PROJECT ALERT ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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E-Newsletter

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Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation, and it is perhaps the most pervasive. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development and peace

– KOFI ANNAN (FORMER UN SECRETARY GENERAL)

Break the cycle of violence. Keeping it quiet is participating.
Call the Hotline: 234-07070467832; 08180091072

PROJECT ALERT ENGAGES STAKEHOLDERS IN ADVOCACY VISIT FOR JUSTICE REFORM



Cross section of participants at the visit

In a proactive move towards enhancing justice and accountability, Project Alert commenced a crucial advocacy visit to key stakeholders. The focus of the visit was to introduce the project "Integrated Response to Advancing Justice and Accountability for Victims of SGBV in Lagos State" and get their buy in. The Stakeholders visited were; The Lagos state Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA), Office of the Public Defender (OPD), Attorney General's Office, Chief Judge's Office, Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Commissioner of Police, and the



Directorate of Public Prosecutions (DPP). The initiative seeks to foster a collaborative and coordinated approach among stakeholders to address issues of Justice and Accountability related to sexual and gender-based violence effectively. By integrating resources, expertise, and efforts, the project aims to streamline processes, enhance support services, and strengthen accountability mechanisms within the justice system. During the advocacy visit, Project Alert presented an overview of the Integrated Response to Advancing Justice and Accountability Project, emphasizing its objectives, strategies, and expected outcomes. One of which is through the development of a Data Application, that will be used to track and monitor the progress of cases reported at selected Family Support Units to the court processes and final Judgement. Highlighting the importance of collective action in combating sexual and gender-based violence and emphasizing on the role of each stakeholder in achieving meaningful progress. The stakeholders expressed their support for the initiative and pledged to actively engage in its implementation, as they recognize the importance of collaboration in tackling the complex challenges associated with gender-based violence and the Justice System in Nigeria. The advocacy visit concluded with their commitment to working closely with Project Alert and partners, a shared goal of ending gender-based violence and promoting justice and accountability in the state.



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PROJECT ALERT'S ONGOING SCHOOL CLUB MEETINGS TO COMBAT SEXUAL VIOLENCE



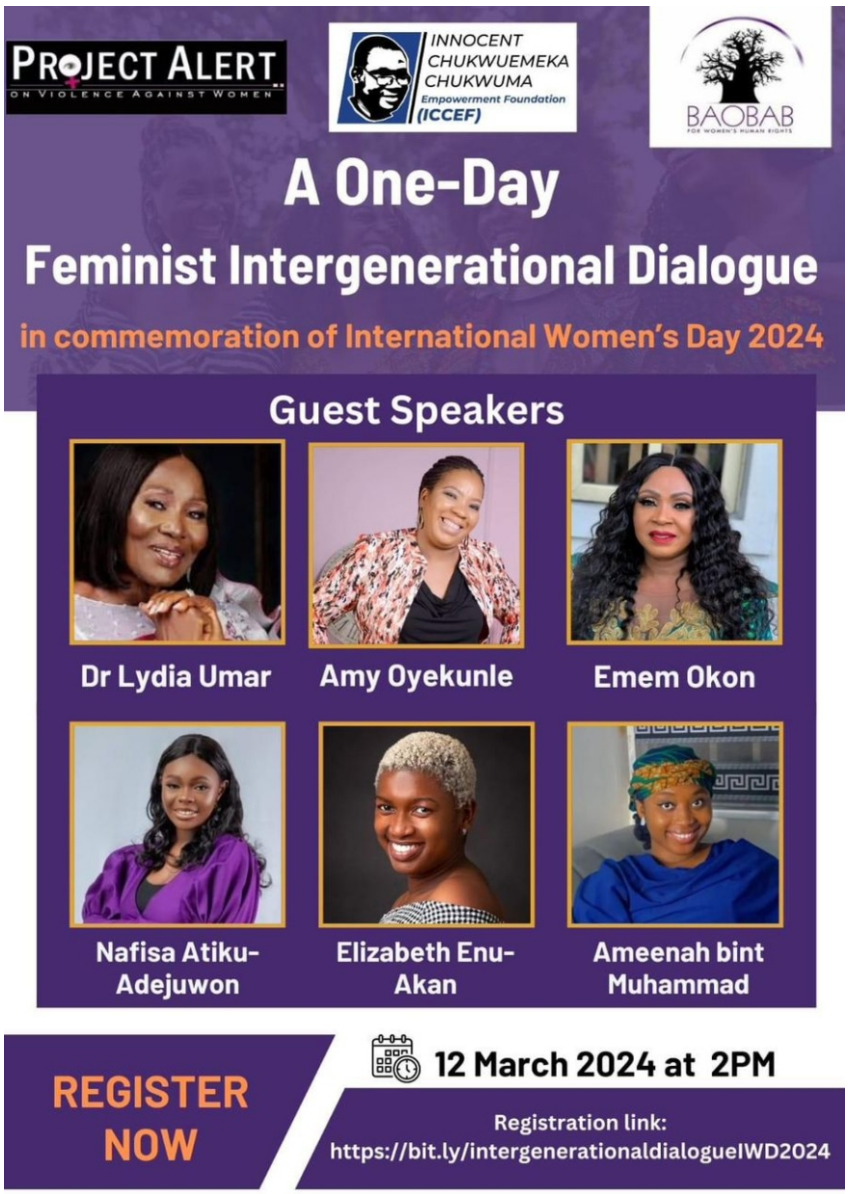
In a continued effort to combat sexual violence and promote safe environment for boys and girls to strive academically, Project Alert commenced club meetings in selected schools in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states from November 2023 and has continued into the 1st Quarter of the year 2024. The meetings aim to raise awareness about sexual violence, provide support for survivors, and educate students on how to prevent and respond to such incidents effectively.



