

# ANNUAL REPORT

2024

VISION SPRING INITIATIVES  
RC No. 908183

## **Vision Spring Initiatives**

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### VSI's Thematic Areas

<b>Gender Justice</b>  This is central and the core of VSI's interventions	<b>Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights</b>  We believe in women's ownership of their bodies	<b>Education and Research</b>  Our interventions are informed by evidence
<b>Participatory Leadership and political education</b>  When we are educated, we transform, when we transform, we participate	<b>Partnerships and movement building</b>  Together we can achieve more	

## The Year In Numbers

WORKSHOPS HELD: 81

WORKSHOPS ATTENDED: 25

CAMPAIGNS HELD: 1

CAMPAIGNS ATTENDED: 1

TRAININGS OF TRAINERS HELD: 1

MEDIA EVENTS HELD: 18

MEDIA EVENTS ATTENDED: 1

PUBLICATIONS: 4

## Individuals reached

WOMEN: 781

MEN: 350

GIRLS: 170

Boys: 40

KEY INFLUENCERS: 75

Media: 30

## **Executive Summary**

The year 2024 was a trans-formative period for Vision Spring Initiatives (VSI), as we deepened our advocacy efforts, expanded our community-based interventions, and strengthened partnerships to promote gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and social justice across Nigeria. Through an array of innovative programs, policy dialogues, and grassroots initiatives, VSI made significant strides in addressing gender-based violence (GBV), improving reproductive health and rights services, and empowering young women and marginalized communities with the knowledge and resources necessary to effect meaningful change in their lives.

One of our most impactful projects this year was the Pamoja Project, which played a critical role in reshaping public discourse around reproductive health and rights. By utilizing storytelling, media engagement, and strategic advocacy, this initiative worked to dismantle long-standing societal stigmas and create a more informed, rights-based approach to SRHR. Likewise, our Girl Impact Project continued to thrive, providing young girls in secondary schools across Lagos with career mentorship, leadership training, and comprehensive reproductive health education, ensuring that they have the confidence and support needed to pursue their aspirations.

VSI's commitment to ending GBV was reflected in several high-impact interventions, including capacity-building workshops for community leaders, advocacy for policy reforms, and direct support for survivors. In addition, our extensive civic engagement efforts included participation in the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 2024, advocacy at the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) discussions, and legislative dialogues on the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act. Despite facing challenges such as legal restrictions, funding constraints, and deeply ingrained social norms, VSI remained steadfast in its mission, leveraging strategic partnerships and innovative programming to amplify its impact.

This annual report provides a comprehensive account of VSI's activities, key achievements, and the profound impact made in communities across Nigeria throughout 2024. It also outlines the organization's challenges, lessons learned, and strategic goals for 2025 as we continue our mission to drive gender equality and social justice.

VSI extends deep gratitude to its funders, partners, volunteers, and staff who have been instrumental in driving its success and making 2024 a remarkable year of impact.



## **About Vision Spring Initiatives (VSI)**

Vision Spring Initiatives (VSI) is a non-governmental organization dedicated to advancing gender equality, protecting the rights of women and girls, and promoting SRHR in Nigeria. Our mission is driven by a commitment to amplifying the voices of marginalized communities and fostering a society where all individuals can exercise their fundamental rights without fear or barriers.

Throughout 2024, VSI focused on five core areas of intervention: sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response, youth empowerment and leadership development, policy advocacy and civic engagement, and community engagement and capacity building. These focus areas align with our vision of a world where gender equity is not just an aspiration but a lived reality.

With strong partnerships from both local and international stakeholders, VSI has continued to amplify the voices of marginalized communities and push for inclusive, rights-based approaches to development and governance. VSI's work would not be possible without the invaluable support of our local and international partners, including Global Fund for Women, African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), HIVOS, UN Trust Fund, and numerous governmental and non-governmental agencies. Their collaboration and commitment have been instrumental in amplifying our impact and ensuring the sustainability of our programs.

In 2024, VSI's work was guided by its commitment to five core focus areas:

**Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR):** Ensuring access to comprehensive reproductive health information and services for women and young girls.

**Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Prevention and Response:** Strengthening support systems for survivors and advocating for stronger legal protections.

**Youth Empowerment and Leadership Development:** Providing young women with mentorship, education, and career-building opportunities.

**Policy Advocacy and Civic Engagement:** Influencing legal frameworks and policies that promote gender equality and human rights.

**Community Engagement and Capacity Building:** Strengthening grassroots movements through education, training, and awareness campaigns.

## 2024 Activities and Programs

### A. Advancing Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

Throughout 2024, VSI implemented several projects aimed at expanding access to sexual and reproductive health services and promoting reproductive justice. One of the most notable initiatives was the SRHR Outreach in Ganaja Village, Kogi State, which was supported by the Global fund for women.

This intervention was designed to address the unique challenges faced by young women and girls in Ganaja, a flood-prone and under-served community with limited access to health services. During the two-day



outreach program, VSI facilitated interactive workshops on SRHR, equipping over 100 young women and girls with the knowledge and resources to make informed choices about their bodies and rights. The



outreach also included medical check-ups, the distribution of hygiene kits,

The outreach also included medical check-ups, the distribution of hygiene kits, and an awareness session on gender-based violence, ensuring that participants received holistic support tailored to their specific needs.



Another key initiative under VSI's SRHR programming was the Pamoja Project, which aimed to reshape the national discourse on safe abortion and reproductive rights. Recognizing the pervasive stigma and legal restrictions surrounding abortion in Nigeria, VSI adopted a multifaceted advocacy approach, combining storytelling, strategic communication training, and legal literacy workshops to shift public perceptions and drive policy change. VSI organized several capacity-building workshops for journalists, activists, and healthcare providers, equipping them with the skills to engage in informed and rights-based discussions on reproductive health. Additionally, the first-ever SRHR Art Exhibition was held in Lagos, where artists, activists, and community members came together to use creative storytelling as a tool for advocacy. This exhibition sparked

important conversations around bodily autonomy and the role of art in activism.



In addition to these major projects, VSI sustained its work with young girls through the Girl Impact Project, which focused on career mentorship, gender-sensitive education, and reproductive health awareness. VSI facilitated several career sessions at secondary schools in Lagos, where successful professionals, including female entrepreneurs, nurses, and filmmakers, shared insights with young girls about pursuing careers in male-dominated industries. The project also saw the establishment of a mini-library at Home of Scholars Academy, aimed at fostering literacy and self-learning among young girls.



## **B. Strengthening Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Prevention and Response**

VSI continued its work in preventing and responding to gender-based violence through capacity-building workshops, policy dialogues, and survivor-centered support programs. In Abia State, VSI organized a three-day training for the Gender/GBV Response Team, equipping stakeholders from government agencies, civil society, and law enforcement with the skills to effectively identify, respond to, and prevent GBV cases. The training focused on case management, survivor-centered approaches, and community-based response mechanisms, emphasizing the importance of collaborative interventions in tackling GBV.



VSI also played a crucial role in strengthening GBV response systems in Lagos State, particularly by participating in strategic engagements with the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA). VSI contributed to discussions on enhancing survivor support services, strengthening legal frameworks, and improving inter-agency coordination to ensure that GBV survivors receive timely and effective support.



In Enugu and Anambra states the organisation supported capacity building of law enforcement officers by training a total of 60 police personnel on human rights and the rule of law using the Violence against Persons Prohibition Act as domesticated by the states. The commissioners of police in both states were happy to partner with VSI and commended the organisation for donating computers and other accessories to facilitate case reporting and documentation in the states.



Beyond institutional engagements, VSI worked directly with traditional and religious leaders to address the cultural barriers that sustain gender-based violence. Through the Value Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT) workshops, community leaders were trained on the importance of challenging harmful norms, promoting gender justice, and creating safe spaces for women and girls.





### C. Policy Advocacy and Civic Engagement

In 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives played a pivotal role in policy advocacy, legal reform discussions, and civic engagement initiatives aimed at ensuring the protection of human rights, particularly those of women and marginalized communities.



A significant milestone was VSI's engagement in the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 2024, where the organization participated in high-level discussions aimed at advancing gender equality on a global scale. In preparation for the CSW, VSI facilitated strategic meetings with policymakers, including a high-level engagement with the First Lady of Abia State. This meeting focused on securing commitments to promote gender-responsive policies and expand opportunities for women's participation in leadership and

governance.



At the national level, VSI actively contributed to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) follow-up discussions, a critical platform where Nigeria's human rights record was evaluated. During these engagements, VSI joined forces with other civil society organizations to assess the progress made in implementing UPR recommendations, particularly those related to sexual and reproductive health rights, GBV prevention, and civic space protections. The organization presented key findings on the challenges facing women's rights defenders in Nigeria, highlighting the shrinking civic space and increased government surveillance on advocacy groups. These insights were instrumental in shaping policy recommendations aimed at strengthening human rights protections in the country.

**Mary add report from your meetings on UPR**

Additionally, VSI played an active role in advocating for reforms to the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act, a critical legal framework

aimed at addressing GBV and protecting survivors. Throughout the year, VSI facilitated policy review workshops, stakeholder meetings, and grassroots consultations, ensuring that the voices of survivors, activists, and community leaders were represented in legislative discussions. The organization also collaborated with legal professionals, women’s rights groups, and media practitioners to enhance public awareness of the VAPP Act, emphasizing the need for stronger enforcement mechanisms and increased government accountability.



Another key advocacy initiative was VSI’s participation in the Bilateral Consultative Meeting between Non-Profit Organizations and Financial Institutions, a workshop that brought together CSOs, banking regulators, and policymakers to discuss the impact of financial regulations on civil society operations. Given the increasing restrictions on non-profit organizations under counter-terrorism and anti-money laundering laws, VSI engaged in high-level discussions to advocate for policy adjustments that would protect human rights organizations from unfair financial scrutiny and operational limitations.



VSI's advocacy efforts in 2024 also included campaigning against the rollback of reproductive health policies in Lagos State, particularly the suspension of the Lagos State Guidelines on Safe Termination of Pregnancy. The organization leveraged media advocacy, policy dialogues, and direct engagements with government officials to demand the reinstatement of the guidelines and broader reproductive rights protections for women and girls.



Recognizing the importance of safeguarding policies in ensuring a secure environment for program beneficiaries, VSI participated in an extensive

safeguarding policy assessment organized by NGOO Consult. This assessment led to critical revisions in VSI's safeguarding framework, ensuring compliance with national and Lagos State child protection laws. Following this, all VSI staff and volunteers underwent safeguarding training to enhance their ability to identify and address potential risks in community interventions.

