sensitisation activities with a number of local stakeholders, to gather support for an inclusive development agenda that recognised the needs and rights of people living with disability.

⁸ Ongoing problems with the validity of quantitative data has hampered ability to quantify peace club impacts without significant additional investment. The closure of Peace Clubs also limited the programme's ability to conduct any follow up research at community level for ethical reasons (see Peace Club Lesson Learning Paper for further information)

Adoption of a **focus on reaching the most marginalised groups across peace clubs** led to 'genuinely grassroots work, involving very excluded children and youth.... In terms of leaving no one behind, this activity plays a central and crucial role within NSRP as a whole' (Review of Output 3, March 2016).

14-Year-Old Peace Club Member

"I used to look down on people living with disability. I never interacted with them but now because of the peace club I interact with them closely and stand up for them when they are molested."

Peace Clubs: Participants as Advocates in Delta State

Convened by the Global Peace and Security CSO, the Delta clubs totalled 530 participants (286 female, 246 male) across 6 clubs. Participants designed and engaged in advocacy efforts targeting a variety of community stakeholders, with the aim of raising the clubs' profile and encouraging debate around local issues.

In 2016, the clubs hosted 12 school debating competitions across 9 schools (3 per focus LGA). Male and female students engaged in debates around topics such as: 'Men are more efficient in community leadership and management than women'; and 'Inclusive community governance prevents violence and ensures societal development'. Both the winning and runner-up teams came from all-girls schools, highlighting the extent to which female students were meaningfully involved in the competition process.

From August to September 2016, the club facilitators and participants conducted 3 advocacy visits to each focus LGA. Topics raised by participants included the prevalence of cultism within specific kingdoms; the culture of silence around VAWG and how this damaged individual and community development; and cleanliness and sanitation in public spaces such as markets. Community leaders consistently commended club members for their work in their communities and pledged support for their activities and objectives.

With club support, four women were successfully elected to the previously male dominated Community Development Committee in Agbarha-Otor community. The club also worked with local authorities to secure an allocation of 2-3 female seats in Agbassa

The peace clubs have piloted an approach for engaging young men and women in violence prevention and conflict management at community level, that has **generated interest amongst other organisations working on peace building**; most notably the government of Kano which has incorporated peace clubs into 46 schools in the state; the EU which is rolling out the model in further states in the North East; and other organisations in Nigeria and internationally who have requested copies of the Peace Club manual provides further evidence of interest in the model.⁹

ToC Outcome Level 3.3: Increased accountability, capacity and responsiveness of decision makers

The NSRP Observatory has tested and demonstrated a promising and practical pathway for addressing sexual and gender based violence. The combination of the three

⁹ See NSRP Peace Clubs Lesson Learning Paper 2017 for more details

'R's - Report, Referral, Response - and the synergies between them has been a key to the model's success, whilst also satisfying the ethical demands of providing a referral pathway alongside awareness raising. The reporting and collection of data by the Observatory has become a clear and trusted channel and foundation of advocacy with key decision makers and opinion leaders. OBSTECs have played a vital role in acting on reports which has begun to create a virtuous cycle of increased awareness and confidence amongst survivors to report the crimes committed against them. If strengthened and consolidated, the model has potential for replication and impact at scale.

The OBSTECs have been successful in establishing new ways of collaborative working, **breaking new ground in Nigeria through multi-stakeholder representation**, collaborating under the auspices of a civil society organisation acting as convenor and secretariat. Past experiences of non-collaboration, mistrust and poor communication have been replaced by **improved understanding, collaboration and joint learning between OBSTEC members**, improving performance and outcomes. The OBSTEC has also **brought more men and male champions to the VAWG agenda**, taking this away from being seen as a women's problem only, helping to give it greater legitimacy, outreach and impact.

The observatory is providing a platform for change, slowly building a constituency of responders. Although the level of engagement of MDAs varies across states, the OBSTECs are increasing awareness of VAWG and commitment to act among MDAs with a mandate around this. **OBSTEC as a convenor of different players, has provided a catalyst for government departments to respond to their mandate and obligations.** With the observatory platforms and OBSTEC behind them, members have influenced each other, and had greater power, legitimacy and credibility to call for action and accountability within their own organisations and of others, using information to drive change. Whilst not pretending that this is a panacea, OBSTECs have made it more difficult for requests to be ignored and side-lined. As such they have helped shift the incentives for institutional change within the mandate of the individual constituencies: security agencies, the police, local government service providers, MWASD, religious and traditional leaders, media and civil society organisations.

