



# **SURVIVOR'S WATCH**

## **AUGUST 2023**



# TABLE OF CONTENT

**3**

**About WACOL**

**4**

**Editors Statement**

**5**

**Emerging SGBV Illustration  
(Safeguarding women & Girls in  
Education)**

**6**

**EMPOWERING CHANGE: Safeguarding Women and  
Girls from Sexual Harassment and Assault in Nigerian  
Universities**

**7**

**Success Stories**

**12**

**Case Breakdown**

**13**

**Contributors**

**14**

**Advertisement                      and                      Upcoming  
Events**





# ABOUT WACOL

WACOL is an independent, non-political, non-governmental and non-profit organization and registered in 2000 as a company limited by guarantee, i.e. as a charitable organization (RC: 388132) with the Corporate Affairs of Commission (CAC), Nigeria. WACOL's vision is democratic society free from violence and abuse, where human rights of all, in particular women and young people, are recognized in law and practice.

Its mission is to assist in the education, social, economic and political development of women and young people through a wide range of services: training, research, advocacy, shelter, free legal and financial aid, intra-familial/community conflict resolution, and information and library services.

WACOL works throughout Nigeria and beyond. WACOL has established itself as a credible and committed organization whose work is well recognized beyond the shores of Nigeria. It has an observer status with the African Union, African Commission on Human Rights (since 2001) and it also has an NGO Special Consultative status with the United Nations (approved in 2010 by ECOSOC). WACOL is a formidable organization that can boast of institutional capacity for sustainable work in the field of advancing human rights, gender equality, democracy and good governance.

WACOL in general works in four thematic areas, which are gender/human rights, peace advocacy/conflict resolution, democracy/good governance and reproductive health rights. It has also done some work in the area of STEM and climate change.



# Editor's Statement

The survivors' watch is a platform created by WACOL to promote a safe space for victims and survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) to share their stories without any bias, conflict, intimidation, fear or threat. The survivors' watch seeks to capture the delicate and unique stories of survivors and victims, while empowering them with the strength of anonymity to own their truth and vocalise their lived experiences.

We understand the importance of supporting survivors and victims to tell their story at their

own time, giving them the opportunity to choose what aspect of their

story they wish to share. The survivors watch provides the

community and safe space for survivors and victims to not only express themselves but also trust that they will be respected while inspiring others to own their story and speak their truth.

This newsletter provides useful information about the issues survivors and victims of abuse experience in the society including emerging areas and trends. The survivors' watch further spotlights anti-SGBV tips and information. Discourse in the survivors' watch negates harmful bias/stereotypes, and promotes healthy practices to enable a safe environment for women and girls to flourish.



**Prof Joy Ngozi Ezeilo (SAN, OON)**  
**Executive Director of WACOL**

OBINNA BANKS



# SAFEGUARDING WOMEN AND GIRLS IN UINVERSITES

Hey girl! Have you seen the news lately? A professor in the University of Calabar was exposed for sexual abuse and assault. I am so glad issues like this are becoming mainstream.



Hi Chioma! Shocking news - it's the Law faculty's Dean involved. Seems he has a history too. He was charged with rape before. Safety for women and girls in universities is a serious concern now.



# SAFEGUARDING WOMEN AND GIRLS IN UINVERSITES

This situation has me deep in thought. It's really unsettling, and I can't help but wonder what we all can do to ensure that the university becomes a much safer place for women and girls to learn. Keeping them safe all the time should be a top priority.



I believe we could implement a few safety measures to guarantee the safety of women and girls within our universities.



# SAFEGUARDING WOMEN AND GIRLS IN UINVERSITES

Is that so, Tayo? That's impressive. What suggestions do you have to tackle this problem?



- I believe measures such as;
- 1. Bystander Intervention: Empower bystanders to prevent harassment, fostering accountability.
  - 2. Student-Led Initiatives: Drive change through gender equality promotion, workshops, and rallies.
  - 3. Art & Media for Change: Use creative mediums to spread messages on consent and respect, engaging the campus community, are effective measures that can be put in place to curb this harmful situation.



# SAFEGUARDING WOMEN AND GIRLS IN UINVERSITES

Great! These ideas seem really impactful. Do you know of any organizations that women and girls in universities dealing with these issues can get in touch with?