#### **D. Community Engagement and Capacity Building**

At the grassroots level, VSI remained committed to empowering communities through training, mentorship, and capacity-building programs. One of the flagship initiatives was the Entrepreneurship and Empowerment Training for Women, which provided over 40 women from diverse backgrounds—including survivors of violence, out-of-school women, and LGBTQ+ individuals—with training on business management, financial literacy, and sustainable income generation. This program not only equipped women with the skills to become financially independent but also created a network of peer support, fostering a sense of solidarity among participants.

In its continued efforts to address GBV, VSI hosted a stakeholder forum on ending violence against women with disabilities, in collaboration with the UN Trust Fund. This forum brought together government agencies, civil society organizations, and disability rights advocates to develop an inclusive action plan that addresses the unique vulnerabilities of women with disabilities in relation to gender-based violence, access to justice, and social protection services.

Recognizing the mental health challenges faced by activists and human rights defenders, VSI also organized a Healing Justice Workshop in Enugu, which provided a safe space for women's rights advocates to engage in collective healing, self-care, and resilience-building exercises. This initiative was particularly important in ensuring that those working on the frontlines of advocacy have the emotional and psychological support needed to sustain their activism.



## **E. Media and Awareness Campaigns**

Throughout the year, VSI utilized media as a powerful tool for advocacy and awareness. One of the most successful campaigns was the radio talk show series titled 'To Ba Se Wo/If It Were You' and 'Amplifying Voices', which aired on Women FM and Ikorodu FM. These programs featured discussions on reproductive health, GBV, and youth empowerment, reaching thousands of listeners across Lagos and beyond. By using interactive storytelling, expert interviews, and real-life testimonies, VSI successfully engaged diverse audiences, sparking critical conversations on gender justice and human rights.



Another groundbreaking initiative was the first-ever SRHR Art Exhibition in Lagos, which brought together activists, artists, and community members to explore the intersection of art and reproductive justice advocacy.

Through paintings, photography, and installations, the exhibition depicted the challenges and struggles women and girls face in accessing reproductive healthcare, while also envisioning a future where their rights are fully protected.

VSI also launched a social media campaign aimed at countering misinformation on reproductive rights, using infographics, short videos, and digital storytelling to educate the public and amplify the voices of marginalized women and girls.









## **Success Stories and Testimonials**

*(To be populated with real-life accounts from program beneficiaries, community leaders, and partners, showcasing the impact of VSI's interventions.)*

Examples:

### **Amina's Journey from Uncertainty to Advocacy**

Amina, (not real name) a 16-year-old from Lagos, entered the Girl Impact Project with limited knowledge of reproductive health and her rights. Through VSI's mentorship and educational sessions, she not only gained awareness but became a peer educator, guiding other young girls to make informed decisions about their future. Today, Amina leads advocacy efforts in her school and community.

### **Chidinma's Fight for Justice**

Chidinma, (Not real name) a survivor of GBV from Abia State, found the courage to report her abuser after attending VSI's GBV Response Training. Through VSI's legal aid partnerships, she received the necessary support to pursue justice. She has since become an advocate for other survivors, working alongside VSI to create safer communities for women and girls.

## **Challenges and Lessons Learned**

While VSI achieved significant milestones in 2024, the organization faced several challenges that impacted program implementation and advocacy efforts. One of the most pressing challenges was policy resistance and legal restrictions on SRHR advocacy, particularly in the wake of increasing government crackdowns on reproductive rights movements. The suspension of the Lagos State Guidelines on Safe Termination of Pregnancy created a challenging environment for reproductive health organizations, requiring VSI to re-strategize its advocacy approach to navigate the restrictions.

Another major challenge was funding constraints, which limited VSI's ability to expand some of its high-impact programs to more states. Despite strong partnerships with international donors and development organizations, the economic downturn in Nigeria affected grant availability, making it more difficult to sustain long-term advocacy initiatives.

Additionally, social stigma and misinformation posed barriers to community engagement, particularly in conservative regions where topics like safe abortion and gender-based violence remain highly sensitive. VSI learned that consistent community sensitization, strategic messaging, and partnerships with traditional leaders were critical in overcoming resistance and fostering dialogue on these issues.

### **Meetings and Events By VSI**

On the 15th of January 2024, VSI had a Co-exploring Safeguarding Assessment Report and Co-planning Next Steps meeting with NGOO Consults to discuss VSI's Safeguarding policy ensuring that it is in alignment with Universal, National and State standards with respect to child and vulnerable adult protection. Following the assessment, it was revealed that while VSI's safeguarding policy was in line with universal and national standards, it wasn't in line with state standards which is of importance as VSI's safeguarding policy has to be in alignment with that of the state in which it operates, that is, Lagos state. It was also revealed that VSI's policy lacked some cogent units that made up an effective safeguarding policy such as; Code of conduct, steps in reporting safeguarding concerns using the Lagos state child protection template. Partners at NGOO Consults supported VSI in the restructuring of the organisation's Safeguarding policy to be in alignment with all necessary standards that will aid in its work regarding the protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

On the 27th to 31st of January, Vision Spring Initiatives embarked on a journey supported by Global Fund for Women to transform the lives of young women and girls made vulnerable by flood in Ganaja village, a hard-to-reach community in Lokoja, Kogi state. The outreach included a

2-Days sexual and reproductive health and rights sensitization workshop with side-organized medical check-ups and diagnosis sessions. These interventions were carried out due to the unique challenges that young women and girls in this community face ranging from limited access to basic resources and sanitary materials, restricted opportunities, and harmful societal norms that hold the young women and girls back from reaching their full potential.

The SRHR workshops aim to empower young women and girls in Ganaja village with the power and knowledge to make informed choices about their bodies and rights. To create a new narrative, VSI provided over one hundred young women and girls with sanitary materials to help them maintain proper hygiene during and after flooding. The SRHR workshop also involved interactive sessions that emphasized the reportage of sexual and gender-based violence cases that occur in the community.

The outreach included a 1-day flood awareness and preparedness training facilitated by officials of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA -Abuja) who sensitized and educated community leaders of Ganaja village on flood alert/awareness, preparedness, and the role of community leaders and healthcare workers in ensuring that the health and safety of the community members especially young women and girls are protected as they are rendered vulnerable during flooding. It also involved the discussion of cases of SGBV during the recent flooding and ways the community leaders employed to tackle the situation.

**On the 24th of January 2024**, Vision Spring Initiatives had the distinct honor of meeting with the First Lady of Abia State as part of the preparations for the upcoming CSW 2024. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and secure her participation in the event, recognizing the pivotal role that her involvement could play in advancing the goals of gender equality and women's empowerment.

CSW picture

During the meeting, key topics and objectives of the CSW 2024 were presented, highlighting the significance of global collaboration to address challenges and promote positive change in the realm of gender equality. Vision Spring Initiatives expressed its commitment to facilitating impactful discussions and initiatives through its participation in CSW 2024.

The engagement with the First Lady of Abia State aimed to garner support and commitment to championing issues related to gender equality, women's rights, and empowerment. Discussions likely revolved around the specific areas of focus within CSW 2024 and how her involvement could contribute to advancing these critical agendas at both the state and global levels.

#### CSW Picture

The meeting served as a platform for Vision Spring Initiatives to present its initiatives, share insights, and seek collaboration with influential figures like the First Lady who play a crucial role in shaping policies and promoting positive change within their respective regions.

As a result of this meeting, the hope was to secure a strong partnership and active involvement from the First Lady of Abia State, amplifying the impact of CSW 2024 initiatives and fostering a collaborative approach towards achieving gender justice and equality.

AWDF- project on survivor-centered approach to tackling sexual and reproductive health and rights Jan-22-30th

#### **FEBRUARY**

On the 2nd of February 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives actively participated in a crucial event titled 'STRENGTHENING SYNERGY AMONG SGBV RESPONDER BODIES,' meticulously organized by the Lagos State

Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency. The opening remarks, delivered by the Executive Secretary of the Lagos State DSVA, underscored the agency's commitment to enhancing awareness and collaboration among civil society organizations (CSOs) to address Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).

The Executive Secretary emphasized the agency's overarching goal of bolstering general knowledge about SGBV, with a keen focus on deepening collaborations among CSOs. Recognizing the importance of public awareness, she highlighted the need for increased consciousness among the general public to facilitate the reporting and response to SGBV cases in their communities. The agency's dedication to creating platforms for dialogue and support for victims of SGBV was reiterated.

Key statutory mandates were outlined, covering the reporting of incidents by third parties or victims, initial contact with victims or perpetrators, swift rescue and response efforts, and the provision of shelter or safe homes. Furthermore, the agency emphasized the facilitation of easy access to medical facilities for victims.

During the event, impactful infographics were presented to depict the number of reported cases in the year 2023. These statistics included 99 cases of rape, 114 cases of sexual harassment, 110 cases of threats to life, 2,649 cases of domestic violence, 3 cases of attempted rape, 9 cases of sexual assaults by penetration, 506 cases of denial of resources, and 323 cases unrelated to SGBV.

Civil society organizations were encouraged to play an active role by providing prompt referrals, establishing strong and enduring partnerships with the agency and victims, maintaining transparent communication, and utilizing the DSVA case management portal called DSVCMS for inputting SGBV cases. Additionally, the importance of offering constructive feedback was underscored as a vital component of collaborative efforts to combat SGBV effectively.

In essence, Vision Spring Initiatives actively engaged in this event, contributing to the broader mission of combating SGBV by strengthening collaboration, fostering awareness, and supporting the critical work of the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency.

On the 9th of February, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives actively participated in a comprehensive one-day capacity-building workshop addressing the critical issue of countering terrorism financing abuse within the Non-Profit Organization (NPO) sector. The workshop, a collaborative effort organized by Spaces for Change in conjunction with the Global Center on Cooperative Security and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), delved into the intricacies of terrorism financing and its impact on non-profit organizations.

Insert picture of Ngozi @ spaces for change event

A significant aspect of the workshop revolved around enlightening participants on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Recommendation 8, which emphasizes the vulnerability of NPOs to financial terrorism and money laundering. This recommendation urges countries to assess and enhance their laws and regulations concerning NPOs to mitigate the risk of terrorist financing abuse.

The discussions were not merely theoretical but also focused on practical approaches, notably the risk-based approach to mitigating risks in the NPO sector. Representatives from the Special Control Unit against Money Laundering (SCRUML) and EFCC provided valuable insights, sharing the outcomes of a research survey conducted across various regions in Nigeria. The research aimed to identify NPOs falling within the FATF definition, assess the nature of threats posed by terrorist organizations, identify features of NPOs making them susceptible to terrorist financing, secure a favorable Recommendation 8 rating for Nigeria, and distinguish NPOs from other organizational types.

