



SURVIVOR'S WATCH

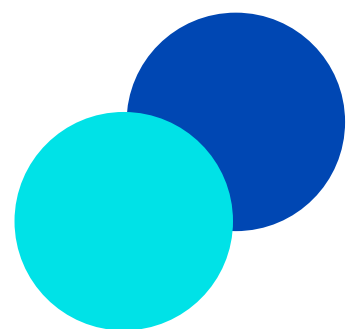
JUNE 2024



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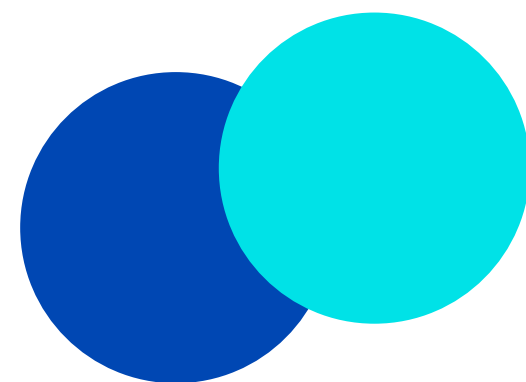
About WACOL

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

Did You know?

SECTION 357 of the CRIMINAL CODE provides that 'any person who has unlawful carnal knowledge of a woman or girl, without her consent or with her consent, if the consent is obtained by force or by means of threats or intimidation of any kind, or by fear of harm, or by means of false and fraudulent representation as to the nature of the act, or in the case of a married woman, by impersonating her husband is guilty of an offence which is called rape'

SUCCESS STORIES

*Names have been changed to protect survivors

WACOL Rescues 13 year old victim of rape by Herdsmen in Enugu



Sometime in June 2024, Amara (pseudo name to protect her identity), a 13-year-old girl from Aku, Enugu State, endured a horrific ordeal that has left an unforgettable mark on her life. Due to the recent economic hardship, Amara was forced to drop out from school, as her parents were unable to afford her school fees any longer. In an effort to support her family, she started helping them in the farm.

It was on one of these visits, she was brutally attacked and assaulted by a group of Fulani herdsmen. According to Amara, she was on the farm on the fateful day working when they surrounded her and before she could escape they overpowered her, taking turns to rape her and brutalise her. As she struggled for her life, her cries was heard by a Good Samaritan, Mr. N. T(Not real name) who was passing by, he quickly intervened and tried to rescue her from the rapist and assailants.

Unfortunately, in the quest to save Amara's life, Mr N. T was severely attacked by the herdsmen and he lost his life in the process.

Amara was later discovered by others and given care. Sadly, this horrible experience left Amara devastated. She found it difficult to talk about her encounter for days and still could not understand why such grave horror befell her and the man that tried to save her.

The story of Amara got to WACOL, who quickly reached out to her family to provide crucial support and a safe haven for the young girl. When WACOL team first met Amara, she was withdrawn and shattered. Immediately, the team provided her with medical and psychological support, including shelter to allow Amara the safe haven she needs to heal and get better.

Upon recovery, Amara thanked WACOL for their kindness and compassion towards her. Especially for giving her comprehensive care and assuring her that her future is still bright and worth pursuing despite her experience. Since Amara's rescue, WACOL has also taken steps to get justice for her and the Good Samaritan that lost his life. WACOL is mindful that the road to recovery will be tough and may be challenging for Amara, that is why as an organization we are committed to ensuring that she ultimately gets justice and also attains her full potential, this includes returning to school and pursuing the things she dreams of achieving.

Our Founding Director, Prof Ezeilo SAN is determined to stand by Amara, to provide the needed resources to help her overcome this tragedy and importantly give her the agency to reclaim her future once again.

WACOL delivers Justice for 6 year old Rape Survivor


This story highlights the incident involving a fragile six-year-old girl, who was left alone in a hospital premises by her elder sister, a nurse. Despite being instructed not to open the door for anyone, the survivor was deceived by the compound's security guard, who claimed to fetch water for them. Tragically, the guard raped victim multiple times, causing severe physical injuries.

WACOL responded promptly to the incident. When victim and her elder sister reported the matter, WACOL took immediate action by writing a letter to the hospital and the police, urging them to address the issue.