I'm familiar with a few, but one worth highlighting is WACOL (Women Aid Collective). They're dedicated to advocating for and supporting the rights of women and girls. Anyone facing such challenges can definitely seek assistance from WACOL.



# SAFEGUARDING WOMEN AND GIRLS IN UINVERSITES

Sounds great! How can we get in touch with WACOL?



WACOL is an NGO specializing in human rights, active on social media platforms as @wacoltamarsarc. They can also be contacted through these phone lines: (1) 09060002128, (2) 09091333000, and (3) 09092777000.



# SAFEGUARDING WOMEN AND GIRLS IN UINVERSITES

You've truly enriched my understanding today, and I appreciate it! Until next time, Tayo.



You are welcome, Chioma! Until we meet again.





# **EMPOWERING CHANGE: Safeguarding Women and Girls from Sexual Harassment and Assault in Nigerian Universities**

**By Omebedo Efemena Elohor**

In recent years, the issue of sexual harassment and assault within Nigerian universities has gained significant attention. Women and girls pursuing higher education should be able to do so in an environment free from fear and discrimination. As a society, it is our responsibility to ensure that educational institutions are safe spaces where everyone can thrive. In this article, we will explore the challenges faced by women and girls in Nigerian universities and propose innovative solutions to curb this pervasive issue.

## **The Reality of Sexual Harassment and Assault:**

Sexual harassment and assault are deeply ingrained societal problems that have permeated educational institutions across Nigeria. The power dynamics between students, faculty members, and administrative staff create an environment where victims often feel powerless to report or address these incidents. The stigma attached to speaking out and the fear of retaliation can perpetuate a culture of silence.

## **Empowering Solutions:**

1. **Comprehensive Awareness Campaigns:** Universities must initiate campus-wide awareness campaigns that shed light on the gravity of sexual harassment and assault. Workshops, seminars, and open dialogues should be organized to educate students, faculty, and staff about what constitutes harassment and the legal implications. Encouraging open conversations can gradually break down the taboos surrounding these topics.
2. **Anonymous Reporting Systems:** Implementing confidential and anonymous reporting systems can help victims come forward without fearing repercussions. Mobile apps or dedicated hotlines can provide a safe platform for survivors to share their experiences, enabling authorities to take swift action.
3. **Rigorous Training for Staff:** Faculty and staff should undergo mandatory training on preventing and addressing sexual harassment. This training should focus on promoting respect, gender equality, and bystander intervention. By fostering a culture of empathy and support, insti-

tutions can discourage harassment and empower individuals to take a stand.

4. **Establishment of Gender Resource Centres:** Universities should create dedicated Gender Resource Centres that provide counselling, legal aid, and other support services to survivors. These centres can also offer educational programs on consent, healthy relationships, and empowerment, fostering a more inclusive campus environment.

## **Innovative Approaches:**

1. **Bystander Intervention Programs:** Universities can introduce innovative bystander intervention programs that teach students and staff how to recognize and respond to potentially harmful situations. By empowering bystanders to intervene, we can collectively prevent harassment and create a culture of accountability.
2. **Student-Led Initiatives:** Encourage student organizations to play an active role in promoting gender equality and safety on campus. These groups can organize rallies, workshops, and awareness campaigns, generating grassroots movements for change.
3. **Art and Media for Social Change:** Utilize art, theatre, and digital media to convey powerful messages about consent, respect, and the importance of ending harassment. Creative initiatives can engage the entire campus community and create a lasting impact.

## **Conclusion:**

Protecting women and girls from sexual harassment and assault in Nigerian universities requires a comprehensive and multifaceted approach. By fostering a culture of respect, empowerment, and accountability, we can create safer environments that allow all individuals to pursue their education without fear. Through a collective effort involving educational institutions, policymakers, and civil society, we can drive meaningful change and ensure that universities truly become spaces of learning, growth, and equality for everyone.