The Club meetings, which are part of Project Alert's ongoing activities under the AWDF project, have seen significant engagement from the students, school officials, and relevant stakeholders. The students have been actively involved in discussions, sharing personal experiences, awareness creation and learning about legal and psychological support available for survivors. One of the key objectives of the workshops is to break the silence surrounding sexual violence and encourage survivors to come forward and seek assistance. Project Alert partnered and has been working closely with local organizations; Girl's power Initiative in Cross River State and Akwa Ibom State GBV management committee, to ensure that survivors receive the necessary support and protection.

PROJECT ALERT, ICCEF AND BAOBAB PARTNER TO HOST INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE IN COMMEMORATION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

In celebration of International Women's Day (IWD) on March 8th, Project Alert collaborated with two women-led organizations, ICCEF and BAOBAB, to host a webinar aimed at exploring contemporary issues hindering or facilitating collaboration between younger and older generations of feminists. The webinar, titled "Fostering an Inclusive Feminist Movement in Nigeria," aligned with this year's IWD theme of 'Inspire Inclusion.' The event sought to strengthen the feminist and gender agenda while identifying emerging challenges to women's rights and freedoms.



The partnership between Project Alert, ICCEF, and BAOBAB envisions a Nigeria where feminist ideologies are accurately represented, ensuring their transmission across generations of women. The key objectives included examining contemporary issues facilitating collaboration between younger and older generations of feminists, identifying emerging challenges to women's rights and freedoms, and cultivating a culture of progress.

The webinar commenced with opening remarks by Ms. Bunmi Dipo-Salami, Executive Director of BAOBAB, followed by introductions by Ms. Nsini, Senior Program Officer of Project Alert.

Distinguished speakers included:

- Dr. Lydia Umar, co-founder of Gender Awareness Trust (GAT), renowned for her expertise in gender activism and peace.
- Emem Okon, a feminist activist with over 23 years of experience in grassroots campaigns.
- Amy Oyekunle, a gender and development professional with expertise in NGO management and gender-based violence.
- Amina Bint Muhammad, an advocate for women's and girls' rights and dynamic entrepreneur.
- Elizabeth Enu-Akan, a sexuality counselor in training.
- Nafisa Atiku-Adejuwon, a commentator and consultant on social and environmental issues.

The webinar provided a platform for robust discussions, sharing experiences, and exchanging ideas to advance the feminist movement and address gender equality challenges in Nigeria. The collaboration between Project Alert, ICCEF, and BAOBAB underscores the importance of inter-generational collaboration in furthering feminist goals and advocating for gender equality in Nigeria. By fostering dialogue and sharing expertise, the webinar contributed to the ongoing efforts to inspire inclusion and progress within the feminist movement.