OBSTECs Credibility and Legitimacy to Drive Change

At the height of the conflict between pastoralists and agriculturalists in Plateau there were reports of high levels of sexual exploitation of young girls and women when the security forces were in town. When a local NGO raised the issue, security forces senior command and powerful individuals in government were dismissive and excused the behaviour as 'boys will be boys'. However, when the case was raised by the OBSTEC backed by evidence and data, this provided an institutional platform to challenge security forces' behaviour. This was no longer 'just' a group of concerned NGO women, but a legitimate, credible, multi stakeholder grouping including the police, MoJ, HRC, MoH, Federation of Muslim Women (FOMWAN), Federation of Female lawyers (FIDA) and media among others. A powerful collective voice which couldn't be ignored. This provided a certain degree of safety from intimidation for the civil society activists and was the first time that the security forces were held to account for their behaviour – a major step forward. [Focus Group Discussion with Plateau State OBSTEC and Coordinating CSO CWEENS]

Ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) are improving their capability spurred by the Observatory experience. Strong examples of action and promising practice can be found across the five states.

- In several states, the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (MWASD) have **reformed the way they report and document SGBV** cases. In Plateau and other

NSRP supported states, the ministries now have a database which is evidence based, quick to navigate, allows for easy and efficient follow up and provides continuity with staff changes (Observatory Lesson Learning KIIs, 2017).

- **VAWG and sexual violence have been given greater priority in several MDAs** – the police, MoJ, MWASD, MoH - in Kaduna, Plateau, Kano and Rivers – as a direct result of the work of the Observatory (Observatory Lesson Learning KIIs, 2017). Examples include, increased knowledge of federal and state frameworks on women’s rights and VAWG and service provider obligations; increased understanding of the practicalities of where people can go for help, the procedures to follow, and how to access medical support.

Improved Police Responsiveness in Plateau

The Commissioner of Police of the Plateau Area Command issued a directive to all 17 local government areas that rape cases reported at LGA level be referred to the state level Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to ensure proper investigation as a criminal case. A special VAWG desk, with 3 dedicated officers has been established at this level. DPOs and DCOs in all 17 LGAs were trained by the OBSTEC on how to handle rape cases, which has improved rape case handling.

‘Now the police are responding better and survivors are not being victimised twice’.

Similarly, the State Attorney General gave a directive for the OBSTEC to report cases of VAWG to the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP) at the Ministry of Justice. If cases were being blocked at the lower courts the complainant could ask to transfer the case to the Ministry of Justice to appeal on his or her behalf. This has resulted in four successful prosecutions and another 20 are in court – a major achievement when previously VAWG cases of this kind would not see the light

- Several MDAs have taken **tangible action to improve their responsiveness to VAWG**. For example, in Plateau, all rape cases are now referred from LGA to state level; a VAWG desk with three dedicated officers has been established and DPOs and DCOs in all 17 LGAs are trained on handling of rape cases resulting in a fivefold increase in reporting and the successful prosecution of 19 cases to date. In Kano, a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) headed by a senior female police officer has been established. In Kaduna, a SARC was established in the general public hospital, following the model of SARCs established and run by a DFID sister programme, J4A.

Improved Police Responsiveness in Kano

The observatory and the OBSTEC has provided the police with a mechanism for amalgamating information and data at the state level. Previously there was a disconnect between the 34 LGAs and HQ. VAWG and rape cases stayed at the local level. The central command had no coherent picture. The CP has established a desk office headed by a senior female police officer who attends the OBSTEC. Divisions have been directed to refer and report any sexual or rape cases to the Desk Officer for investigation. Cases are now dealt with at the High court rather than in local magistrate courts, providing greater accountability and professionalism. This has led to increased prosecutions.

