



SURVIVOR'S WATCH

JULY 2023

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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

COMBATING FEMICIDE IN NIGERIA

Safeguarding Women's Lives and Rights

By Omekedo Efemena Elohor

Introduction

Femicide, the intentional killing of women and girls due to their gender, is a deeply concerning issue that plagues Nigeria. The rise in femicide cases poses a significant threat to women's safety and hampers gender equality in the country. Addressing this grave concern requires a concerted effort from the Nigerian government, civil society, and citizens alike. This article explores the causes and consequences of femicide in Nigeria and suggests proactive measures that can be taken to curb it and ensure the protection of women.

Understanding the Causes of Femicide in Nigeria

Femicide in Nigeria is fueled by a complex web of factors, including gender-based violence, cultural norms, poverty, and weak law enforcement. Harmful traditional practices, such as early marriage and female genital mutilation, further perpetuate violence against women. Additionally, the patriarchal system often undermines women's rights, leading to a lack of accountability for those who commit femicide.

Empowering Women through Education and Awareness

Promoting education and awareness plays a crucial role in curbing femicide. The Nigerian government must invest in educational initiatives that raise awareness about women's rights and gender equality. Community-based programs, media campaigns, and school curriculums can help challenge harmful stereotypes and foster respect for women's dignity and autonomy.

Strengthening Legal Protections

To combat femicide effectively, Nigerian authorities need to strengthen legal protections for women. Enacting and enforcing comprehensive legislation that specifically addresses violence against women and femicide is essential. Additionally, establishing specialized courts and support services for victims can lead to swifter justice and better access to resources.

Improving Law Enforcement and Accountability

Enhancing law enforcement's responsiveness to femicide cases is vital. Training law enforcement officers to handle gender-based violence with sensitivity and empathy is crucial for building trust between authorities and victims. Encouraging women to report incidents and ensuring that cases are thoroughly investigated and prosecuted will send a strong message that violence against women will not be tolerated.

Providing Safe Spaces and Support Systems

Creating safe spaces and support systems for women who are at risk of or have experienced violence is essential. Shelters and crisis centers can offer a safe haven for women escaping abusive situations. Additionally, helplines and counseling services can provide emotional support and guidance to those affected by femicide or violence.

Empowering Men as Allies

Engaging men as allies in the fight against femicide is crucial. Promoting positive masculinity and challenging harmful stereotypes can help reshape attitudes towards women. Men can be actively involved in workshops, campaigns, and community dialogues to foster a culture of respect, equality, and non-violence.

Conclusion

Femicide in Nigeria is a harrowing reality that demands immediate attention and collective action. By addressing the root causes of violence against women, empowering women through education and awareness, strengthening legal protections, improving law enforcement and accountability, providing safe spaces, and engaging men as allies, Nigeria can take significant strides towards curbing femicide and protecting women's lives and rights. It is only through a united effort that Nigeria can build a safer and more equitable society for all its citizens.



EDUCATION ON FEMICIDE IN NIGERIA



SUCCESS STORIES

*NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT SURVIVORS

ADVOCATING FOR RIGHTS OF A VISUALLY IMPAIRED TEACHER

In May 2023, a visually impaired woman, a dedicated teacher at a special school in Enugu, bravely reported maltreatment by the school authority. She raised concerns over being unjustly relocated to a dilapidated apartment following a dispute with a fellow

her peers and having her belongings thrown out of the hostel after her quarrelsome colleague's mysterious death added to her grievances. Upon receiving her report, our organization promptly engaged the school management, inviting them to address the matter. However, the school requested permission from the Ministry of Education before attending the meeting.

To ensure a thorough investigation into the allegations, we then reached out to the Ministry of Education. The ministry, under the guidance of the Permanent Secretary, conducted a comprehensive inspection of the school premises. The aim was to ensure a conducive environment for the visually impaired teacher to continue her valuable services and guarantee her safety, given the recurring conflicts with certain colleagues.

As a result, the visually impaired teacher was relocated to another apartment to protect her from potential harm. Additionally, the ministry's intervention sought to foster a more inclusive and respectful environment for all staff at the school. This success story reflects the importance of advocacy and collaboration in safeguarding the rights and well-being of vulnerable individuals in our society.



visually impaired colleague. The teacher expressed her distress, stating that she had faced discrimination and partiality from both the school authority and her colleagues.