One notable revelation from the presentation was the regional disparity in terrorism rates. The South-West region demonstrated the lowest terrorism rate, while the North Central region reported the highest. The research not only aimed to assess the impact of terrorism on NPOs but also to strategically position Nigeria to meet international standards and foster a secure environment for non-profit activities.

In summary, Vision Spring Initiatives actively engaged in a comprehensive workshop, gaining insights into countering terrorism financing abuse within the NPO sector. The collaborative efforts of various organizations, coupled with the practical approach to mitigating risks, reflect a concerted effort to ensure the safety and integrity of non-profit organizations in the face of evolving security challenges.

**On the 12th to 17th of February 2024,** following the meeting held in January to discuss VSI's safeguarding policy assessment results, VSI participated in a safeguarding enhancement training organized by NGOO Consults which was done to improve the knowledge of staff on safeguarding and its concerns, and how to respond to safeguarding concerns when reported by children or vulnerable adults. It also outlined the importance of frameworks and policies in handling and managing cases related to safeguarding. The training described the principles of safeguarding, key concepts of safeguarding, importance of safeguarding, legal and ethical frameworks of safeguarding, recognising and reporting child abuse, vulnerable adults and recognising their categories, caregivers, roles and responsibilities of caregivers in safeguarding, creating safe environments and policies, key safety measures in organisational settings, child protection and safeguarding policies and protocols, collaborative approach in safeguarding, empathy and trauma-informed care, effective communication and building trust, sensitive interviewing, and multi-agency collaboration and case management. This training was robust and will inform VSI's programs in the future.

**On the 12th to 16th February 2024, Vision Spring** Initiatives organised an Advocacy-in-practice training in Ekiti and Ondo states for young women

with disabilities, living with HIV, in displacement and LBQ women under the We-lead Project. The workshop served as a platform for participants to enhance their advocacy skills and knowledge.

Throughout the two-day for each state the program was implemented in, engaging activities such as role-playing, group discussions, and presentations were conducted. Participants also had the opportunity to watch informative videos and engage in interactive conversations. These activities were designed to provide practical insights and empower participants to become effective advocates for themselves and their communities.



By creating a supportive and inclusive environment, the workshop fostered learning and collaboration among participants. It encouraged them to share their experiences and perspectives, leading to meaningful discussions and mutual learning. Overall, the Advocacy-in-Practice workshop equipped marginalized young women with the tools and confidence needed to advocate for their rights and contribute to positive change in society.



On the 12th to 16th of February, 2024, the Pamoja SRHR Communication Workshop convened stakeholders from various sectors in Nigeria to address the complex and often stigmatized issue of safe abortion. Over five days, participants engaged in a multifaceted agenda designed to equip them with the necessary tools and strategies for effective advocacy and communication.

The workshop began with a focus on key message development, where participants collaborated to craft clear, compelling messages aimed at destigmatizing abortion, raising awareness of legal rights, and emphasizing the importance of safe abortion services. This process likely involved distilling complex information into accessible language and tailoring messages to resonate with diverse audiences.

Following message development, participants delved into the creation of a strategic communication plan. This involved identifying communication objectives, defining target audiences, selecting appropriate communication channels, and outlining specific tactics to achieve advocacy goals. By developing a comprehensive plan, participants were better prepared to strategically disseminate messages and engage stakeholders effectively.



A significant aspect of the workshop involved public speaking training, recognizing the importance of equipping advocates with the skills to confidently articulate their message in various settings. Through workshops and exercises, participants likely honed their ability to convey key points persuasively, respond to challenges, and engage in constructive dialogue surrounding safe abortion.

Moreover, the workshop emphasized the importance of language in abortion reporting, highlighting the need for sensitivity, accuracy, and inclusivity in communication efforts. Participants were likely educated on using non-stigmatizing language and avoiding judgmental rhetoric to foster a more respectful and supportive discourse around abortion.

Central to the workshop was the utilization of the National Guidelines on the Safe Termination of Pregnancies as a guiding framework for advocacy and action. By aligning efforts with existing legal and healthcare guidelines, participants ensured their advocacy was evidence-based and grounded in established principles, enhancing credibility and effectiveness. The workshop fostered collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including lawyers, doctors, journalists, activists, and NGOs, recognizing the importance of a multi-sectoral approach to advancing SRHR issues. By bringing together expertise from various fields, participants were able to leverage collective knowledge, resources, and networks to drive meaningful change.



Throughout the workshop, an overarching emphasis was placed on promoting inclusivity and accessibility in safe abortion services. By prioritizing the needs and experiences of all individuals, regardless of socio-economic status or geographic location, participants worked towards ensuring that safe abortion services were available and accessible to those who needed them most.

**On February 14th and 15th, 2024, Vision** Spring Initiatives organized a special training session for parents of students involved in the Girl Impact Project at Ipakodo Junior Grammar School and Home of Scholars. Led by facilitators, the session aimed to familiarize parents with VSI and the Girl Impact Project while addressing pertinent topics related to parenting and child development.

Parents were introduced to various subjects, including leadership, challenging gender stereotypes, nurturing children's self-esteem, understanding human rights, and preventing sexual and gender-based abuse among children. The discussions elicited active participation from parents, who found the topics relevant and enlightening, leading to a shift in their perspectives on supporting their children.



Post-training, parents shared stories of positive changes observed in their children as a result of their participation in the Girl Impact training. One parent noted their child's increased responsibility at home, taking on household chores willingly. Another mentioned their child's initiative in sharing the training with peers, showcasing leadership qualities and a commitment to empowering others. Additionally, a parent shared how their child had developed a sense of bodily autonomy, confidently asserting control over personal space and boundaries.

These anecdotes underscore the profound impact of the Girl Impact Project not only on the participating students but also on their families. By equipping parents with knowledge and tools, Vision Spring Initiatives continues to catalyze positive transformations and support the holistic development of young girls within the community.

From February 19th to 23rd, 2024, a representative from Vision Spring Initiatives (VSI) led a 3-day Strategic Training on behalf of Achievers Improved Health Initiative (AIHI). The training aimed to empower staff members to effectively deliver services that meet the needs of end-users and enable them to advocate for change in their communities.

AIHI holds yearly staff retreats to renew commitments and strategically position staff to drive the organization's work. The objectives of the

training included building a strong team, strategic planning, enhancing collaboration, fostering a positive organizational culture, and aligning the team with AIHI's mission and goals. Additionally, the training aimed to strengthen staff capacity in advocacy in Northern Nigeria, promote unity and collaboration, review AIHI policies and strategic plan documents, and provide guidance on staff roles and responsibilities.

During the sessions, the VSI representative covered various topics such as report writing, advocacy for minority rights, policy document review, and promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in the North. The training was highly interactive, with participants actively engaging and asking questions for clarification.

At the end of the sessions, participants expressed satisfaction with the knowledge gained and appreciated the opportunity to learn and contribute. The VSI representative thanked the participants for their active participation and contributions to the training.

On the 29th of February, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives' representative, participated in a webinar focused on 'Women and navigating social justice challenges'. During the session, She shared insights into the various obstacles faced by women in addressing social injustices and their impact on women's development and societal contributions. She addressed key issues such as healthcare disparities, political exclusion, economic inequalities, gender-based violence, and the digital divide, highlighting the systemic barriers and biases that hinder women's efforts to address these issues effectively. Throughout the discussion, she emphasized the importance of women supporting each other, challenging stereotypes, demanding equality, and creating opportunities for empowerment. She also underscored the need for policymakers to demonstrate political will and collaborate to bridge gender gaps and address systemic inequalities. Overall, VSI representative emphasized the importance of centering the voices and experiences of marginalized women in conversations and actions around social justice to ensure gender equality and empowerment for all.

## **MARCH**

**On March 6th, 2024, Vision** Spring Initiatives organized a career session titled 'Entrepreneurship, Creativity, and Innovation' for students at Ipakodo Junior Grammar School and Home of Scholars in Ikorodu, Lagos State, as part of our ongoing Girlimpact project. The session featured a special guest—a successful female photographer and filmmaker—who shared her inspiring journey and offered valuable insights on pursuing careers in storytelling, photography, and filmmaking. The students listened attentively and were thrilled to interact with our guest. Her encouraging words resonated with them, sparking their enthusiasm and curiosity about future possibilities. The event provided a platform for students to learn about entrepreneurship and explore their creative potential. It was an enriching experience that empowered them to pursue their dreams with confidence and determination. We are grateful to our guest for inspiring the next generation of storytellers and innovators.

**On March 8, 2024, Vision Sp**ring Initiatives (VSI) participated as a panelist at an event hosted by Advocates for Health and Rights of Women and Youth Initiative (ADHERI) in collaboration with Alliance Francaise. The event, titled "Inspiring Inclusive Mindset in Creating the Nigeria We Want," aimed to raise awareness about the myriad challenges faced by women and young people in society. Activities included panel sessions, a sip and paint session, musical performances, games, and networking opportunities.

During the panel discussion, VSI addressed the role of law enforcement officers in protecting the rights of women and girls. Emphasizing the importance of capacity building, VSI highlighted the need to educate law enforcement officers on various rights issues rather than assuming they are knowledgeable on all rights. VSI also advocated for the enforcement of existing laws, particularly the Anti-torture Act, which emphasizes treating individuals with dignity. Additionally, VSI emphasized the importance of collaboration between the National Human Rights Commission, Women Affairs, and other relevant agencies responsible for promoting rights.

Other key contributions from the panelists included:

- Recognizing the critical role of education for women and girls, emphasizing the necessity of gender mainstreaming in educational curricula.
- Addressing gaps at the grassroots level and ensuring human rights reach hard-to-reach communities.
- Holding perpetrators of gender-based violence accountable under the law.
- Promoting gender as a social responsibility, suggesting organizations undergo gender training before promotions.
- Advocating for increased focus on STEM education.
- Highlighting the importance of addressing the needs of persons with disabilities and imposing sanctions on those who abuse them.
- Emphasizing the importance of training men and boys to combat stereotypes and biases.
- Recommending the use of films and documentaries to challenge ingrained beliefs and practices.
- Encouraging women to support and uplift each other through mentorship and solidarity.

On March 12th, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives organized a career session titled 'Entrepreneurship, Creativity, and Innovation' as part of our ongoing GirlImpact Project. The event took place at Ipakodo Junior Grammar School and Home of Scholars in Ikorodu, Lagos State. We were delighted to welcome a distinguished guest speaker, a registered male nurse, who shared invaluable insights with the students.



The session began with the speaker emphasizing the importance of diligence in their studies and breaking gender stereotypes in career choices. He provided a detailed overview of the nursing profession, outlining the steps to become a registered nurse and highlighting the opportunities available in the field. The students listened attentively, eager to learn more about pursuing their passions and overcoming obstacles.