# SUCCESS STORIES

\*NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT SURVIVORS

## RESOLVING FAMILY CONFLICTS THROUGH MEDIATION: A CASE STUDY

**M**rs. Sophia's distressing situation involved conflict with four stepchil-

cations with her brother. Recognizing the need for intervention, a mediation session was convened. Delving into the root causes, it became evident that this discord was linked to a past unresolved issue. Through empathetic dialogue, the parties were encouraged to embrace harmony as a unified family unit, with designated roles assigned to each member, fostering lasting peace.



dren who not only threatened her but engaged in physical alter-



## Navigating Parenthood and Responsibility: A Mediation Success

Mrs. Igene's plea for assistance at WACOL centered around her estranged husband's neglect of their child's welfare. Through mediation, a nuanced picture emerged - the father was willing to contribute but sought access to his child. A mutually agreeable solution was reached, outlining specific obligations for him to fulfill in order to gain access. Demonstrating commitment, the father fulfilled these obligations earnestly, showcasing the potential of mediation in fostering cooperative co-parenting and child well-being.





# Jennifer's Journey:

## A Tale of Unyielding Sisterhood in the Pursuit of Justice

In August, WACOL's spotlight falls upon a remarkable individual: 6-year-old Jennifer (names have been altered to preserve anonymity). Jennifer's sister, Janet, graciously shares her sibling's inspiring narrative. Following a return from a journey, Jennifer confided in Janet, divulging a revelation that would shake the very foundations of their world. At the forefront of a private medical care facility, Janet, a dedicated young nurse, plays a pivotal role in her family. With her mother and younger sister Jennifer as dependents, she assumes the mantle of the household's primary breadwinner. Janet's unwavering commitment to her hospital profession underscores her steadfast devotion and tireless work ethic.

Upon Janet's return from a business trip, she discerned an unidentifiable shift in Jennifer's demeanor. Despite her inability to pinpoint the nature of this change, Janet opted to engage Jennifer in a compassionate conversation. The revelation that followed not only stunned her but also inflicted profound emotional distress, leaving her in a state of bewilderment, indigna-

tion, and an unwavering determination to procure justice for her sister and her family. Jennifer confides in her sister, Janet, disclosing a distressing incident involving the hospital's security personnel who also serves as an errand aide for staff residing in the living quarters of the staff compound. Shockingly, Jennifer reveals that during her moments of absence, this individual unlawfully enters their home and subjects her to inappropriate physical contact. When Janet delicately probes for further clarification on the nature of these actions, Jennifer, using child-appropriate language, describes the perpetrator's conduct, involving oral and penetrative sexual offenses.

Upon inquiring about the duration of these harrowing experiences, Jennifer reveals that they have persisted for a considerable period. Compounding the gravity of the situation, Jennifer discloses that Sunday, the security personnel, has employed continuous threats to intimidate her into silence, with dire warnings of harm and even brandishing a common kitchen implement known as a "turning garri," which is typically used in Nigeria for preparing a local dish called eba. These threats have left Jennifer in a state of perpetual fear, inhibiting her from confiding in anyone except her sister, Janet, to whom she finally opens up.

Janet describes a tumultuous range of emotions upon learning of her sister's ordeal. She employs her smartphone to delicately examine Jennifer's physical condition, revealing evidence of distressing injuries, abrasions, and tears in her intimate areas.



This sight triggers an overwhelming emotional response in Janet, leading to her emotional breakdown. Janet goes on to reveal that Jennifer's disclosure also helps shed light on previously perplexing changes in her sister's behavior, including increased frequency of urination and abrupt shifts in demeanor. Following her discovery of the distressing truth, Janet takes immediate action by placing a call to the hospital's Managing Director (MD), earnestly requesting an urgent meeting to address the grave matter at hand. In response, Janet is promptly invited to partake in this crucial discussion. Upon entering the meeting space, she is greeted by the MD, the hospital manager, and a security personnel known as Oga Friday.

Throughout the course of this meeting, Sunday vehemently refutes all allegations leveled against him, steadfastly denying his involvement in the reprehensible acts of raping and sexually assaulting the six-year-old victim, Jennifer. This blanket denial leaves Janet oscillating between a tumultuous blend of anger and confusion, grappling with the disheartening situation.

Seeking clarity on the subsequent steps to be taken, Janet presses for answers. In response, the hospital's MD advises her to ensure that Jennifer receives necessary medical attention at the hospital. Inquiring about Sunday's status within the hospital, Janet is informed that he will be terminated from his employment. Regrettably, the anticipated termination fails to materialize, and instead, Sunday seemingly draws newfound audacity from the situation, brazenly taunting both the victim and her family.

