



FORMAT FOR GOOD PRACTICE DESCRIPTION

Title of the good practice	Not Only on Paper: Building a Human Rights Culture for Sexual Minority Women in Nigeria (NOOP)
Name of organization or coalition that implemented the good practice	Women's Health and Equal Rights Initiative (WHER)
When is/was the good practice implemented?	<i>2015 till Date</i>
Where is/was the good practice implemented?	<i>3 Geopolitical Zones - North Central (Abuja, Benue, Nassarawa); North West (Kaduna) and some Southern States (Imo, Cross River, Enugu, Rivers, Edo, Lagos, Anambra and Abia)</i>
Total budget of the good practice	<i>NGN 15,862,830</i>
Central theme of the good practice	<i>Advocacy and Empowerment</i>
Target group of the good practice	<i>Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer (LBQ) Women in Nigeria</i>

A. General description

Why did you initiate the project?

Describe the context in which the good practice takes/took place. What problem does it address? (75 words)

In 2014, the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (SSMPA) was enacted which increased the hostility against LGBT people in Nigeria by leaving ambiguous clauses to the interpretation of both state and non – state actors to perpetrate acts of violence and hate crimes against LGBT people and justifies the social exclusion. It became evident that empowering the community on their human rights will enable them to demand their rights, report cases of violation and seek redress.

Goal and Objective?

What is/was the goal, and what are/were the objectives of the good practice? What change did you aim to see? (50 words)

The goal of the project is to contribute to promotion of human rights of LBQ women in Nigeria. The objective is to improve the situation of LBQ women through human rights education, provision of legal, psychosocial support services and their active participation in LGBT and women's rights advocacy platforms.

What were the activities?

What did you really do? With whom? (100 words)

We recruited and trained 22 LBQ women from North West, South West and South South as community paralegals (CPs) to provide first aid legal support, psychosocial support and human rights education to members of the LBQ community in Nigeria. We also conducted human rights education forums in the North Central (Kaduna) and some states in the Southern (Imo, Cross River, Enugu, Rivers, Edo, Lagos, Anambra and Abia) geopolitical zones. The paralegals conducted an online and in-person human rights education for LBQ women in Nigeria.



What were the results?

Describe the main results of the good practice? (100 words)

The Community paralegals provided 46 LBQ women with psychosocial support and legal services, 14 of those cases were reported from cities where we did not have paralegals. We also conducted human rights education forums in the North West (Kaduna) and some states in the Southern (Imo, Cross River, Enugu, Rivers, Edo, Lagos, Anambra and Abia) geopolitical zones reaching 1,603 LBQ Women as of December, 2018. 65% of the cases handled by our paralegals were resolved successfully. The typology of cases recorded during this project includes police harassment and extortion, blackmail, abuse and rejection by family, intimate partner violence.

B. Detailed description

This section is to be completed after the exchange visits. During those visits, you will have discussed and enriched your understanding of the good practice.

B.1 LOBBY AND ADVOCACY (MAX. 100 WORDS)

Describe per question below what you did relating to L&A.

To whom did you lobby?

What did you lobby and advocate for?

Did you change your plan/activities during the process?

Any unexpected L&A results?

2016 to 2018 recorded an increase in the number of reported human rights violations which we attributed to being as a result of the human rights education forums we organized as part of this project. We compiled and used these violations report to advocate for the rights of LBQ women nationally, regionally and internationally including submitting a shadow report at CEDAW in 2017, at the UN during the Universal Periodic Review and at the 61st and 62nd African Commission on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR). We are planning with other VOI partners to fight the SSMPA which has hindered partnerships.

Validate	Whom
Describe the main outcomes of the project related to advocacy , resulting from your project? <i>Specify who did what, when and where.</i>	<i>We recorded an increase in human rights knowledge of LBQ and we recorded violations report which we used as advocacy tool to hold our lawmakers accountable at CEDAW in 2017, at the Universal Periodic Review (2017) and at the 61st and 62nd African Commission on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR).</i>
Describe how your organization contributed to this change, as described above.	As a result of the diversity within our community, we made sure that our approach in creating a change is targeted towards all women within our community irrespective of their heterogeneity. The WHER trained paralegals organized in-person and online human rights forums to educate LBQ women of their rights. Due to the increase knowledge of their rights, the community were able to report cases of violations which we used as an advocacy tool to lobby at the ACHPR, CEDAW, Commonwealth -Heads of states meeting, etc.
Which organisation or persons could validate the change described above?	This change can be validated by our sister organizations TIERS (The Initiative for Equal Rights, Lagos) and IAH (Initiative for the advancement of Humanity, Port Harcourt) whom we have partnered with to submit shadow reports at the African



	<p>Commission. The Netherlands Embassy in Abuja can also validate this change. They funded the phase one of our paralegal project called which lasted for two years. The phase 2 is currently being funded by the EU Commission in Abuja, Nigeria. I believe that our partners under voices of inclusion can validate this change because they interfaced with our stakeholders.</p>
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B.2 INTERSECTIONALITY (MAX. 50 WORDS)

Describe per question below what you did relating to intersectionality.