Throughout the session, the students actively participated by asking thoughtful questions and expressing their aspirations. The interactive nature of the discussion fostered a supportive and encouraging environment, empowering the students to explore diverse career paths and embrace their potential. It was a rewarding experience for all involved, inspiring the students to pursue their dreams with confidence and determination.

**On the 12th, 13th and 14th March, 2024, Vision** Spring Initiatives' representative as part of the Community of Action participated in the We-lead Safety and Security Awareness Training which was organised by HIVOS and Education as a Vaccine. This training sought to enhance our comprehension of safety and security dynamics, nurturing collaboration among participants and equipping us to advocate more effectively for meaningful transformation. Through interactive sessions and knowledge-sharing, we delved into various aspects of safety and security, exploring strategies for mitigating risks and promoting resilience within our communities. This initiative underscores our commitment to fostering a safer and more secure environment for all, aligning with our vision of driving positive change and advancing the well-being for all

**On the 19th to 22nd March, 2024, Vision Spring** Initiatives participated in the Action Group for Free Civic Space Annual Retreat. The Annual General for Civic Space (AGFCS) coalition held its 3-day retreat from March 20-22, 2024 at the Shoregate Hotel in Lagos. Representatives from over 20 AGFCS member organizations were in attendance, including a representative from Vision Spring Initiatives (VSI).

Day 1 kicked off with ice-breakers and overviews of AGFCS's 2023 achievements and the "Security Playbook." Members then broke into groups to discuss transformative, reformative, and disruptive initiatives from 2023. Organizations like RULAAC, TIERS, Garga Foundation presented learnings. The day closed with a presentation on the new AGFCS logo.

Day 2 began with experience sharing from the Kenya-Nigeria learning exchange program. Members reflected on implementation challenges

faced in 2023 and what worked or didn't work well for the collective. The afternoon had groups pitching new ideas for 2024 to scale up impact, followed by strategy discussions. VSI gave a short presentation on the Feminist Hub to the collective organisations with the intent to collaborate with Virgin's Heart Foundation who works with women and girls.

The final day focused on financial sustainability and compliance best practices for NGOs, led by Spaces for Change's legal and finance team. There were exercises on financial controls. The retreat concluded with discussions on proposal and contracting timelines for 2024 coordinated by the AGFCS secretariat.

Overall, the retreat allowed AGFCS members to review 2023 progress, share learnings, pitch new initiatives, discuss financial management, and plan collaborations for maximum civic space impact in 2024.

**On the 26th of March, 2024** VSI hosted the graduates of the EMpowerHer project at a graduation and award ceremony and start-up support event. The graduation ceremony was held to wrap up the first phase of the EMpowerHer project. The EMpowerHer project is a program aimed at empowering women with relevant skills and resources for self-reliance, independence and sustainability. The graduation highlighted the overview of the project, and the journey so far, and ended with the presentation of the cash awards to the beneficiaries. In attendance at the ceremony were the graduates, their friends and families, trainers, mentors, community leaders, representatives from the Lagos State Ministry of Health and National Human Rights Commission, and the media. The event marked the beginning of a new future for the beneficiaries of the project and also for Vision Spring Initiatives.

## **APRIL**

**On the 16th to 18th of April, 2024, Vision** Spring Initiatives (Abia State Branch) organized a 3-day workshop for the Abia State Gender/GBV Response Team/Technical Working Group (TWG) at the Women Development Centre, Abia State Ministry of Women Affairs & Poverty

Alleviation. Supported by the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), this workshop focused on implementing a survivor-centred approach to ending sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in Abia State.

The workshop aimed to build the capacity of the team to efficiently identify, respond to, and end cases of SGBV. Attended by 34 key stakeholders from government agencies and non-governmental organizations, the sessions covered various approaches to SGBV response, including participatory, survivor-centred, and multi-sectoral approaches.

Participants engaged in activities such as case management, documentation, referral pathways, and understanding the role of the SGBV team in Abia State. The sessions emphasized the importance of empathy, active listening, and providing first-line support using the L.I.V.E.S. framework. The workshop concluded with group exercises on effective coordination and sustainability of the response team, leading to actionable recommendations for improving GBV response in Abia State.

On the 18th of April 2024, VSI participated in a one-day stakeholders' forum on technical action/sustainable plan on ending violence against women and girls with disability in Lagos state. The meeting was organised by the Center for Women's Health and Information (CEWHIN). The organisation is currently carrying out a project that is funded by the UN Trust Fund, aimed at putting an end to violence against women. The main objective of this project is to strengthen existing VAWG/SGBV prevention and response structures in Lagos and Osun States to provide adequate response to women and girls with disabilities.

The forum's objectives were as follows:

- Develop ways to increase community awareness on key measures to prevent and respond to SGBV and community level sensitization based on the SOP for VAWG integrated service provision and strengthened referral pathways for persons with disabilities in four local government areas in Lagos.
- Develop ways to improve access for women and girls with disabilities to essential, safe, and adequate multi-sectoral services to end VAW/G

- Develop ways to improve prevention of VAW/G with disabilities through changes in behavior, practices, and attitudes.
- Develop ways to improve access to adequate services provision for WGWD survivors and women and girls with disabilities at risk of violence
- Develop ways to improve access to information, goods, and/or resources to help prevent and respond to violence against women and girls with disabilities.
- Develop ways to improve institutional framework for interagency coordination of WGWD SGBV response in Lagos and Osun state.

The meeting brought together a diverse group of attendees including NGOs, CSOs, government agencies, disability clusters, CBOs, child-focused organizations, Child Protection Networks (CPN), the media, legal professionals, Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA), Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and the Lagos Neighborhood Safety Corps (LNSC). The host organization introduced the project focused on inclusivity in SGBV response programs. Atinuke Odukoya, Executive Director of CEWHIN, discussed the significant challenges women and girls with disabilities face in reporting SGBV and accessing justice, urging organizations to incorporate services for this vulnerable group into their existing frameworks.

Participants shared their methods for raising awareness about SGBV, emphasizing prevention, reporting, and case handling for women and girls with disabilities. A representative from VSI highlighted their project spanning six southwestern states of Nigeria, which involves creating awareness on various forms of violence and reporting mechanisms, with community leaders playing a key role. This session highlighted the importance of community involvement in promoting SGBV awareness and reporting.

During the group discussion, participants conducted a SWOT analysis of their organizations, identifying strengths like strong networks and community engagement, weaknesses such as insufficient funding and community resistance, opportunities including leveraging social media and

potential grants, and threats like community backlash and weak laws. The meeting concluded with participants outlining their plans to continue awareness campaigns and improve institutional frameworks to protect women and girls with disabilities. VSI and other organizations committed to ongoing efforts, including using social media to advocate against violence. The session ended with closing remarks from Atinuke Odukoya.

**On April 30th, 2024, Vision Spring** Initiatives attended the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Lagos State Office Commissioning, marking a significant advancement in protecting and promoting human rights in Nigeria. The event, hosted by NHRC, featured dignitaries such as the Chairperson Dr. Salamatu Suleiman, Executive Secretary Dr. Tony Ojukwu, and the Attorney General of the Federation, Prince Lateef Fagbemi, along with media and civil society organizations.

The new office complex aims to provide a modern, accessible environment for the commission's operations, improving its capacity to handle human rights complaints and enhancing access to services for vulnerable populations. The event underscored the federal government's support for the NHRC's independence and effectiveness, with plans for eight additional offices across Nigeria to further expand the commission's impact.

Key takeaways include the NHRC's reaffirmed commitment to human rights, improved working conditions, and better accessibility for addressing complaints. Outcomes from the commissioning include enhanced investigative capacity, strengthened government partnerships, increased human rights education, and improved response to violations through a new hotline. The collaboration with civil society organizations will also be enhanced, further advancing the human rights agenda in Nigeria.

**On the 30th of April 2024,** VSI participated at a one-day workshop on Stakeholders Engagement that focused on familiarizing the Safeguards team and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) service providers in the state. This workshop, part of a World Bank-funded project aimed at enhancing the country's public health emergency response capacity, brought together representatives from NGOs, CSOs, shelters, legal professionals,

Child Protection Networks (CPN), Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA), social welfare heads from general hospitals, and law enforcement agencies including Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), the Lagos Neighborhood Safety Corps (LNSC), and the police. Facilitated by Ms. Juliet Olumuyiwa-Rufai, the workshop continued previous training efforts to equip participants with skills in GBV response, reportage, and case handling. The primary goal was to discuss and establish referral pathways for GBV cases and create a directory of involved organizations to streamline case management.

At the workshop's conclusion, participants provided their contact details and roles to form a comprehensive directory, facilitating efficient communication and coordination among GBV service providers. Ms. Olumuyiwa-Rufai then handed over to representatives from the Ministry of Youth and Social Development for closing remarks, emphasizing the importance of continued collaboration among stakeholders.

## **MAY**

On the 2nd of May, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives organized a preparatory meeting under the Pamoja project with staff, volunteers, creative artists, storytellers, social media influencers, voice-over artists, and video editors to ensure a comprehensive approach and understanding of VSI's intervention.









The meeting focused on introducing the project, its objectives, and long-term goals. Roles and responsibilities were clearly outlined, and effective communication strategies were discussed. Group brainstorming sessions allowed participants to collaboratively develop ideas to enhance the project's effectiveness. An unintended but significant outcome was the transformation in attitudes and mindsets, leading to personal story-

sharing among participants about safe and unsafe abortions, underscoring the project's importance. The active participation and support of male participants in discussions about reproductive health issues affecting women added a positive dynamic.

The meeting concluded with confidence that the participants and partners would effectively contribute to raising awareness about safe termination of pregnancy and garnering public support for the reinstatement of the Lagos State Guideline on Safe Termination of Pregnancy. The enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated by all participants set a promising foundation for the project's success.

On May 6th-9th, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives hosted a Value Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT) Training for Creative Artists under the Pamoja Project.

The 4-day training, facilitated by VSI staff and creative artist Itunu Omotoso, focused on understanding personal values, discussing safe abortion, and using art for advocacy. Day one introduced VCAT, its importance, and the roles of artists in social change. Day two tackled deconstructing abortion stigma and myths, exploring legal aspects of reproductive health, and included a sketch activity to gauge artistic perspectives. The third and fourth days, led by the external facilitator, emphasized art for advocacy, sharing strategies, and planning for an art exhibition. Participants engaged in group exercises to create art addressing safe abortion and reproductive rights, culminating in presentations and concept sharing for the upcoming exhibition.



The training concluded with participants excitedly preparing for the exhibition, showcasing their creative expressions to highlight reproductive health and rights issues. Feedback was gathered through evaluation forms, and a group photo documented the event.

