

Vision Spring Initiatives

annual report

2016-2018

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Executive Summary

In Nigeria, the advancement of the rights of women and girls has suffered several set-backs in spite of civil society effort. Over the years governments have failed to see the link between women’s human rights and development, consequently many women’s human rights initiatives remain under-resourced and lacking adequate implementation. Arguably, this has continued to significantly hamper development and people’s well-being. The commitment of government in designing and signing on to development frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), CEDAW, Maputo Plan of Action (MPoA) Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing PoA), National Consensus documents and policy frameworks have seen reviews of separate but intertwining global and regional policy frameworks that provide opportunities to assess the progress made in the advancement of the rights of women and girls. Various reports of the government both to international monitoring bodies and its policy reviews internally agree that progress has been slow in the effort to advance the rights of women and girls. Since 1995 Beijing Conference, governments began to change policies to create more opportunities for women but progress has been slow and limited in Nigeria because poverty has increased generally for the whole population but with women being the most affected.



Vision Spring Initiatives has been partnering with strategic stakeholders to respond to the various issues and challenges as they affect women and girls and others made vulnerable by laws, policies and practices. Our work focuses on challenging

the status quo and holding duty bearers accountable to their commitment. More importantly, we build capacities to enable communities and groups to demand accountability from duty bearers. This report reflects our work between 2016 and 2018.

Our thematic areas:

- ✓ Gender justice
- ✓ Education and Research
- ✓ Participatory Leadership / Political education
- ✓ Sexual and reproductive health and rights
- ✓ Networks and exchange programs

Between 2016 till date, the organization responded to critical issues in the advancement of gender justice in Nigeria, including partnering with civil society organizations in Nigeria and Africa, building and gaining capacities.

We currently belong to the following networks and groups:

- ✓ LagosWomen2030
- ✓ Coalition for the Defense of Sexual Rights
- ✓ Group of 6 (G6)
- ✓ Alliance for Inclusion
- ✓ Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for all (CSACEFA) Lagos
- ✓ Interfaith Diversity Network of West Africa
- ✓ Gender Updates
- ✓ Feminists Group
- ✓ Civil Society Health Watch
- ✓ Connecting the Dots Project of International Centre for Sexual and Reproductive health and rights (INCREASE)
- ✓ Child Protection Network



Mirabel Centre fund raising event for sexually abused women and girls

Due to the volume of work requiring our attention, we have relied considerably on social media to engage our audience and beneficiaries. Some of the strategic WhatsApp groups through which we have responded to the issues affecting our beneficiaries include: Gender agenda group, LagosWomen2030, feminists group, KAP core group, Alliance for Inclusion, connecting the Dots, Taking all men brother, Child Protection network amongst others. Through these spaces we contribute to the agenda of gender justice in Nigeria and beyond.

Gender justice is at the core of the work we do at Vision Spring Initiatives. In the years under review, we partnered with civil society organizations and a few government agencies to produce gender sensitive manuals used for trainings on human rights, safety and security, governance, organizational development, resource mobilization, role of government agencies towards ending blackmail and extortion, sexual and reproductive health and rights education, Paralegal education, psychosocial training and gender based violence. We contributed to the Beijing +20 Shadow report, Universal Review Report by Nigeria and CEDAW Shadow report presented at the CEDAW review meeting in Geneva in 2017.

Our education and research interventions saw us engaging in research for rights of minority groups in Nigeria and working with partners such as Coalition for Defense of sexual rights to provide step down trainings based on research findings. Our school programs were expanded with support from IPAS to cover more schools in Ogudu, Ikeja and Ikorodu environs where we provided sexual and reproductive health and rights education. Our partnership with Child Protection Network involved partnering with public government schools to end all forms of child abuse and providing education on the laws and policies that protect young people's rights such as the Child Rights Act and child rights law of Lagos state.

Sexual and reproductive health and services received more support from Nigeria and other parts, enabling us reach more young people in Nigeria. Our network, Reproductive Health and Rights Network Africa (RHANA), later renamed CSO League based in Nairobi Kenya provided space for more engagements at the regional level. Vision Spring Initiatives was represented at the 2018, Africa's Regional Dialogue (ARD) which focused on Advancing Gender Equality and Rights. The forum provided space for interactive exchange, knowledge transfer, mutual learning, joint strategizing and dialogue on issues that affect and impact gender equality and SRHR in Africa. Key participants to this forum were drawn from civil society networks and organizations including IPPF Member Associations, Faith Based and Youth Led organizations; Governmental and Intergovernmental Representatives, Parliamentarians, Academia, and various Bilateral and Multilateral agencies.