- **Collective action around casework is leading to improved accountability** making it more difficult for the police or the justice system to dismiss sexual violence cases on false grounds, or to pervert the course of justice due to corruption and bribes. Collaboration and the institutionalisation of checks and balances has resulted in

increased transparency, responsiveness and mutual accountability. For example, in Kaduna, the Ministry of Justice, the National Human Rights Commission, FIDA, the police and MWASD have supported survivors to get cases to court and have a proper hearing, resulting in increased prosecution and justice 'being seen to be done' (Observatory Lesson Learning KILLS 2017). A total of 20 successful prosecutions have resulted.

- **The work of NSRP supported Observatories and OBSTECs has played a seminal role in getting sexual violence and VAWG into public discourse.** This is a critical first step towards shifting the social norms that maintain the culture of silence and stigma around VAWG: *'we have broken the culture of silence –there has been '150%' improvement in reporting and speaking out on SGBV'* (KI Borno, Co-Ordinating CSO)

The Observatory has played a **ground-breaking role in linking information at the local level on recording and mapping VAWG with broader conflict mapping** (though considerably more could be done to tap into larger potential data sources on VAWG/SGBV). Furthermore, the work of the Observatory has begun to have an impact on the overall peace architecture in Nigeria. Notably in Plateau the government has adopted the State Conflict Management Alliance – convened by NSRP - and representatives from the OBSTEC are part of the SCMA, reporting on VAWG and gender.

Recent interviews and data gathering have suggested that there has been **an increase in prosecution of rape cases**. Over four of the five states (no available data on prosecutions from Borno) a total of 44 cases have so far resulted in prosecution, with the highest success rates in Kaduna and Plateau. Although the conviction level remains low in relation to cases, this level of prosecutions represents a major step forward and should not be underestimated in a context where it has taken 14 years to get the Violence Against the Persons (VAPP) Act passed at the federal level and state level domestication is still in process. Because of the work of the Observatory and OBSTEC, many more cases are now being investigated more effectively (a total of 1,787 reports across the five states), more perpetrators are being arrested and brought to court and there have been a number of successful prosecutions

Sustainability

Delivering UNSCR 1325

A policy framework has been established at federal, state and local levels for action on women, peace and security and NSRP's role in this should not be under estimated. The MWASD is now receiving interest and support from other donors, most notably the EU and UN Women, who are taking over funding of technical assistance to MWASD toward implementation of the NAP. The Spanish government is taking on support to the Minister of MWASD as Nigeria's WPS focal point for the NAP. At the **regional level UNOWAS have adopted the WPS structure** from state to federal level in their own working group structure.

The gains achieved through NSRP should therefore be built upon, though NSRP's role as the 'go to' repository of expertise on WPS will be lost following programme closure. The work to fundamentally change the role women play in peace building at every level is only just beginning and ongoing support will be much needed to see through and deliver the ambitions of UNSCR in Nigeria.

OBSTECs

The **personal commitment, motivation and passion of OBSTEC members** and the co-ordinating CSO have been a main driving force for progress to date. In the Nigerian context,

the voluntary nature of the OBSTEC and the commitment of individuals is one of its strengths. **All key informants saw this as one of the key aspects that will ensure sustainability of the OBSTEC** after funding stops. Questions remain, however, regarding the long-term sustainability of a model which relies on the commitment of individual champions within their agencies. Measures to ensure institutionalisation and sustainability are needed for scaling up and amplification of impact.

In Kaduna, Kano and Plateau the **MWASD has shown willingness to take on the secretariat role and to provide space for convening the OBSTEC meetings**. In Plateau, a budget line has been put in place through the State Action Plan (SAP). In Rivers, the MWASD is seeking to secure a budget under the SAP to support the observatory. Here too the Governor's wife has committed resources for a physical safe space at a Women's Development Centre. MWASDs in several states are in discussion with the **Bureau of Statistics (BoS)** to publish data as part of its reporting.

A major programme achievement is that the USAID Regional Early Warning and Response Division (REWARD) programme, in collaboration with the ECOWAS gender centre and UNOWAS, has adopted the observatory model. Additionally, the observatory platform provider, FFP, is using the NSRP observatory module to develop a gender responsive early warning framework to be used by ECOWAS early warning practitioners in their work, incorporating gender analysis into early warning. The training resources are being used to train field monitors in 15 ECOWAS member states.