Overwhelmed by sorrow and dissatisfaction with the handling of the matter, Janet reaches out to the hospital manager, expressing her intention to engage with TamarSac, an external organization. Her decision is borne out of the hospital's apparent failure to address the situation with the required sensitivity and professionalism. The hospital manager assents to her course of action, allowing her to initiate contact with TamarSac as well as the local police station.

In her quest for justice and resolution, Janet navigates the complexities of the situation, determined to ensure her sister's well-being and hold accountable those responsible for the grievous acts inflicted upon Jennifer.

Janet takes a significant step by visiting the local police station, where she is provided with a police report that directs her to seek a medical examination from ParkLane Hospital to substantiate Jennifer's account. However, upon arriving at the hospital, they discover an ongoing strike, prompting the rescheduling of their appointment. On the subsequent visit, they follow instructions to procure menstruating pads at a cost of 2,000 naira, only to encounter another roadblock due to the unavailability of the doctor.



Amid these challenges, a doctor, who remains unnamed for confidentiality, intimidates Janet with threats of legal action for alleged libel and defamation against Sunday. The doctor warns of potential incarceration and professional restrictions. Fearing for her safety, Janet reaches out to the police seeking protection and an alternative medical facility. The police direct her to a police clinic, where a doctor examines Jennifer and confirms her distressing experience of rape and sexual assault. The clinic charges a total of 20,200 naira for the doctor's consultation, tests, and photocopying. The medical report, affirming Jennifer's ordeal, is provided to Janet's family the following day.

Armed with the corroborative medical report, Janet and her family believe they possess the necessary leverage to pursue legal action. However, their optimism falters as they encounter disappointment when the police attempt to manipulate them into silence. The police employ coercive tactics, pressuring the family to drop the case or face a demand of 50,000 naira for filing and pursuing the legal proceedings.

Simultaneously, Sunday and his family beseech Janet's family, offering a monthly payment of 10,000 naira as compensation for Jennifer's suffering. Janet and her family, refusing to compromise on justice, reject this proposition outright. In the midst of these complex negotiations, Janet and her family stand resolute in their pursuit of justice for Jennifer, determined to navigate the challenging terrain and ensure accountability for the heinous crimes committed.

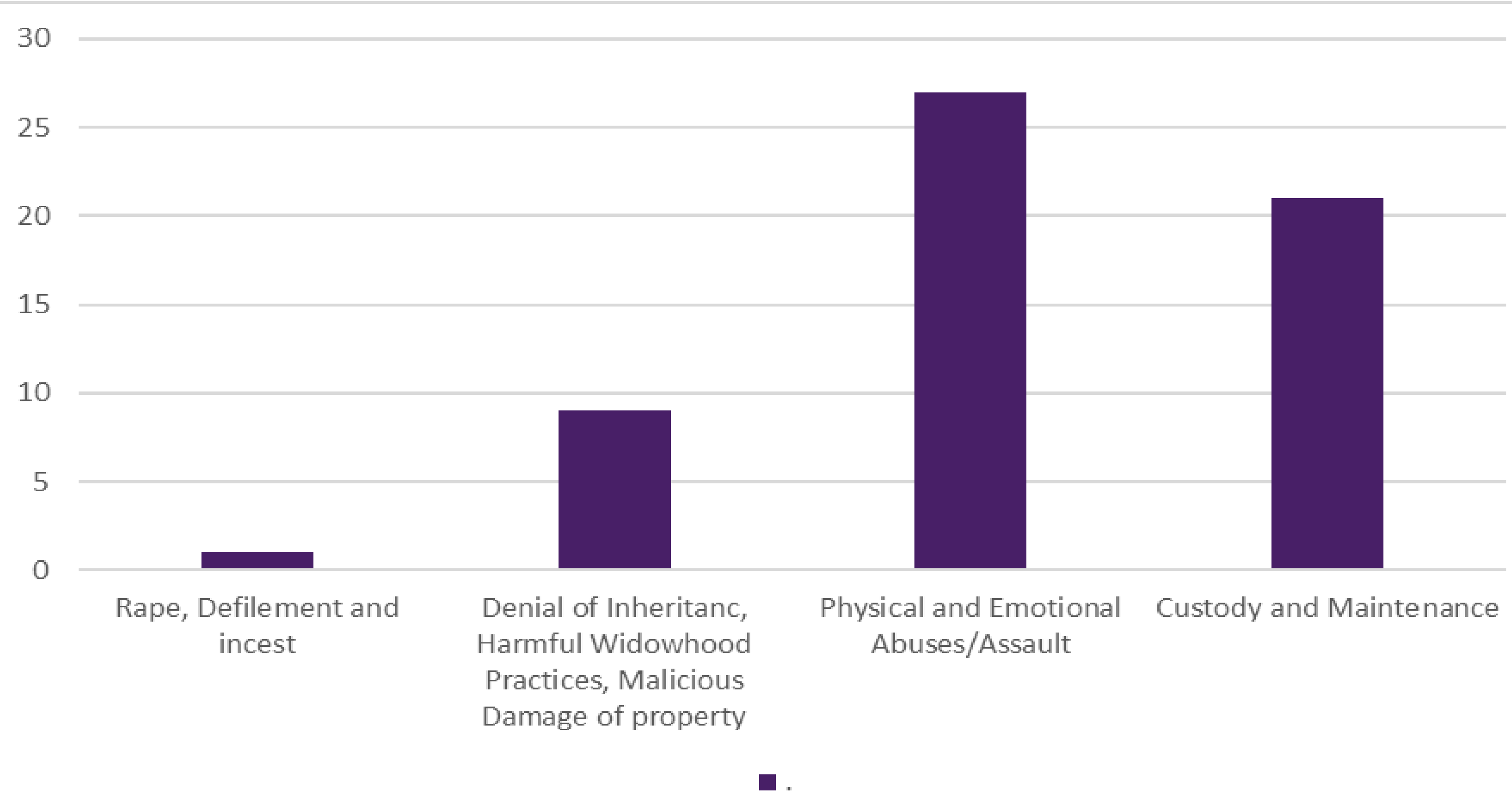
As a final recourse in her pursuit of justice, Janet turns to WACOL (Women's Aid Collective) for assistance. At WACOL, she is met with compassion, attentive ears, and a commitment to secure justice for Jennifer. In this safe haven, Janet receives invaluable guidance on tending to Jennifer's emotional and psychological well-being as they navigate the arduous path ahead. WACOL takes the lead in fully engaging with Jennifer's case, collaborating seamlessly with pertinent resources and organizations to ensure the proper handling of the matter and the attainment of justice. Currently Sunday has been remanded in prison and is being charged to court after investigation by the police.