To what extent did you pay attention to intersectionality?

Give one concrete example? We understand that women are heterogenous and that even in the marginalized groups, there are people who are further marginalized. We ensure that in our programs and provision of services we prioritize LBQ youths, LBQ persons with disability, from rural, muslim and less priviledge background.

Validate	Whom
<p>Describe the main outcomes related to intersectionality, resulting from your project? Specify who did what, when and where.</p>	<p><i>At WHER, we recognize that humans' are multi-dimensional beings. We sit at the intersection of LGBT and women's rights and we strive to ensure the representation and active participation of LBQ women in both movements. We recognize that LBQ women are heterogenous across sexuality, gender, indigeneity, disability, religion, language, etc.</i></p>
<p>Describe how your organization contributed to this change, as described above.</p>	<p><i>WHER organized a 2-day values clarification workshop for mainstream CSOs to allow them to put forth their queries, curiosities regarding being LGBT, and a space to share experiences, and struggles. We also document all cases of violations we have received from everyone our issues intersect with. The online human rights education was directed towards everyone within the community regardless of their ethnicity, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity.</i></p>
<p>Which organisation or persons could validate the change described above?</p>	<p><i>This change can be validated by our sister organizations TIERS (The Initiative for Equal Rights, Lagos) who co-facilitated in the values clarification workshop. Also, Education as a Vaccine was invited to the workshop and since then has been an ally and supporter for our cause. We have also partnered to implement projects and carry out campaigns. During the VOI learning visits, we intimated our partners about our projects and they interfaced with our stakeholders, I believe they can validate this change.</i></p>



C. Learning

What did your organisation learn from this good practice? (50 words)

Describe what your organisation learned especially regarding L&A and intersectionality.

It reaffirmed our belief that humans are multi-dimensional. We learned that sustainable change can happen by collaborating and learning. All human rights and social issues are interconnected and indivisible. We were advised to focus our work around changing perceptions to enable the repealing of homophobic laws easier.

What are 3 tips you would give to other organisations?

Tip 1: We advice Dew Drop to facilitate capacity strengthening for the women in the carbinet to enable them strengthen their voice to lobby, negotiate and advocate on issues pertinent to them (women).

Tip 2: We suggest that the center for citizens with disability (CCD) should sensitize their staff around diverse gender and sexual orientations to open up the space for all persons with disability irrespective of their gender identity, and sexual orientation. We also suggested that the provisions of the Discrimination against Persons with Disability (Prohibition) Act, 2018 should be developed into infographics and easy to read using pictures { eg. <https://whernigeria.org/rights-every-nigerian-woman-should-know/>} and probably translated into native languages.

Tip 3: We suggest that organizations should train and recruit people from their constituents who can be trained as community paralegals to ensure that violation of the rights of their stakeholders do not go undocumented, provide avenues for alternate dispute resolutions and to seek redress.

What makes this project a good practice? (max. 50 words)

Please describe what made this project special and more successful than other projects you have done before? This project resulted in increased knowledge of human rights among LBQ women who are now visibly challenging homophobia, sexism and patriarchy. Also, this project created an avenue for us to explore our intersectionality and develop relationships with other organizations and individuals to advance our work. Lastly, our visibility has drastically increased within our target population and also other population which has led us to have an effective referral directory that is inclusive of all groups.

D. Award

If your organisation would win the award of €5.000,- , how would you use this prize? (100 words).

Our definition of Advocacy at WHER is a set of organized actions aimed at influencing public policies, social attitudes, or political processes in order to make a difference in the lives of LGBT people in Nigeria. We will use the award to organize another value clarification workshop with mainstream civil society organizations. This will enable new collaborations and opportunities, as we are working towards exploring our intersections. Furthermore, while exploring these intersections, we will develop a relationship that could result in future collaborations and partnerships that could benefit every community regardless of their specific issues.

Are we allowed to use this good practice in a publication on good advocacy practices?

- Yes, we give permission to include **both** the name of the organisation and the good practice
- Yes, we give permission, but **ONLY** for including the good practice (organisation will be anonymous)
- No, we **do not** give permission to use this good practice in any publication