The organization participated and made presentations at strategic regional events in Africa. In Rwanda, working with IRAW Asia Pacific, we acknowledged challenges that might affect the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals such as poor gender machinery at country levels, weak data gathering and reporting, poor budgetary allocation for women's rights, poor and inadequate infrastructure including skills gaps, over dependency on external funding, impact of International Non-Governmental Organizations, inadequate monitoring mechanisms, non-prioritization of women's issues, lack of support and partnership

with women's groups amongst other challenges. Following this a number of ASKs were agreed upon and presented to government of different countries.

On networks and exchanges, staff and volunteers attended meetings and outreach programs aimed at building skills to effectively tackle cases of violence against persons.

Our year usually starts with the development of work plan derived from our Strategic Plan. This was done and work commenced. We now present a detailed report of our events from 2016 to 2018.

1. Organizational Background

Vision Spring Initiatives (VSI) is a duly registered (RC 908183) non-governmental, not-for profit human rights organization partnering with stakeholders to achieve developmental rights of children, young people and other vulnerable groups and supporting their attainment of these rights using a multipronged approach and diverse strategies.

Our vision is that collectively with women, adolescents and minority groups we create a world based on gender equality and social justice.

Our mission is to ensure that our constituencies have practical tools for the realization of our vision. We will collectively build on existing initiatives, engage in debates, research, education, advocacy, network building amongst other strategies.

We strongly believe that rights are interrelated, inalienable and inseparable and cannot be achieved in isolation. We therefore focus on the following thematic areas towards achieving our mandate:

1. Gender justice (Central and the core of VSI programming)
2. Education and Research:
3. Participatory Leadership/Political education
4. Sexual and reproductive health and rights
5. Networks/Exchange program / Youth Outreach

Our objectives

- To promote gender equality in all spheres of our programming and develop literary skills amongst women and young persons.
- To advocate for the sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people and vulnerable groups
- To promote and advance education and research in Nigeria
- To promote participatory leadership and advance youth inclusion in decision making
- To engage with strategic stakeholders and demand implementation of Laws and Policies that guarantee the rights of citizens
- To collaborate with like-minded organizations and find areas of knowledge sharing and build strategic partnerships

Our target Beneficiaries:

Children, Young people and persons made vulnerable by laws, policies and practices.

1. GENDER JUSTICE

Gender justice is central and the core of VSI programs. Discrimination and violence against women and girls are major causes of poverty all over the world. Ensuring that women and men / boys and girls benefit equally is at the core of all VSI intervention programs. Gender justice and equality therefore underpin all our work and interventions.

Project under Gender Justice-

Policy Advocacy-VSI's policy advocacy project enables it to engage in advocacy to promote the inclusion of women and girls in Laws and policies relating to gender, as well as the enactment of these Laws and the Constitutional commitments towards equality and closing of gender gaps.

Legal Reform -VSI's legal reform project enables it to challenge obnoxious and discriminatory Laws, asking for their repeal and demanding institutionalization and implementation of Laws that respect in equal terms the rights and dignity of women/men and boys/girls.

Interpretation and Simplification of Laws – This initiative provides the opportunity for young people to benefit from interpretation and simplifications of Laws to enable them use these Laws to hold governments accountable and demand implementation of these Laws. The Laws are simplified for different age groups and for easy grasping for the users.

2. Education and Research:

Vision Spring Initiatives' Model school and Crèche project for and children (still under construction) will provide space for young girls and a few boys to 'unlearn' gender stereotypes and gain knowledge on gender. While girls learn that they can undertake any role and responsibilities if they are provided with the knowledge they require, boys learn to respect girls and ultimately become 'champions' in challenging stereotypes. This is one VSI's long term project and plan to charges a fee for the education as a means of sustaining the organization. Through Vision Spring Initiative's gender Manuals young people's reading culture will be enhanced.

VSI's Gender and human rights Institute Project-for gender trainings, curriculum review and development, including ensuring they are relevant to time and needs, teacher training, counselors, school debates.

Research –All interventions promote evidence-based research.

3. Participatory Leadership / Political education Project

Project under Participatory Leadership/Political Education-

Participatory and horizontal approach to leadership-VSI's leadership project draw from many years of partnering and engaging in leadership approaches that are inclusive and horizontal, respecting diversity, enhancing communication skills, every body's input and commitment and sharing results and challenges.