As a result of WACOL's intervention, the accused was apprehended, and the wounded minor received necessary medical treatment. The case has been filed with the court, ensuring that justice will be sought for survivor and her family.

The swift response and advocacy of WACOL demonstrate the crucial role

that organizations dedicated to protecting vulnerable individuals play in society. They have not only supported the survivor and her family during this traumatic event but also



“As a result of WACOL's intervention, the accused was apprehended, and the wounded minor received necessary medical treatment.”

facilitated the legal process to hold the offender accountable.

It is essential to acknowledge the efforts of WACOL in promptly addressing this distressing incident and their commitment to creating a safer environment for children and women in general.

Rape: A Heinous Crime That Must Be Condemned

By Ugochukwu Ogoke

Rape is a topic that can be tough to discuss, but it's one that we absolutely need to address head-on. This isn't just a crime; it's a profound violation of a person's body, mind, and spirit. It's something that leaves scars far deeper than any physical wound, and it's something that we, as a society, must unequivocally condemn.

Rape is not just a crime; it's an act of violence and cruelty. It's about power and control, not sex. When someone is raped, their autonomy is stripped away. They are left feeling powerless, violated, and often shamed. This is not something that can be brushed off or minimized. It's a devastating experience that can haunt survivors for the rest of their lives.

The Impact on Survivors

Imagine waking up every day with the memory of such a traumatic event. The emotional and psychological toll is immense. Survivors often deal with anxiety, depression, PTSD, and a host of other mental health issues. They may struggle with trust and intimacy, and their relationships can suffer as a result. The ripple effect of rape extends far beyond the immediate victim, affecting families, friends, and entire communities.

One of the most insidious aspects of rape culture is victim-blaming. How often have we heard questions like, "What was she



wearing?" or "Why was he out so late?" These questions imply that the victim is somehow responsible for the crime committed against them. This is not only wrong but also incredibly harmful. No one asks to be raped. The responsibility lies solely with the perpetrator.

We, as a society, have a crucial role to play in condemning rape. This starts with education. We need to teach our children about consent and respect from a young age. We need to challenge harmful stereotypes and myths about gender and sexuality. And we need to support survivors, believing them and providing them with the resources they need to heal.

Unfortunately, our legal and institutional systems often fail survivors of rape. Many cases go unreported because victims fear they won't be believed or that their attacker won't be brought to justice. Even when cases are reported, the legal process can be re-traumatizing, and convictions are far too rare.

We need to push for reforms that make it easier for survivors to come forward and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable. In the heart-wrenching story of Amara, (not her real name) a 13-year-old victim of a brutal rape by Fulani herds-men in Enugu, Nigeria, we are confronted with the harsh realities of the ongoing scourge of sexual violence. This tragic incident serves as a sobering reminder of the urgent need to address the systemic challenges that enable such heinous crimes to persist and the critical role organizations like WACOL play in providing support and pursuing justice for survivors.

Supporting survivors means more than just offering words of comfort. It means advocating for their rights, pushing for legal reforms, and working to change the culture that allows rape to persist. It means listening to their stories and believing them. It means creating a society where they feel safe and supported.