**On the 28th of May, 2024, Vision Spring** Initiatives attended a one-day workshop on Stakeholder's Engagement: Referral Pathway/MOU Signing Meeting hosted by the Lagos State Government. This workshop, part of a World Bank-funded project, aimed to enhance Lagos State's capacity to respond to public health emergencies, particularly addressing challenges in solving Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) cases within the Socio-cultural context. The event brought together representatives from NGOs, CSOs, shelters, Child Protection Networks (CPN), Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA), heads of social welfare departments from general hospitals, and the Ministry of Education in Lagos State. Facilitated by Lawrence Marlam E. and Ms. Juliet Olumuyiwa-Rufai, the workshop emphasized the importance of education, legal protection, safe spaces, appropriate responses, law enforcement training, partnerships, and research in addressing SGBV. The discussions also highlighted cultural and legal challenges, and strategies for reducing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH) and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) through advocacy, awareness, and community involvement. The primary goal was

to formalize collaborations between the safeguards team and GBV service providers to enhance support for survivors of gender-based violence.

On the 28th and 29th May, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives attended the 2 Days Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Narrative Change Workshop which was organized by the Youth Network for Community and Sustainable Development (YNCSD) and funded by AmplifyChange. Participants included representatives from various organizations working in SRHR and related fields. The workshop aimed to address the challenges and barriers to accessing SRHR services in Nigeria, focusing on laws, policies, and the existing gaps in SRHR policies. Discussions covered topics such as gender roles, inadequate funding, social taboos, religious factors, and lack of proper infrastructure and information. Group work included SWOT analyses and the development of strategies for CSOs. The workshop also addressed the impact of changes in the SRHR space, including policy shifts, funding changes, and societal attitudes. Emphasis was placed on enhancing change readiness through leadership support, communication, training, and stakeholder engagement. Strategies to overcome resistance to change were discussed, focusing on communication, involvement, support, leadership, incentives, and addressing concerns. The workshop concluded with the identification of responsibilities for CSO networks to address the gaps in existing SRHR policies and emphasized the need for continuous advocacy, collaboration, and capacity building.

On the 29th of May 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives, with support from EMpower, successfully launched a newly equipped mini library at Home of Scholars Academy as part of the 2023/2024 Girl Impact Project. The event featured a recap of project topics, an interactive Q&A session, and a fun photo session. Highlights included an award presentation to the school for its exceptional contribution to promoting SRHR for young girls and the official opening of the library, which aims to provide a resource-rich environment to encourage reading culture and self-study among students.

To recognize and encourage active participation, cash prizes were awarded to the most active and participatory students, reinforcing their commitment to learning. The event highlighted VSI's dedication to empowering girls through improved learning resources and opportunities.

## **JUNE**

From June 3rd to 5th, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives hosted a Storytelling Boot-camp targeting 5 gender-diverse young women aged 18 to 25 interested in advocacy and social change.

The first day began with a warm welcome from VSI staff, reintroducing the Pamoja Project and its objectives. Initial sessions focused on Value Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT), with interactive exercises to identify personal values and attitudes towards abortion and reproductive rights. Participants engaged in storytelling exercises and discussions to debunk myths surrounding safe termination of pregnancy. The day ended with empathy-building activities and reflections.







On the second day, facilitator Tawakalit Kareem introduced storytelling basics, covering essential elements and techniques. Participants explored various storytelling mediums such as blogs, articles, videos, graphics, podcasts, poetry, and spoken word. A presentation on the VAPP Act and Lagos State Guideline on Safe Termination of Pregnancy was given,

followed by group work to develop advocacy campaigns. Projects were shared and received constructive feedback.

The final day focused on refining storytelling campaigns, with guidance from facilitators on public speaking, body language, and audience engagement. Participants rehearsed and presented their stories using multimedia, receiving feedback to enhance their narratives. The boot-camp concluded with reflections, shared insights, and a group photo to document the event.

The Storytelling Boot-camp engaged a diverse group of young storytellers, empowering them with valuable skills in storytelling and advocacy to become effective agents of change in their communities.

**On the 6th of June 20204**, VSI kickstarted a radio talk show as part of the activities under the Pamoja project titled To Ba Se Wo/If It Were You. The radio show involved discussion around the reproductive health and rights of women and girls in Lagos state. The aim of the show is to create awareness around the struggles of women and girls in Nigeria and to garner support for the reinstatement of the suspended guideline on Safe Termination of Pregnancy by Lagos state government. The Radio show will air on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the month of June and July on Women FM WFM 91.7 and Ikorodu FM IKD FM 106.1.

**Add picture**

**#ToBaSeWo**

**WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS**

**SIMISOLA AWE**  
 .....  
**LAWYER AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONER**

**THURSDAY 6 JUNE**  
**12:05PM**

Livestream : [www.wfm917.com](http://www.wfm917.com)  
 Call In Live: 07000 917 917

**wfm917**  
 SMS/WhatsApp:07031756537

On the 7th of June, 2024 , VSI was represented at the 2024 Gender and The Blue Economy Conference to commemorate World Oceans Day in Lagos. The theme of the conference was “Expanding the Horizons for Women in Fisheries and Aquaculture”. The conference had in attendance women in fisheries and aquaculture, members of the ministry of fisheries and marine, media, and other NGOs. The conference highlighted the benefits of having women in fisheries and aquaculture for economic growth and empowerment, it highlighted the interventions and efforts of Center for Gender Economics in Africa (CGE Africa) in empowering women in Nigeria with information, data, resources and connections. The organisation has also empowered the women through gender transformative training. They have also empowered them with knowledge on alternate forms of aquaculture - seaweed farming for cosmetics, etc and the use of workshops and shortfilms to tell stories, challenges and progress of these women. Their major demographic covers fisherwomen in Ikorodu, Badagry, and Epe. A panel session was held with women from the different areas to discuss their progress, challenges, success and advice for upcoming fisherwomen.

A



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One of the conversations during the conference was encouraging formal education of women and girls on fisheries and marine life in tertiary institutions as a medium for economic growth and empowerment. The conference held robust conversations on the involvement of women in marine life, the use of technology and AI for acceleration and expansion and also the importance and relevance of formal education. The conference ended with dance and celebration by the women with cultural music and dances.

On the 13th to 15th of June, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives, in partnership with Access to Good Health Initiative (AGHI), hosted a three-day workshop on Value Clarification and Attitude Transformation training for media, religious, and traditional leaders in Lagos State. Held from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm each day, the workshop focused on promoting positive attitudes towards individuals regardless of their religion, beliefs, ethnicity, and culture. Mrs. Ngozi Nwosu-juba facilitated the sessions.

picture



The workshop began with an introduction by Mrs. Ngozi Nwosu-juba, who emphasized the importance of valuing humanity above individual beliefs, religion, ethnicity, and culture. She elaborated on the concept of value clarification, which involves exploring and reflecting on personal beliefs, values, and attitudes to understand their influence on actions and interactions. The discussion highlighted marginalized groups, such as female sex workers, LGBTQ+ individuals, people who inject drugs, and persons living with disabilities, stressing the importance of empowering these communities.

Key concepts of human rights were outlined, including dignity, equity, non-discrimination, equality, and justice. The facilitator analyzed media reporting and highlighted the need for human-centered, non-discriminatory journalism. Participants discussed various biased media reports, stressing the importance of prioritizing humanity over sensationalism and advocating for fair and just reporting practices.

Discussions also covered empathy and compassion, emphasizing their importance in driving social change. Mrs. Ngozi Nwosu-juba explained that empathy involves understanding and sharing others' experiences, while compassion extends to taking action to alleviate others' suffering. She

provided guidance on how media, religious, and traditional leaders can apply these principles to support their communities effectively.



Participants were educated on addressing stigma and discrimination, particularly against persons with HIV, disabilities, and other marginalized groups. The workshop addressed the negative impact of stigma and discrimination and offered strategies to promote accurate information, emphasize compassion, and challenge harmful cultural practices.

The roles of media, religious, and traditional leaders were highlighted, urging them to use their influence to promote inclusivity and respect for all individuals. Leaders were encouraged to create safe spaces, provide support, and advocate for legal reforms to protect the rights of marginalized persons.

At the conclusion of the workshop, participants were reminded to listen, correct in love, respect the rights and dignity of vulnerable individuals, promote accurate information, and advocate for policies that protect human rights. Case studies were used to evaluate the session, prompting participants to propose solutions to various scenarios.

The workshop successfully engaged diverse leaders, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to foster a more inclusive and compassionate society.



On June 18th to 19th, Vision Spring Initiatives attended the Pamoja Partners Convening. The workshop began with an overview of the Pamoja Project, a collaboration of four partners: Amplify Change, Mama Network, RAES, and Ahaki, aiming for policy and legal reform in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) across several African countries. Participants discussed the importance of changing perceptions and values towards abortion, with presentations on each partner's role, such as RAES' storytelling and 360° communication strategies, and Mama Network's support for self-managed abortions.



The second day included a recap of the previous day's activities, group exercises to identify collaboration areas, and discussions on legal frameworks related to abortion. Gaps in these frameworks were identified, and strategies were proposed to address them. A panel session featured representatives sharing their experiences and strategies for achieving safe abortion in Nigeria, emphasizing advocacy, digital media, training healthcare providers, and engaging with relevant agencies. Participants prioritized thematic areas of intervention and strategized activities and collaborations, focusing on reinstating the STOP Guideline in Lagos state and advocating for the implementation of the VAPP law.

The final day began with reflections and setting expectations. Participants discussed fine-tuning the Pamoja Project, focusing on indicators and milestones. An in-depth explanation was given on the process of applying for funds through the Amplify Change portal. Group work centered on organizational milestones and indicators linked to strengths such as communication, access, litigation, and advocacy. Detailed instructions were provided on submitting reports through the Amplify Change

reporting portal, Fluxx. The workshop concluded with reminders to listen and correct with love, respect the rights and dignity of vulnerable individuals, promote accurate information, avoid stigma and discrimination, and advocate for human rights-protecting policies. The session ended with an evaluation and a group photo of partner organizations.

On the 21st of June 2024, VSI hosted the first-ever SRHR art exhibition in Lagos. The exhibition highlighted unique art pieces that depicted the challenges and struggles women and girls face with respect to sexual and reproductive health and rights. The pieces also depicted alternate futures where the SRHR of women and girls are respected and protected, where they are not limited by laws, policies and societal norms and restrictions. The art exhibition sparked conversations around the health and rights of women and girls, created awareness and garnered the support of attendees. The exhibition was insightful, informative and also fun.