This poignant narrative spotlight the unwavering fortitude displayed by six-year-old Jennifer and her sister Janet. Despite the formidable challenges they confront, their determination remains steadfast in the pursuit of justice. This story serves as a beacon of strength, not only for Jennifer and Janet but also for others who find themselves grappling with similar circumstances. Their resilience sets a powerful example, underscoring the significance of standing up for what is right and persevering in the face of adversity.




# CASE BREAKDOWN

## for August 2023



### Gender Disaggregated data

 Female complainants total: 54

 Male complainants total: 4

 Overall total: 58 cases.

### Age Range

Under 18: 1

18-24: 5

25-34: 15

35-44: 23

45-59: 9

60 and above: 0

Unknown: 4





## CONTRIBUTORS

**Prof. Joy Ngozi Ezeilo (SAN, OON)** is the founding director of Women's Aid Collective (WACOL), she is the Emeritus Dean Faculty of Law, University of Nigeria and Former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons.

**Nkechi Igwe** is the Head of Programme and Administration at WACOL, a gender consultant and the pioneer Centre Manager Tamar Sexual Assault Referral Centre (Tamar SARC).

**Ibangah Esemé Goodness Esq.** is a Communicator, Women Human Rights Defender and Digital Enthusiast. She is the program manager of WACOL GirlsWill Initiative.

**Efemena Obialunamma Omeke** is a digital artist and writer passionate about creating stories that explore identities, cultures, and experiences. She is an intern at WACOL and GirlsWill.