Allegations of being labeled a witch by

COURAGE'S STORY

In June, Courage arrived at WACOL to report a series of life-threatening threats from Mr. Emeka, who she claimed is the father of her children. She revealed that Mr. Emeka not only fails to provide for their children's basic needs but also subjects her to domestic abuse. Her heartfelt prayer was for peace to be restored in their home.

Further investigation revealed that the parties had been living separately for three years prior to Courage's complaint. In light of the situation, a family meeting was proposed to facilitate the resolution of their issues.

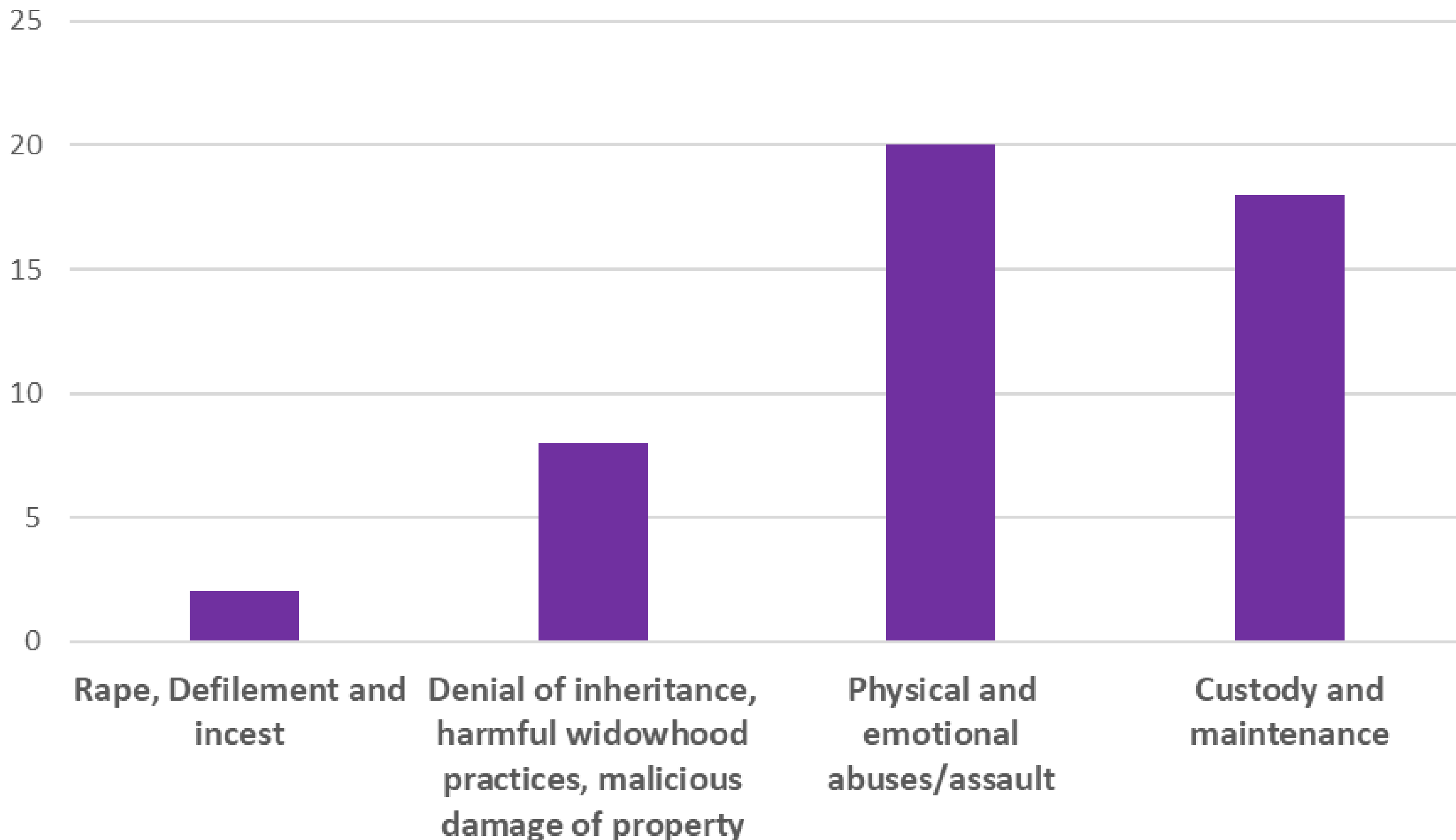
Through multiple mediation

sessions, Mr. Emeka pledged to contribute N15,000 every two weeks for the family's sustenance and vowed to cover their medical and accommodation expenses. Additionally, he was granted visitation rights, allowing the children to spend time with him during holidays, fostering their relationship.