## JULY

From July 10th to 12th, 2024, VSI conducted a three-day refresher training session for volunteers participating in the Girl Impact project. The training aimed to both onboard new volunteers and refresh the knowledge of existing ones on the Girl Impact training manual, its components, and the significance of the project. VSI staff led discussions on the various modules, providing practical examples and engaging volunteers in interactive sessions. The final day featured a practice session where volunteers conducted mock training to simulate facilitating sessions in schools. Key aspects evaluated included language use, interaction skills, time management, topic comprehension, and question response ability. VSI staff and facilitators provided feedback and recommendations for improvement. The training included a total of 18 participants, comprising both volunteers and VSI staff.







From July 17th to 19th, 2024, VSI attended a Linking and Learning Visit, during which VSI participated in site visits to Women Health Equal Rights (WHER) and Intersex Nigeria, while other organizations visited Deaf Women Aloud Initiatives (DWAI) and SWAG Initiatives. This event was

designed to facilitate learning and collaboration among civil society organizations advocating for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and human rights.

On the first day, VSI visited WHER, an organization working to address LGBTQI+ rights, legal discrimination, and community empowerment in Nigeria. WHER's leadership provided an overview of their work, including peer support networks, legal advocacy efforts, and security measures aimed at protecting LGBTQI+ individuals from human rights violations. WHER discussed the challenges posed by Nigeria's conservative legal landscape, such as the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (SSMPA), which criminalizes same-sex relationships and creates hostile conditions for LGBTQI+ people. The session also focused on WHER's strategies for legal reform, cross-movement building, and the development of safe spaces for marginalized communities.

On the second day, VSI visited Intersex Nigeria, an organization that advocates for the rights and healthcare of intersex individuals. The visit included discussions on the challenges faced by intersex persons in Nigeria, including lack of legal recognition and discrimination within the healthcare system. Intersex Nigeria's staff highlighted their advocacy work, which includes awareness campaigns, outreach programs, and efforts to stop intersex genital mutilation (IGM). They also shared best practices in promoting bodily autonomy, inclusive healthcare, and intersectional advocacy, which considers the unique experiences of intersex persons alongside other marginalized identities.

At the end of each day, all the COA organizations—including those that visited DWAI and SWAG Initiatives—came together to share their experiences. Participants discussed key lessons learned, such as the importance of intersectionality in advocacy, the need for inclusion of persons with disabilities, and the power of collaboration in advancing SRHR and human rights for diverse marginalized groups.

From July 21st to 22nd, 2024, VSI attended an Outcome Harvesting Training aimed at enhancing their monitoring and evaluation capacities, with a focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) programming. This training, led by Mary (staff of HIVOS), was designed to help organizations identify, document, and assess the outcomes of their interventions to better understand their impact on social actors and systems.

The training began with a review of the outcome harvesting methodology, which emphasizes the collection of evidence-based outcomes that reflect changes in behavior, policies, or practices influenced by an organization's activities. Participants were introduced to a step-by-step guide to outcome harvesting, which included identifying potential outcome statements, verifying them with independent sources, and analyzing their significance in relation to the program's theory of change. The process was described as highly participatory, with a focus on ensuring that outcomes are verifiable and credible.

A key part of the training was the introduction of the SMART framework—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely—which helps organizations formulate clear and measurable outcome statements. The participants engaged in exercises to practice writing outcome descriptions, focusing on when and where the change occurred, who the social actors were, and what specifically had changed as a result of their interventions.

Examples from the We-Lead project were used to illustrate how changes in behavior and policies could be tracked and linked back to specific program activities. The training also emphasized the importance of harvesting both positive and negative outcomes, as understanding failures can be just as crucial as measuring successes.

By the end of the training, participants had a stronger grasp of how to document and assess the long-term impacts of their interventions,

ensuring that their programs lead to meaningful and sustainable changes in society. They also learned strategies for ensuring that their outcome harvesting aligns with broader program goals, such as improving SRHR for marginalized groups. The event concluded with participants committing to apply these methods in their ongoing work, ensuring that the impact of their advocacy efforts is thoroughly evaluated and understood.

On July 29th, 2024 , VSI participated in a follow-up meeting on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) 4th cycle recommendations, organized by Partnership for Justice. This meeting included representatives from various partners within the National Human Rights Defenders network, such as CSOs, media personnel, journalists, and the NHRC. The primary focus was on discussing the UPR 4th cycle review that took place at the UN in January 2024, which involved evaluating the human rights records of all 193 UN member states, including Nigeria. During this review, Nigeria's human rights records from the previous cycle up to 2024 were assessed, and recommendations were made, which the Nigerian delegation subsequently supported and noted.

The follow-up meeting aimed to provide an in-depth discussion and briefing on the specific sections and themes of the recommendations, focusing on socio-economic and cultural rights, civil and political rights, and group rights. Key topics included the religious and cultural biases of the Nigerian government in implementing laws and policies, particularly those protecting minority and vulnerable groups, and the SRHR of women and girls. It was highlighted that recommendations related to promoting and protecting SRHR for women and girls were noted but not fully supported by the Nigerian government.

To advance the discussion and plan advocacy efforts for the supported recommendations by the Nigerian delegation such as the need for gender bills to ensure women's political participation and to protect the lives of journalists/media and national human rights defenders. Partners were divided into groups based on thematic areas to develop a document that would support advocacy and ensure accountability of both state and non-

state actors. Partnership for Justice committed to creating a live document to incorporate feedback from all partners, fostering a collaborative approach. The meeting ended on a hopeful note, with participants optimistic about advocating for a better Nigeria.

## AUGUST

On the 8th of August, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives alongside other members of the Womanifesto in Nigeria joined the #EndBadGovernance protest organized by WARDC. The protest aimed to build on the existing protest activities and requests which are to call the current government to accountability for the promises they made and the necessary decisions that they have to make to ensure the stability of the country by improving the economic situation that prompted/birthed the protest in the first place. Also, the protest highlighted the challenges such as unfavorable policies, laws and guidelines that restrict women and girls in the country from accessing and exercising their rights. It also called for the reason to EndViolence in the country as women and girls are more subject to violence and abuse during conflicts and war. The protest involved the presence of the Nigerian Police Force who guarded and protected the protest from hijack by hoodlums.

On August 16th and 17th, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives organized a Value Clarification and Attitude Transformation Training in Abia State aimed at combating sexual and gender-based violence. The event brought together participants from seventeen local government areas.

Barrister Amanamba opened discussions by addressing the pervasive nature of gender-based violence, emphasizing that it affects everyone in society. She underscored the significance of the VAPP law, which empowers survivors to report cases and holds perpetrators accountable.

The second day included group activities where participants identified harmful cultural practices still prevalent in their communities, such as restrictions on women and early marriages for girls. They collaboratively developed action plans, focusing on awareness campaigns and community engagement to drive change.

Each day saw an attendance of 50 participants, and the training concluded with expressions of gratitude, fostering a sense of commitment to advancing gender equality in the region.

On August 26th, 2024, VSI hosted a Town Hall meeting in Lagos with community leaders to discuss the gendered impact of Nigeria's shrinking civic space. This event built on earlier interventions, including contributions to the Security Playbook, a project that highlighted the increasing surveillance and restrictions on civil society, particularly how they disproportionately affect women, girls, and human rights defenders. The meeting aimed to raise awareness of these issues, promote gender equality, and empower community leaders to advocate for the protection of civic freedoms.

Discussions at the event focused on the growing restrictions on fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, assembly, and association, with participants emphasizing how women are disproportionately affected. The participants, including community leaders, shared concerns over government surveillance and its chilling effect on activism, especially within women's rights and gender justice movements. Examples of shrinking civic space were discussed, including the #EndSARS movement and other protests.

The meeting also emphasized the role of community leaders in countering these trends by promoting women's participation in decision-making processes, creating safe spaces for public dialogue, and advocating for policies that protect civic freedoms. Leaders committed to actionable steps, such as advocating for policy reforms, promoting civic education, and establishing forums for marginalized groups to express their views freely.

The event concluded with a call to action to protect women's rights, challenge harmful surveillance practices, and foster inclusivity within civic spaces.

A video presentation further highlighted the misuse of government surveillance to stifle dissent, sparking a lively discussion about the need for transparency and the protection of citizens' privacy. The event ended with a commitment to continued advocacy for women's rights and civic freedoms.

On August 27th to 31st, VSI was represented at a healing justice workshop organized by Access to Good Health Initiatives in Enugu. The Healing Justice Workshop was carried out to bring together allies and activists dedicated to advocating for the human rights of marginalized populations. This workshop aimed to create a supportive space where participants could engage in collective healing and strengthen their resolve for future advocacy efforts. Recognizing the emotional toll that advocacy work can take, the workshop emphasized the importance of self-care, community support, and resilience in the face of ongoing challenges.

Throughout the workshop, participants engaged in various activities designed to build connection and understanding. These included guided discussions, storytelling sessions, and collaborative exercises that allowed attendees to share their experiences and insights. The focus on healing was not only about addressing personal trauma but also about building a collective strength that would empower participants to continue their advocacy work.

In addition to healing practices, the workshop also addressed strategic approaches to future advocacy efforts. Participants discussed current challenges facing marginalized communities and explored innovative solutions to these issues. The workshop concluded with actionable steps for participants to take back to their respective organizations, reinforcing

the commitment to ongoing collaboration and support within the activist community. By encouraging a culture of healing and solidarity, the Healing Justice Workshop sought to equip allies and activists with the tools they need to advocate effectively for human rights while prioritizing their own well-being.

## SEPTEMBER

On September 5, 2024 , Vision Spring Initiatives hosted a training titled "Empowerment for Vulnerable Women in Nigeria," supported by EmPower. The training had over 40 women in attendance from diverse backgrounds, including survivors of violence, out-of-school women, single mothers, and LBQ women. The primary aim of the training was to equip these women with essential knowledge and skills in human rights, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and business management (business sustenance and savings culture). VSI believes that empowering women with information enables them to make informed decisions that can lead to self-sustenance and independence.

A key feature of the training was the focused group discussions that provided a platform for participants to share their experiences and challenges. These discussions revealed critical insights into the obstacles faced by women in the community, particularly regarding sexual and gender-based violence, access to healthcare, human rights violations, and opportunities for vocational training. The diversity of the attendees improved these conversations, allowing for a deeper understanding of the unique challenges each group faces. This collaborative environment created a sense of solidarity among participants, highlighting the importance of community support in addressing these pressing issues.

At the end of the training, participants provided valuable feedback that will inform future initiatives. VSI plans to select 15 women for further empowerment opportunities based on the insights gained during the training. By focusing on tailored support for these individuals, VSI aims to

empower change agents who can advocate for their rights and uplift their communities. This initiative not only empowers individual women but also contributes to broader societal change by challenging existing norms and promoting women's rights in Nigeria.