Taking Action

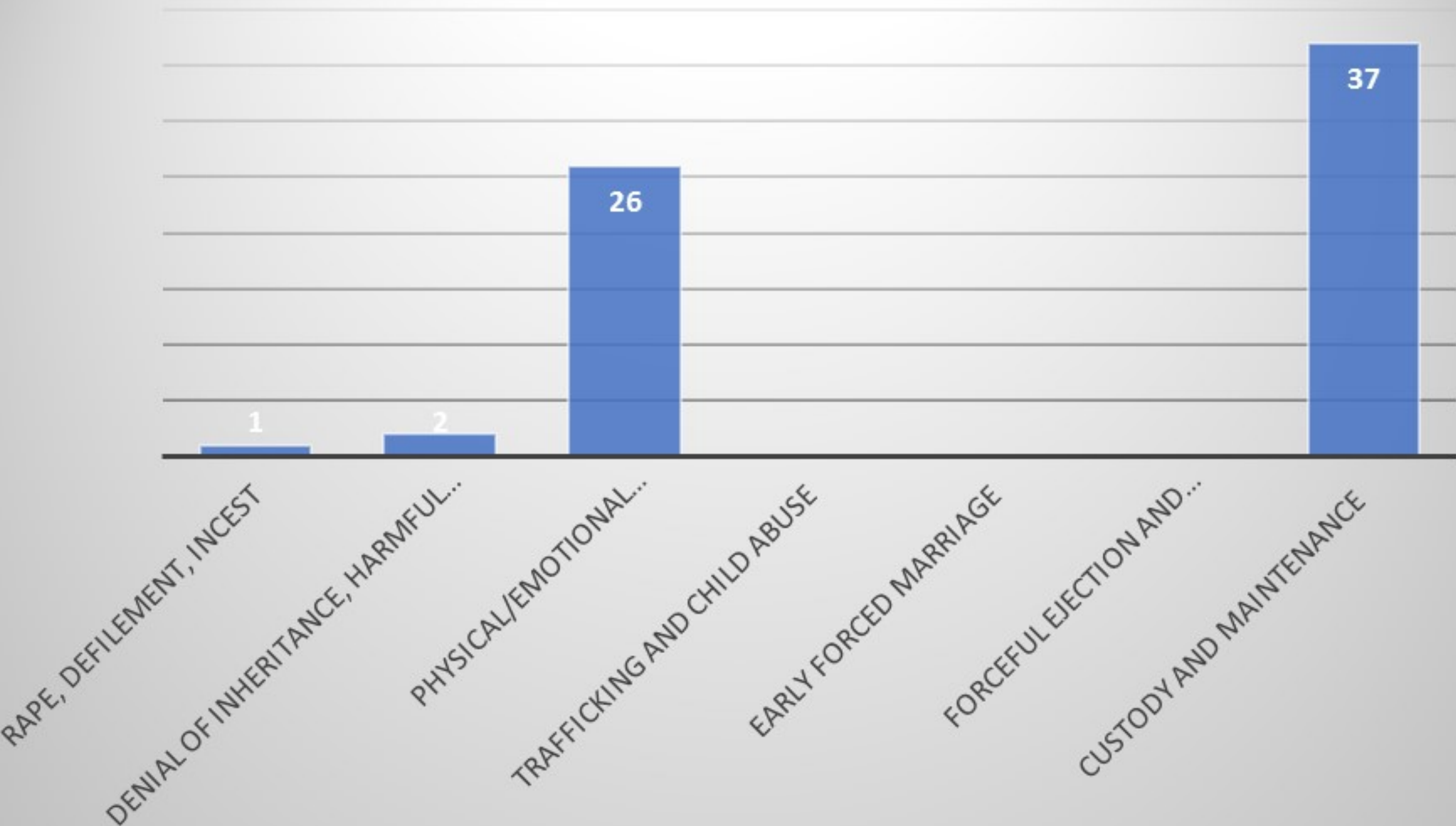
So, what can we do? Here are a few steps we can take to make a difference:

- 1. Educate Yourself and Others:** Learn about the realities of rape and sexual violence. Share this knowledge with others and challenge harmful myths and stereotypes.
- 2. Support Survivors:** If someone confides in you about their experience, listen without judgment. Offer your support and help them find the resources they need.
- 3. Advocate for Change:** Push for legal reforms that protect survivors and hold perpetrators accountable. Support organizations that work to end sexual violence.
- 4. Promote Consent and Respect:** Teach and model the importance of consent in all relationships. Challenge behaviors and attitudes that contribute to rape culture.

Rape is a heinous crime that leaves lasting scars on its victims and society as a whole. It's something that we must condemn in the strongest possible terms. By educating ourselves, supporting survivors, and advocating for change, we can work towards a world where rape is no longer a reality. Let's stand together and say, "Enough is enough." No one should have to endure the pain and trauma of rape. It's time to end this violence once and for all.

CASE BREAKDOWN

for June 2024



Gender Disaggregated data



Female complainants total: 59



Male complainants total: 7



Overall total: 66 cases.