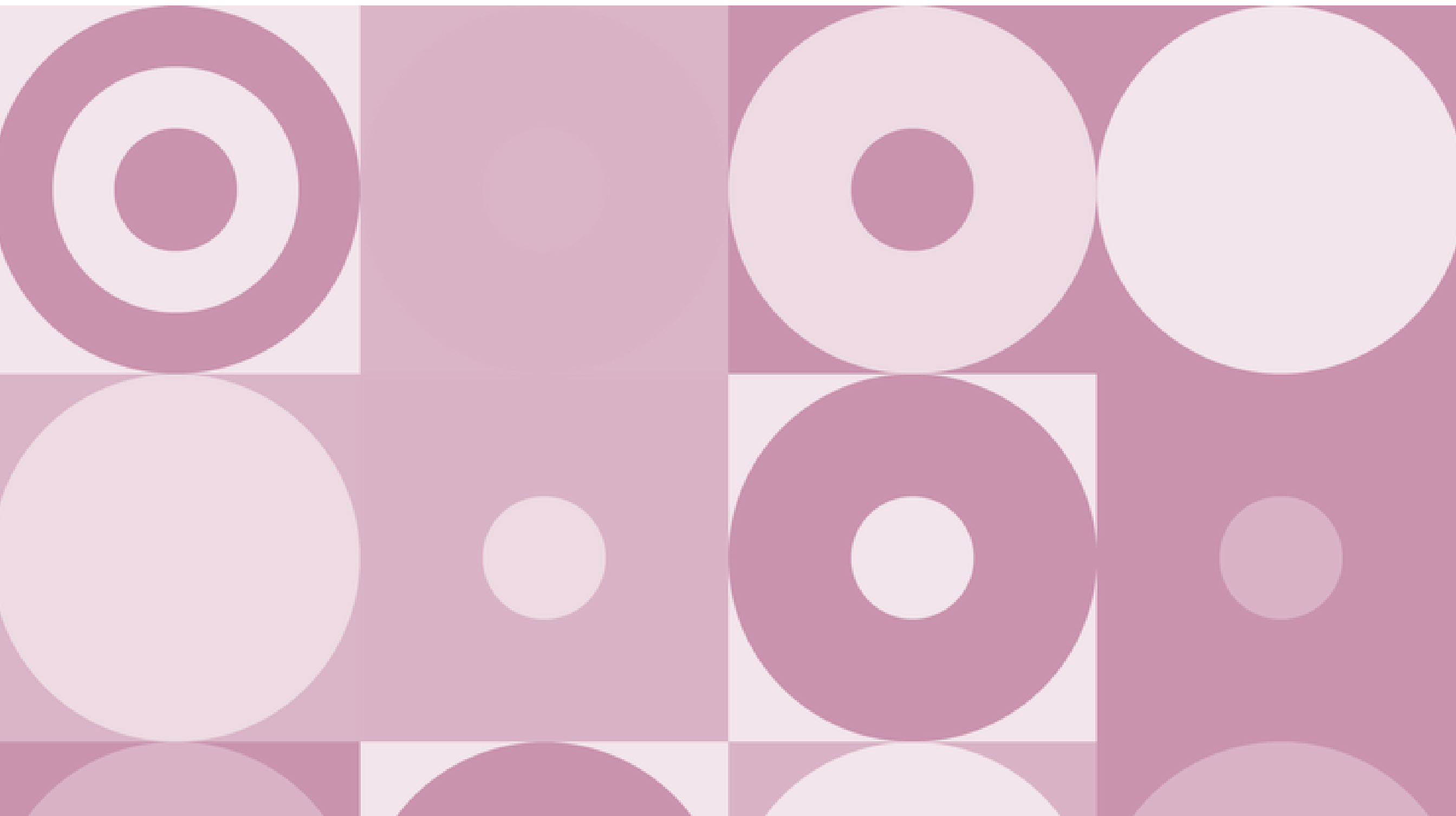
**Ugochukwu Ogoke** is a graphics designer, web developer and Program associate at WACOL.

**Martha Akhere Aikhomun Esq** is a lawyer and an Associate, Chartered Mediators and Conciliators (AICMC). She's a Legal Officer (NYSC) at the Legal Unit of WACOL who is passionate about human rights.



# **ADVERTISEMENT & UPCOMING EVENTS**

To Report any threat or human rights violation call our hotlines:  
(1) +2349060002128; (2) 09091333000; (3) 09092777000.



**WACOL Women House (Ulo Umunwanyi)**  
**No 9 Dr. Mathias Ilo Avenue, New Haven Extension.**



**0703 577 9083; 08095757590**



**wacol@wacolnigeria.org; wacolnig@yahoo.com;**  
**wacolnig@gmail.com**



**WACOLTamarSARC**  
**www.wacolnigeria.org**



**WACOL Tamar Sarc**  
**Women Aid Collective-WACOL**