On September 9th, Vision Spring Initiatives (VSI) joined other civil society organizations (CSOs) at the Lagos State Ministry of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation (MWAPA) 2024 Annual Interactive Meeting. The session, titled "Know Your Government," reviewed commitments from the previous year and assessed their implementation across the state. MWAPA reaffirmed the importance of continuous collaboration between the state and women-focused NGOs, emphasizing that NGOs should align their programs with government efforts to better serve the public. Topics discussed included addressing healthcare and security challenges, the Ilera Eko Health Scheme, and the need for a directory of NGOs for better coordination. The ministry also encouraged NGOs to use the female security squad during their events.

The meeting also covered transportation issues in Lagos State, a key theme affecting women. Discussions focused on the safety, affordability, and accessibility of transport, as well as challenges like street trading, illegal road levies, and the prevalence of miscreants. The government outlined initiatives for commuter safety, including gender safety training for road staff and public advocacy for women's involvement in transportation. Recommendations included whistleblowing to identify fraudulent NGOs and encouraging communities to avoid offline ride-hailing services to enhance the safety of women and girls. There was also a discussion about a potential population control measure limiting families to four children.

On September 9th-13th, VSI alongside CHEVS participated in a co-design workshop with the What Works2 team on restructuring the "Safe to be me" proposed intervention on ending violence against women and girls,

particularly LBT persons. This intervention is focused on higher institutions. Initially intended to cover both southeastern and southwestern states in Nigeria, the scope of the intervention was refined to concentrate solely on the southwestern region, with the University of Lagos designated as the primary site for implementation. The workshop provided a collaborative platform for discussions that were instrumental in shaping the intervention's objectives and strategies.

Throughout the workshop, we engaged in extensive deliberations surrounding key components of the intervention, including the theory of change, overarching goals, specific objectives, and various activities such as Values Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT) training and media campaigns. The discussions also addressed critical aspects such as research questions, expected outcomes, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, workplan, log framework, and budgeting aligned with project activities. Additionally, we conducted risk analysis and mitigation strategies to identify potential challenges while emphasizing the importance of feminist principles to guide accountability within the project.

The workshop concluded with a series of recommendations aimed at refining the intervention further and enhancing engagement with our target population. This initiative not only seeks to create safer environments for marginalized populations but also focuses on the significance of community-driven approaches in ending VAWG particularly LBT persons within higher institutions in Nigeria.

On September 17th, 2024, Aanuoluwapo Owoseeni from Vision Spring Initiatives (VSI) appeared as a guest speaker on a radio show organized by Hacey Health Initiative, part of the "Next-Gen SRHR Policy Dialogue Series." The program focused on policies and developments that affect young people's access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services. Discussions explored how youth-driven efforts are expanding

SRHR access, particularly in rural and hard-to-reach areas of Nigeria, where barriers such as cultural norms and inadequate healthcare infrastructure are more pronounced.

Key topics likely discussed included the role of education in dismantling misconceptions surrounding SRHR, strategies for engaging traditional and religious leaders in conservative communities, and the importance of youth-friendly services in improving access. The dialogue also likely addressed the legal and policy gaps hindering SRHR access, especially for marginalized groups, and potential collaborations between government, NGOs, and youth organizations. VSI highlighted the use of VCAT trainings as a transformative tool to challenge conservative attitudes, advocating for a more open approach to SRHR care, including comprehensive sex education, access to contraceptives, and support for gender equality in decision-making around reproductive health.

On September 18th, VSI in collaboration with Access to Good Health Initiatives (AGHI) kicked off a radio campaign titled "Amplifying voices" on creating awareness, educating the public, and advocating for the inclusion and acceptance of vulnerable persons in society. The radio campaign is aimed at creating awareness around the challenges, discrimination, and stigmatization faced by vulnerable persons, as well as educating the public, promoting inclusion and acceptance. It also aims to spark conversations, drive empathy, and humanize vulnerable persons within our community.

The campaign will run for five Wednesdays through September and October 2024. AGHI hopes that by shedding light on the struggles faced by vulnerable persons, the public will be inspired to take action and support initiatives that promote inclusivity and acceptance. By amplifying the voices of these marginalized groups, AGHI aims to promote a more compassionate and inclusive society.

On September 25th, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives (VSI) participated in a radio show organized by Access to Good Health Initiative (AGHI). The

session focused on the intersectionality of challenges faced by vulnerable groups in Nigeria, including housing, employment, and health barriers. It explored how these interconnected issues affect marginalized communities and discussed strategies for addressing them.

The conversation also highlighted the role of technology in solving these problems, emphasizing the need for social media campaigns, radio shows, and text messaging to increase awareness and access to resources. Additionally, the session called for inclusive and responsive infrastructural development across public and private sectors to ensure vulnerable groups benefit from improved accommodations, job opportunities, and healthcare services.

On the 26th of September, VSI officially kicked off on the Girl Impact project in one of the selected schools - Noble Stars Schools. Mary Udoh, the program manager for the project was assisted by 8 other volunteers that were trained for the project. Mary introduced VSI, the program and the volunteers to the students. For the first day, we had 108 students in attendance and 2 of their teachers who assisted in organizing the students. The students also learned the daily mantra.

The key activity of the day was conducting a baseline survey aimed at assessing the students' existing knowledge on the topics to be covered during the project. This survey was important for tailoring the training sessions to meet the students' needs and to establish a foundation for measuring the impact of the program upon completion.

On the 27th of September 2024, representatives from Vision Spring Initiatives (VSI) participated in the Advocacy Walk and Picnic on Reproductive Justice organized by Think Positive Live Positive. This event was held in commemoration of World Contraception Day, which focuses on raising awareness about reproductive health and rights. The event aimed to spotlight critical topics such as contraception, family planning, and access to comprehensive healthcare services.

During the walk, VSI and other participants engaged with the public to foster conversations around reproductive justice, particularly the importance of informed decision-making when it comes to sexual and reproductive health. Educational materials were distributed to enhance understanding of these issues, promoting the need for greater access to contraception and family planning resources, especially in underserved communities.

The event served as an opportunity for VSI to collaborate with other advocates and stakeholders in advancing public discourse on reproductive justice and reinforcing the organization's commitment to ensuring that women and girls have access to the information and services they need to make empowered health decisions.

## OCTOBER

October 2nd to 4th, 2024 , VSI attended The Theory of Change (TOC) Planning Meeting 2024, organized and hosted by Education as a Vaccine (EVA) and HIVOS in Abuja, Nigeria. The purpose of this three-day workshop was to revise and update the existing TOC framework that guides the We Lead program, which focuses on improving SRHR of young women and girls in Nigeria. The workshop aimed to ensure that the TOC framework reflects the current challenges and opportunities in the SRHR climate, particularly prioritizing the issues to be addressed in 2025. Participants, which included members from VSI and other members of the CoA, engaged in critical discussions around contextualizing the TOC to the Nigerian environment, reviewing key assumptions, and identifying new strategies for more effective SRHR advocacy and interventions.

Key highlights from the workshop included a detailed review of the current TOC framework, with particular attention to safety and security risks for

rights holders, especially in rural areas, and the need to improve youth-led movements and CSO collaborations. It was noted that access to SRHR services remains hindered by various barriers such as accountability issues in healthcare and insufficient collaboration between stakeholders. Moreover, the CoA members recognized the risks involved in SRHR programming in Nigeria, including organizational, contextual, and programmatic risks. Recommendations were made to integrate more potent safety protocols in advocacy efforts, and to strengthen partnerships with local law enforcement to safeguard rights holders during advocacy events.

The second day of the workshop focused on reviewing the progress of SRHR interventions in 2024, with COA members presenting their organizational achievements and challenges. VSI highlighted its successes in increasing public awareness of SRHR issues but also emphasized the financial and societal barriers they faced. The need for more collaborative efforts among CSOs and stakeholders was reiterated, and strategies for resource mobilization and joint advocacy were refined. The session also included a discussion of the final closeout for the We Lead project, with the development of a costed workplan for 2025 and guidelines for monitoring, evaluation, and reporting throughout the final year.

The final day of the meeting was dedicated to financial reporting and budget development for 2025. The CoA members were guided through the budgeting process, with a focus on ensuring that budgets align with the We Lead program's six-month implementation period. Mistakes in past budgeting exercises were highlighted, such as poor expense categorization and the underestimation of funds. The meeting concluded with presentations of draft budgets and discussions on monitoring and evaluation timelines. The COA agreed on key next steps, including finalizing the 2025 budget, continuing advocacy efforts to address legal barriers to SRHR, and preparing for the end-term review and project closeout. The session ended with pictures and networking among participants.

On October 4th, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives attended the Bilateral Consultative Meeting between Non-profit Organizations and Financial Institutions, a workshop organized by Spaces for Change at Sheraton Hotel, Ikeja, Lagos. The meeting aimed to facilitate discussions on the role of financial institutions in supporting a conducive operating environment for civil society organizations (CSOs) in Nigeria. It brought together stakeholders from the banking sector, academia, media, government departments, and regulatory agencies like the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) and SCUML. Notably absent was the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), whose input was considered crucial.

The workshop featured key presentations addressing the regulatory challenges faced by CSOs, the impact of counter-terrorism policies on banking practices, and the need for a streamlined regulatory framework. Participants highlighted the negative effects of overlapping regulations on CSOs and recommended fostering collaboration among stakeholders, implementing a unified registration platform, and adopting risk-based assessments for NPOs. Spaces for Change announced the establishment of a Working Group to monitor compliance and enhance dialogue between regulatory bodies and CSOs.

The event concluded with actionable recommendations, including the development of digital systems for compliance monitoring and tailored risk assessment frameworks to reduce bureaucratic burdens on NPOs. Two progress reports on banks and civil society interactions were shared during the session, which saw the participation of 35 attendees.

On October 18th, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives hosted a Virtual Pamoja Project Introduction supported by Amplifychange with the project's strategic team (consisting of lawyers, Healthcare providers, journalist, judges, and other relevant stakeholders). VSI volunteers, and VSI staff. The virtual meeting was filled with insightful conversations, strategic planning, and a shared commitment to driving change. Participants discussed how the Pamoja Project will address barriers to safe reproductive healthcare, challenge societal stigma, and empower women

and girls to advocate for their right to make informed decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive health..

Attendees highlighted the importance of leveraging their collective expertise to dismantle harmful norms and promote a rights-based approach to healthcare. The attendees were also able to map out the key stakeholders to pay advocacy visit to that will garner the right support for the project objectives. By fostering cross-sector collaboration, the Pamoja Project will create a supportive environment where women and girls can exercise their reproductive rights freely and safely. The event concluded with a renewed commitment from all participants to ensure the project's success and to uphold the principles of gender equality and social justice.