VSI's Political Education Project- election preparation, preparation as voters and those to be voted, school clubs on elections and citizenship, manifestoes and preparing youth for elections and violence free elections.

4. **Sexual and reproductive health and rights Project:** {Sexual and reproductive health and rights-from a development perspective}

Project under Sexual and reproductive health and rights' project

Women and young peoples' sexual and reproductive health and rights remain the most debated issue including lack of its inclusion as a development issue: Comprehensive sexuality education, information about life skills, communication strategies, diversities, bodily autonomy, bodily care, self-esteem, VAW, sexual violence and responding to them.

5. **Networks/Exchange Program / Youth Outreach:** {Youth represent developed and on-going development. They have passions, determination and constitute half of the world's population}.

Project under Network/exchange Program / Youth Outreach

This space enables young people and other groups to dialogue and reach a consensus, understanding and yearnings of young people. It creates safe space for exchange, information sharing, dialogues, debates, peace initiatives amongst others.

1. Gender Justice (Central and the core of VSI programming)

We have moved a lot from documenting cases of human rights violation to handling cases and making referrals to partners such as Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team; Office of the Public Defender; human rights section of the Nigerian police and the social welfare offices. While some of the cases we handled required counselling and psychosocial support services, we referred cases that were eventually decided at Magistrate courts. Cases reported during the reporting period include domestic violence and child custody cases, rape, defilement and incest. In some of these cases we got pro bono lawyers and safe home assistance on behalf of our clients. Most of the cases are on-going. One of the cases has so far favored our client who got custody of her three children. Other cases include abandonment and domestic violence which is currently being handled by Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team (DSVRT).

Vision Spring Initiatives working with International Centre for Sexual and reproductive health and rights provided a week long psychosocial support education to 25 community based organizations who have since stepped down the trainings. From February 2017 to November through consultancy support from Excellent Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), VSI trained more than 30 nascent community based organizations across Nigeria. Part of this training was to build their consciousness towards gender awareness in their programming and sustainability purposes for their organizations. Some of the trainings provided during the project include: Human rights education, safety and security training, fundraising, monitoring and evaluation, governance, research and education.

The organization is a member of Child Protection Network. Child protection networks exist in over half of Nigeria's 36 states. Members carry out monitoring; documentation and reporting of child rights abuse cases, and partner with relevant agencies to support the safety of children, including train the children on their rights and responsibilities.

The organization as member of LagosWomen2030 and Women Thrive Alliance participated at a peaceful protest to end all forms of attack, abuse and killing of women, girls and men in Nigeria. The protest was a response to the incessant report of attacks on women, girls and men by alleged Fulani herdsmen. LagosWomen2030 are a group of Civil Society organizations monitoring and contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria.

The protesters visited media stations, issuing statements and demanding an end to all forms of violence. Places visited include Lagos Television Authority, Office of the governor and Lagos State House of Assembly.

On behalf of Legal Defense and Assistance Project LEDAP, the organization conducted series of human rights training, familiarizing Nigerian Police with the Administration of the Criminal Justice Act. The Act which was signed into law in May 2015 has 495-sections divided into 49 parts, providing for the administration of criminal justice and for related matters in the courts of the Federal Capital Territory

and other Federal Courts in Nigeria. With the Administration of Criminal Justice Act, Nigeria now has a unique and unified law applicable in all federal courts and with respect to offences contained in Federal Legislations. The law repeals the erstwhile Criminal Procedure Act as applied in the South and the Criminal Procedure (Northern states) Act, which applied in the North and the Administration of Justice Commission Act.

In 2017, the organization continued its partnership with Positive Action Treatment Access (PATA) by providing HIV counselling, sexual and reproductive rights education to more than 70 adolescents living with HIV. The training which was supported by Ford Foundation focused on how to enable young people cope with the HIV pandemic, including build their capacities in their choice of career.

Every October 11, Vision Spring Initiatives in partnership with Women Law Development Centre of Nigeria and Ajoke Ayisat Afolabi Foundation partner to host the international day of the girl child. In 2017, the event was held at Veritas International secondary school Oregun Ikeja Lagos. Sessions such as enhancing adolescent's self-esteem was provided by seasoned human rights activists and representatives of civil society organizations in Nigeria. The organization remained committed to responding to cases of violence against women and girl children and a few boys including reporting and handling cases of abuse through counselling, education, psychosocial support and referrals where and when necessary.