This publication presents the compelling narrative of a woman's courage to seek help and the constructive steps taken towards resolving the family's challenges, emphasizing the importance of mediation and compromise in such delicate situations.

CASE BREAKDOWN

for July 2023



Gender Disaggregated data



Female complainants total: 42



Male complainants total: 6



Overall total: 48 cases.

Age Range

Under 18: 3

18-24: 4

25-34: 11

35-44: 21

45-59: 4

60 and above: 1

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.

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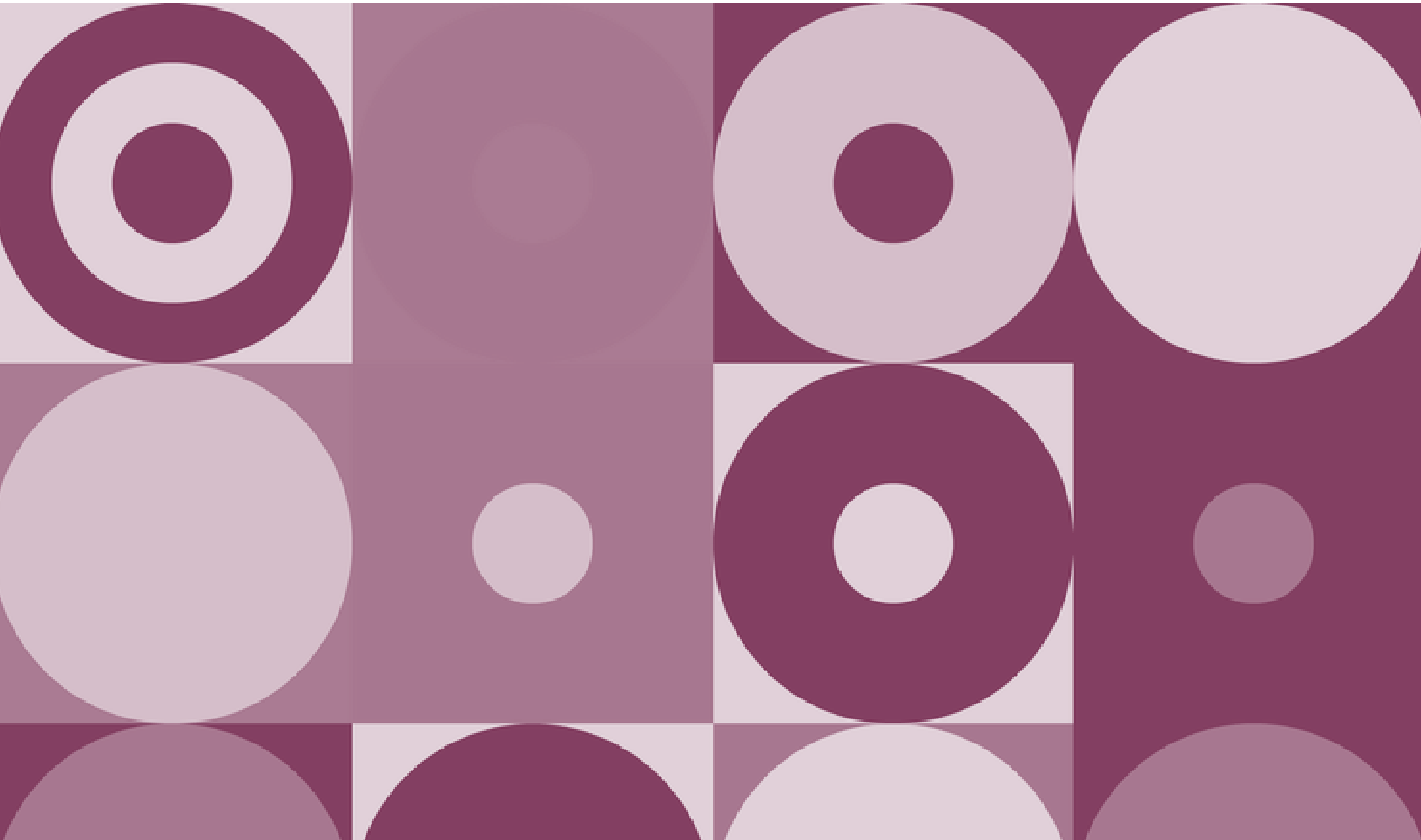
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ADVERTISEMENT & UPCOMING EVENTS

To Report any threat or human rights violation call our hotlines:
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