Age Range

Under 18: 2

18-24: 6

25-34: 20

35-44: 27

45-59: 7

60 and above: 4

Unknown: 0

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).

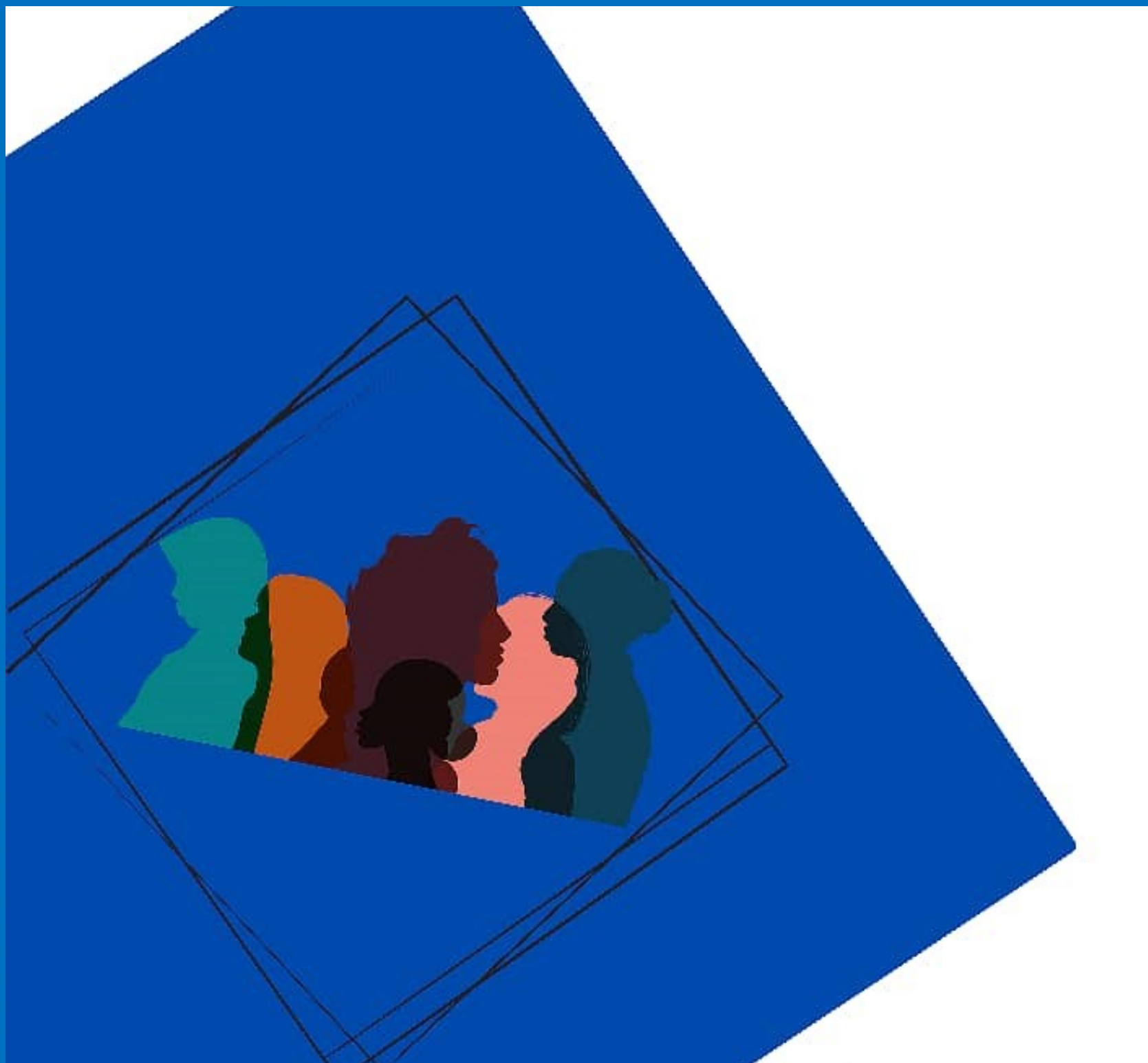
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ADVERTISEMENT & UPCOMING EVENTS

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