## NOVEMBER

From November 5th to 8th, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives (VSI) conducted advocacy visits to relevant stakeholders in Oyo State as part of the AmplifyChange-funded Pamoja Project. The initiative aimed to advocate for the reproductive rights of young women and girls in the state by fostering partnerships and securing support from key stakeholders, including government ministries, health-focused NGOs, and advocacy groups.



VSI engaged with the Oyo State Primary Health Care Board, Oyo State Agency for the Control of AIDS (SACA), Committed Soul Women Health Advocacy Initiative (COSWOHI), and PLAN Health Advocacy and Development Foundation. Discussions centered on improving access to inclusive and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, addressing barriers such as stigmatization and poverty constraints, and promoting youth-friendly healthcare services. VSI also highlighted the importance of policy change and strategic stakeholder engagement to advance reproductive rights.

Key outcomes included:

- Strengthened partnerships with stakeholders, including COSWOHI and PLAN Foundation, to amplify the project's impact.
- Identification of strategies to address health barriers, including awareness campaigns, sensitization, and outreach programs.
- Collaborative recommendations, such as utilizing inclusive terminologies, aligning activity calendars, and leveraging visual tools to communicate project goals effectively.

The advocacy visits concluded with commitments from stakeholders to support the Pamoja Project and to collaborate on future initiatives, including the commemoration of special days like World AIDS Day and the 16 Days of Activism.

On November 18th, 2024, Vision Spring Initiatives attended the inauguration and training of the Local Government Child Rights Implementation Committee (LGCRIC) organized by the Child Protection Network (CPN) at the Ikorodu Local Government Council Hall, Lagos State. The event, presided over by Hon. Wasiu Adeshina, Chairman of Ikorodu Local Government, aimed to enhance collaboration among stakeholders and raise awareness about child rights at the local government level.

Key discussions focused on case management principles, including non-discrimination, informed consent, and confidentiality, as well as the four

pillars of child rights: Survival, Development, Participation, and Protection. The event concluded with the formal inauguration of the LGCRIC by the local government chairman, marking a significant step toward strengthening child protection mechanisms in the area.

On November 26th and 27th, Vision Spring Initiatives participated in a workshop focused on the policy analysis and review of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act. Organized by Think Positive Live Positive Initiative, the event examined the Act's provisions, strengths, and gaps, particularly concerning gender-based violence and reproductive rights.

The first day involved group activities, including SWOT analyses, where participants assessed the Act's ability to address various forms of violence and its limitations, such as unclear punishment provisions and the absence of clauses for attempted rape and reproductive rights. Cultural and systemic barriers to abortion rights were also debated, with strategies proposed to engage traditional leaders in advocacy.

On the second day, a legislative charade fostered understanding of the Act, and groups proposed recommendations to address inclusivity, clarity, and enforcement challenges. Key suggestions included anonymous reporting systems for marginalized groups, simplified punitive measures, and community-based legal aid. The workshop concluded with a commitment to advancing these recommendations, emphasizing the importance of collaborative advocacy to enhance the VAPP Act's effectiveness and inclusivity.

## DECEMBER

On December 4th to 6th, Vision Spring Initiatives (VSI) participated in the 8th Nigerian Family Planning Conference (NFPC), contributing to the dynamic discussions, exhibitions, and engagements that underscored the importance of universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

The conference was a pivotal gathering to advance progress towards the FP2030 goals. With the theme, "Sustaining Commitments for Family Planning within the Nigeria Health Sector Renewal Investment Initiative: Advancing Progress Towards Achieving FP2030 Goals," the event brought together over 1,000 participants, including policymakers, healthcare professionals, civil society organizations, and stakeholders. The conference featured a structured program that included plenary sessions, breakout discussions, poster presentations, and exhibitions, all designed to align with the theme and subthemes.

On Dec 12th-13th, Vision Spring Initiatives hosted a Human Rights Training for Police in Enugu State. With support from OSWIA, VSI hosted a 2-day Human Rights Training for the Nigeria Police Headquarters of Enugu State. VSI also presented findings of its Legal Clinic and dialoguing with the Nigeria Police Head quarters Enugu on Ending Sexual and Gender Based Violence in the State., VSI introduced itself, the project and its commitment to Ending Sexual and Gender Based Violence Against Women and Girls in the State. Barr. Nnenna Anozie, the lawyer in charge of the Legal Clinic, presented findings and cases that have been handled by the clinic, Laws and Policies signed by Nigeria and Challenged faced in Implementing Laws and Policies. Madam Miriam Menkiti discussed the Roles of State and Non-state Actors in Protecting the Rights of Women and Girls in the State.

At the end of the workshop, VSI presented the Enugu state police command with office equipment such as Laptops, Desktops, papers, files, printers, etc to handle cases with professionalism and care. The Commissioner of Police, Mr. Kanayo Uzegbu, expressed his gratitude for the valuable insights gained from the workshop. "The training has been extremely beneficial in enhancing our ability to address GBV cases with the utmost care and professionalism," CP Uzegbu stated. "The donated equipment will significantly help in the documentation and management of these cases, ensuring that victims' voices are heard."

On Dec 17th and 18th , similarly in Anambra, hosted a Human Rights Training for Police in Enugu State. With support from OSWIA, VSI hosted a

2-day Human Rights Training for the Nigeria Police Headquarters of Enugu State. VSI also presented findings of its Legal Clinic and dialoguing with the Nigeria Police Head quarters Enugu on Ending Sexual and Gender Based Violence in the State., VSI introduced itself, the project and its commitment to Ending Sexual and Gender Based Violence Against Women and Girls in the State. Barr. Nnenna Anozie, the lawyer in charge of the Legal Clinic, presented findings and cases that have been handled by the clinic, Laws and Policies signed by Nigeria and Challenged faced in Implementing Laws and Policies. Madam Miriam Menkiti discussed the Roles of State and Non-state Actors in Protecting the Rights of Women and Girls in the State.







As part of the collaboration, VSI, with OSIWA's support, donated essential resources to the police, including computers and other accessories to aid in the proper documentation of GBV cases. These resources are vital in ensuring that cases are accurately recorded, tracked, and followed up, promoting greater accountability within law enforcement. The Commissioner of Police, CP Nnaghe Obono Itam, praised the initiative, recognizing the importance of such training in improving police responses to GBV. "This training will allow us to better understand the nuances of gender-based violence and how to respond appropriately," CP Itam remarked. "We are deeply grateful for the support from VSI and OSIWA in providing us with the necessary tools to better serve our communities."

#### Enugu and Anambra Pictures

Through this training and engagement, we aim to build and strengthen the capacity of the Police in Enugu state in effectively handling cases of SGBV and prosecution.

On Dec 16th to 19th, Vision Spring Initiatives organized the \*We-Lead Advocacy in Practice Training\* in Osun and Lagos States to empower young women with disabilities, those living with HIV, and LBQ (lesbian, bisexual, and queer) individuals aged 18 to 29. The program aimed to enhance participants' capacity to advocate for their rights, combat stigma and discrimination, and engage with policymakers to drive systemic change.





The training targeted 30 participants in Osun and 23 in Lagos, focusing on strengthening their understanding of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), developing advocacy skills, fostering collaboration, and promoting leadership. Sessions were tailored to address the unique challenges participants faced, with measures like providing a Yoruba translator to ensure inclusivity for non-English speakers.

On the first day, participants engaged in interactive introductions, a pre-test to assess their knowledge, and discussions on SRHR and advocacy principles. The SMART framework for setting advocacy objectives was introduced, and participants worked in groups to propose practical solutions, such as leveraging media for awareness and engaging communities through education.

The second day began with a recap of key lessons, followed by group presentations addressing advocacy scenarios with actionable solutions, including family planning advocacy and the use of educational materials. A session on stakeholder analysis taught participants how to craft impactful advocacy messages and map relevant stakeholders effectively. Role-playing exercises provided a dynamic platform for simulating real-life advocacy situations.

The training concluded with a post-test to evaluate knowledge gained. Participants expressed gratitude for the skills and insights acquired and committed to implementing their advocacy plans in their communities.

On Dec 20th, Vision Spring Initiatives organized the We-Lead Safety and Security Training to address the safety and security challenges faced by young women living with HIV, women with disabilities, and LBQ women aged 18 to 29. The training aimed to equip participants with the knowledge, tools, and strategies needed to navigate these challenges while fostering empowerment and collaboration.

The session began with participants sharing personal and community experiences, revealing incidents like corrective rape, public harassment, workplace discrimination, stigma in healthcare, and cyberbullying. These discussions highlighted the urgent need for tailored safety measures to address their unique risks.







Participants were introduced to key safety and security concepts, including assessing threats, identifying patterns, and understanding the feasibility of risks. They also learned practical strategies to mitigate risks, such as building support networks, practicing online safety and self-defense, and conducting regular risk assessments. The training emphasized the importance of human rights principles like non-discrimination, privacy, and access to justice. The session equipped 25 participants with essential knowledge and strategies to safeguard their well-being and advocate for their rights. By fostering a supportive environment, the training empowered them to take proactive steps to address safety concerns and highlighted the importance of continued advocacy for inclusive and protective policies.

On December 21st and 22nd, Vision Spring Initiatives hosted the We-Lead Development of Advocacy Toolkit workshop, focused on creating a toolkit to advance the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) of young women from rights-holder groups, including people living with HIV (PLWHIV), persons with disabilities (PWD), and LBQ women. Facilitated by Anita Graham with support from VSI, the workshop engaged selected

rightsholders in practical activities to identify SRHR challenges, root causes, and potential solutions through a structured roadmap.





The session aimed to help participants re-learn effective advocacy strategies, understand the steps in developing a toolkit, and collaborate in its creation. Key activities included analyzing SRHR issues using a problem tree, conducting stakeholder and power mapping to identify influencers and decision-makers, and developing advocacy priorities and actionable messages tailored to each group's unique needs.

By the end of the workshop, participants were empowered with tools to create focused, evidence-based advocacy strategies. The next steps involve finalizing, testing, and disseminating the advocacy toolkit to help influence policies and drive systemic change.

The year came to an end with staff and volunteers hosting a Strategic Planning Review Meeting. The meeting was aimed at development of a new Strategic Plan to guide the organisations interventions from 2025 to 2030. At the end of the event the organisation members took the time to relax and catch some fun. Indeed 2024 was a very productive year for the organisation.

## Personnel / Staff Matters

Vision Spring in 2024 expanded its staff base to welcome new staff with expertise to handle specific projects on its behalf. Dr. Marian Nwaokolo joined the organisation on temporary basis to contribute to the development of a proposal following the successful selection of VSI by Whatworks2.

Adetutu Soneye an expert in Monitoring and Evaluation also joined the organisation as an intern and has been contributing to the overall program within the organisation.