The Peace Clubs

There is evidence of interest in sustaining the peace club model after DFID funding ceased in 2016. In Kano, 46 schools have adopted peace clubs under state funding although this has not been the case elsewhere, with peace clubs folding following the unexpected withdrawal of financial and technical support and with too little time to find a solution to sustaining the groups state by state.

There is the possibility that **the Peace Club model will be continued in three states in the North East** through the EU funded Managing Conflict in Northeast Nigeria Programme (MCN). Requests for the Peace Club manual have come from a number of organisations inside and outside Nigeria also indicating an interest in the model amongst other organisations engaged in community level peace building and conflict management in Nigeria and internationally.

Conclusion

Has NSRP **improved policies and practices for the reduction of violence against women and girls, and increased influence and participation of women and girls in institutions and initiatives relative to peacebuilding**? And in so doing, has this work contributed to NSRP's intended outcome: 'Application of improved policies and practices that help to manage conflict non-violently more often in NSRP target states'.

Programme activities have undoubtedly improved the enabling environment for women's participation and reduction of violence against women and girls:

- NSRP has made a substantive contribution to building the **policy and operational framework for action on women, peace and security** in Nigeria through its support to the development and delivery of two National Action Plans and State Action Plans in NSRP states. It leaves a lasting legacy.
- NSRP has strengthened **institutions and networks at community, state and federal level** to increase women and girl's voice in peace and security and action on VAWG

through federal and state level Women, Peace and Security Networks (WPSNs) and community level peace clubs for young women and men to understand and act on the dynamics of conflict, violence and peace-building. Whilst WPSNs are likely to continue across states beyond the end of NSRP, peace clubs are only expected to continue (or be replicated) in Kano and the North East where other channels of funding have been secured. Some replication is also likely given expressed interest in the model.

- NSRP has contributed to **breaking the culture of silence on violence against women and girls**, by increasing awareness, reporting, advocacy and action through the creation of an 'Observatory' and OBSTECs in each state, bringing together agencies with a role in tackling violence. Examples can be found of MDAs putting in place new mechanisms for tackling and responding to VAWG across all NSRP priority states: from improving police responsiveness, to strengthening child protection mechanisms, to establishment of Sexual Assault Referral Centres following the model developed on DFID's J4A programme. Levels of reporting and action have increased across all programme states and prosecutions have gone up.
- Even though Peace Clubs are largely unlikely to be continued, NSRP has supported and built a **cohort of individual young women and men to act as ambassadors** against violence and for conflict management and peace building within their own communities across the five priority states. The impact of these ambassadors has not been measured, but tracking the ripple effects over time could provide a valuable addition to international evidence on conflict management and peace building
- **One of NSRP's important legacies is to have demonstrated the relationship between VAWG and conflict and peace-building and the vital role of women's participation in conflict management processes** and to have institutionally embedded this in the federal and state level UNSCR 1325 architecture.
- NSRP has made an important contribution to the **international experience and evidence base** on women, peace and security which is still at a very early stage of development.

And finally, there are strong signals that the work on WPS and VAWG started by NSRP will be continued by government, CSOs, through the networks created and by other donors. There are, however, concerns that gains will be lost and/or momentum will be stalled, without upscaling and ongoing co-ordination of WPS/VAWG support. It is strongly recommended that DFID consider:

- Ongoing financial support for the ground breaking and promising Observatory/OBSTEC initiative, especially in light of DFID's global policy commitment to tackling VAWG and strengthening women's participation in peace building. The Observatory and OBSTECs could be seen as a pilot for either scaling up and/or forming the centre piece of a future standalone programme on VAWG. Alternatively, DFID could play a useful role in promoting the initiative to other interested parties.
- Continuation of support to MWASD's on UNSCR, building on the leadership role that HMG has established through NSRP, including support to WPSNs.
- Contributing further to the international evidence base on women peace and security by setting up a mechanism for tracking change over time: the sustainability, ripple effects and long term impacts of these ground breaking programme interventions.

- To strengthen sustainability of the structures that have been established under NSRP, facilitate linkages with the Purple networks built under the V4C programme in overlapping states.