INEC women in politics forum with stakeholders Enugu State, Nigeria

1. Education and Research

Although school enrolment remains high for the girl child, Nigeria is yet to have a 100% enrolment for girls as desired by the provisions of the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) Platform for Action (PFA). Dropout rate of girls from school is still a critical area of concern. 53% of girls are out of school at the secondary school level compared to 37% of boys. Most of the girls would have dropped out of school by the tertiary level.

Vision Spring Initiatives' education and research received a boost in the years under review. We conducted school interventions in partnership with MATE secondary school in Lagos Nigeria with young people. At the end, there was a commitment between the school and Vision Spring Initiatives to provide comprehensive sexuality education for the schools. This was supported by IPAS Nigeria. Following the successful completion of the project, the training was replicated in neighboring Gladys secondary school.



VSI's SRHR training participants and mentors

The trainings and dialogue was for four (4) days and organized for 150 adolescents identified from three private schools (Mate secondary school, Gladys Secondary school and Harrobs International school all located within Ketu area of Lagos state of Nigeria and 1 day training for 30 adolescents identified from ten local government areas of Lagos state of Nigeria; Ikorodu, Kosofe, Ikeja, Oshodi-Isolo, Surulere, Ojo, Lagos Island, Shomolu, Alimosho, Odi-olowo LGAs supported by IPAS to build beneficiaries capacity on SRHR decision making and subsequently

become advocates on SRHR issues at their various spaces of influence.



Head teacher of Mate School commits to partner with VSI to promote SRHR

The objectives of the training include the following:

- Promote sexual and reproductive health knowledge amongst adolescents aged 18-24.
- Create awareness on the challenges young people face in choosing career
- Enhance capacity of young persons to commence advocacy for repeal of negative laws in partnership with Vision Spring Initiatives
- Increase knowledge on safer sex practices which will ultimately be stepped down to other adolescents and lead to reduced unsafe abortion
- Partner with schools as strategic stakeholders in demanding comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights education in schools

The training at the three secondary schools took place at the schools while the training for 30 adolescents held at Citi height hotel, Lagos. The training methods used included power point presentations, group works, participatory and interactive discussions, video clips and the use of role plays in training delivery.

The trainings ended with commitment from adolescents to step down the knowledge as one of its deliverables. Participant's scores on the post test on subjects such as self-esteem and self- value, ending all forms of unsafe abortion and comprehensive sexuality education was an indication that learning had taken place. The participants were able to identify agents that influence self-esteem of

adolescents and through plenary explained their supportive and not so supportive roles.



The young training beneficiaries had many questions around menstrual hygiene which was answered by VSI team and other partners including medical personnel. The leadership of the schools thanked VSI for a job well done committing to partner with the organization in other areas of need. The organization on its part promised to expand its scope and partnership with schools and other neighboring institutions towards building knowledge.

At the end of the interventions participants at the school and the SRHR training were thanked for sharing their personal stories and assured that it was an indication that they understood the importance of planning for the future. They were also told that personal development was crucial to the development of society. Responding to the presentations, some participants confirmed that the skills they gained will enable them focus, including enhancing the reproductive health and rights decision-making.



Beneficiaries of our school training on SRHR

In our estimation, it achieved great results which ties into earlier skills that VSI has been building around SRHR knowledge. The level of interactions and outcome of the evaluation showed that young people desire SRHR knowledge.

Here is an excerpt of the on the spot evaluation recorded from participants:

- ✓ *Please have more of this training if possible more publicly for more people to benefit*
- ✓ *I think some people had questions but were too shy to ask. I suggest that for subsequent trainings you provide a box where we can drop questions or better still create a WhatsApp page*
- ✓ *Please keep it up, but next time more experiences should be shared so that we can learn*
- ✓ *Thank you very much please continue passing information for young people on comprehensive sexuality education*
- ✓ *I feel we should have more days to take on comprehensive sexuality education*
- ✓ *The training needs to be replicated in every local government, schools and with grass root to enable them also know about SRHR*
- ✓ *The thing they thought us is very interesting and it will help me to protect myself from having unprotected sex, especially as our teachers don't teach us.*

2. Participatory Leadership / Political education

Nigeria witnessed what can be described as its worst period from 2016-2018 with respect to women's political participation. Nigeria is signatory to many treaties and commitments but the various governments since independence have demonstrated poor political will towards addressing gender gaps. Some of the documents Nigeria has fallen short in fulfilling include: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against Women, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development goals. Equality between women and men is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and is also necessary and fundamental prerequisite for equality.