PROJECT ALERT HOSTS TWO-DAYS STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP TO LAUNCH NEW PROJECT



Project Alert in partnership with Open Society on Justice Reform Project, with support from Open Society Africa organized a two-day stakeholder's workshop. The workshop aimed to further introduce the "Integrated Response to Advancing Justice and Accountability (IRAJA) project" and get the input from participants on the Application to be developed, which will be utilized for monitoring and tracking reported cases. Held at Watercress Hotel, Ikeja on the 7th & 8th of March, 2024, the workshop brought together a diverse array of stakeholders including representatives from government agencies, law enforcement, legal practitioners, civil society organizations, and surveillance team members to address the critical issue of gender-based violence and devise innovative solutions for its eradication.

The first day of the workshop commenced with an overview of the IRAJA project, outlining the objectives, strategies, and expected outcomes of the initiative. The workshop emphasized the urgent need for a coordinated and integrated response to address the multifaceted challenges of access to Justice for Survivors of sexual and gender-based violence effectively. Subsequent sessions delved into discussions on understanding SGBV and Challenges in Access to Justice; DSVA Experience by Mrs Tunmininu Oni (DSVA). Mrs Oreoluwa Lesi; Founder Women's Technology Empowerment Center also shared insights into 'The role of technology in addressing SGBV; Access to Justice.'

Day 2's highlight was the breakout session and group presentation of the IRAJA Application key features and functionalities by participants. Together with technical experts, the application is designed to facilitate the monitoring and tracking of reported cases of SGBV. Participants had the opportunity to provide feedback on the user interface, functionality, and features of the application, ensuring that it meets the diverse needs of stakeholders.

As the workshop concluded, participants expressed their commitment to supporting the project and leveraging the IRAJA Application as a valuable tool in the pursuit of Justice. Looking ahead, Project Alert and its partners are poised to embark on the next phase of the project, working tirelessly to operationalize the application and advance justice and accountability in combating SGBV.





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PROJECT ALERT ENGAGES AND EMPOWERS COMMUNITY SURVEILLANCE TEAM MEMBERS IN COMMEMORATION OF IWD 2024



Project Alert on Violence Against Women held an engagement with its Sexual and Gender-based Violence Community Surveillance teams in an effort to address gender-based violence (GBV) and support survivors at the grassroot level. The meeting convened through the support of Open Society Africa, to appreciate them for their performance since instituted under Spotlight Initiative Project in 2020.

The occasion also connects over 100 surveillance members with Office of Public Defender (OPD), Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency, Mirabel Centre LASUTH, Assurance Centre Federal Medical Centre, Ebute-Meta and a representative from the Family Support Unit (Police). This, Mrs Josephine Effah-Chukwuma Executive Director Project Alert, noted was to ensure collaboration with agencies to achieve success against SGBV. The teams consist of volunteers who decided be watchdog for sexual and gender-based violence issues. They are like first responders and carry out outreaches to sensitize their communities.

Special remarks were delivered by Ms. Joy Sokoya from the Mirabel Centre, highlighting the center's decade-long commitment to providing support to victims of rape. Mrs. Folake Adebayo from the Assurance Centre also shared insights into the facility's services, emphasizing collaboration within communities. Mrs. Oni from the Lagos State Domestic Violence Agency discussed the agency's efforts in addressing domestic violence cases and providing support to survivors, while Ms. Henrietta Agbaje from the Office of the Public Defender underscored the agency's role in providing legal representation to indigent Nigerians, including victims of domestic violence.

Ms. Nsini Udonta presented the overview of the IRAJA project, a collaboration with Open Society Africa aimed at addressing injustice for survivors and holding perpetrators accountable. The project, spanning nine local government areas, employs proactive and reactive approaches, including education, data collection, legal representation, and counseling services.



Following presentations, surveillance team members shared their experiences and engaged in dialogue with the special guests. Mrs. Josephine Effah-Chukwuma and other special guests presented umbrellas, reflective jackets, and megaphones to representatives from each of the nine local governments involved in the IRAJA project.

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