The height women have attained in Nigerian politics still leaves a lot to be desired. No woman has been elected a Governor of state in Nigeria. Governors who had female deputies were elected in 1999, 2007, 2011 and 2015 out of the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

There were 3 women senators compared to 106 men elected in 1999; 4 women and 105 men elected into the senate in 2003. In 2007 8 women and 101 men; In 2011, 7 women as opposed to 102 men and in 2015, 8 women and 101 men were voted into the senate.

The representation in the lower house is lopsided as well. There were 12 women and 348 men in 1999, 21 women, 339 men, in 2003, in 2007, 23 women and 337 men; 2011, 26 women and 334 men and 19 women and 341 men in 2015.

The implications of this systemic marginalization of women in Policy making positions tells a lot about the low status of women in Nigeria and the strength of patriarchal hold which perpetually weakens the political will to address issues of gender inequality in Nigeria. It means that women in the senate and in the lower house would find it difficult to pass any law that does not favor men.

Vision Spring Initiatives aware of these challenges partnered with organizations focusing on demanding accountability with regards to government's commitment to

women in the area of leadership and decision making. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Lagos and its partners; Women Law Development Center of Nigeria, Ajoke Ayisat Afolabi Foundation and Vision Spring Initiatives hosted a media round table to determine how best to engage towards ensuring overcoming some of the obstacles mentioned above and implement women's full participation and acceptance as credible candidates in the 2019 elections in Nigeria.

Objective: To implement series of activities aimed at ensuring increased women's participation as voters and candidates in the 2019 elections.

Specific objectives:

- To enhance mobilization of women to undertake and engage in the Continuous Voters Registration
- To dialogue with political parties towards the implementation of party manifestoes including the 35% Affirmative Action
- To map out plans on engaging stakeholders such as religious leaders and cultural gate-keepers to ensure support for women's engagement in the electoral processes.
- To deliberate on strategies for engaging media on supporting and ending negative portrayal of women.

Thereafter, the partners hosted civil society dialogue. Representatives of civil society led by Women Law Development Centre of Nigeria, Ajoke Ayisat Foundation and Vision Spring Initiatives and INEC met to chart the way towards ensuring free and fair elections in Nigeria come 2019. The meeting which was termed timely and an avenue towards ensuring all adults and those eligible to vote participate was hosted by INEC. At the meeting, challenges of past elections were discussed. Some of these challenges include late preparedness, lack of registration of young people who had reached the voting age of 18 years, women's poor participation and poor election outcomes for women, poor turn out on election days due to fear of violence and fear of attack amongst other challenges.

The dialogue provided platform for key stakeholders from norms setting institutions; media representatives, governments and civil society organizations to deliberate on how to better contribute toward achieving better outcomes during the elections coming up in 2019.

In 2017, the organization was part of a strategic workshop with leaders of civil society organizations representing the 6 geopolitical zones. The event which was well attended was held at Ozom hotel Enugu Nigeria. Participants were mostly civil society groups, faith based, and development partners and grass root organizations all working on achieving gender justice in Nigeria. Participants expressed enthusiasm for the invitation, commending INEC for organizing the event which they felt was critical and timely.

The meeting agreed that the decrease of women in elective position in 2015 elections is problematic, stressing the need to sustain and interrogate women's poor performance with a view to finding lasting solution. The critical role CSOs play as counterparts was underlined, as they are in a position to help both government and political parties and electorate to become more proactive, play pivotal roles, constructively engage the different partners and ensure that election results turn out in favor of women.

The strategic meeting noted some of the challenges women face in their quest to occupy leadership position to include:

- Superiority complex, (the class feeling-men feel they are better, and superior to women)
- Lack of family support (women have to get permission)
- Money politics/God fatherism
- Media bias-negative portrayal of women as sex objects.
- Intimidation and violence-the political arena is rife
- Cultural and religious bias-they are to be seen and not heard.
- Poverty,
- Low level of literacy

-Inadequate civil education and lack of awareness of constitutional rights, undemocratic political structures, arbitrary changing of the rules and withholding of vital information

-Hostile political environment

-Labelling of women as anti-party people, labelling women aspirants as cultural deviants since the prevalent culture does not accept assertiveness, public or leadership roles for women.

-The indigeneity ploy

-Male dominated party structure

The meeting recommended the following as a means of moving the women's agenda:

-Identification and establishment of a Women's fund

-Women's empowerment political office-funded by Federal ministry of women affairs

-Funding strategies of donor organizations must change for significant improvement in the quest for gender equality and women empowerment

-Enhancing women's capacity and mentoring for female political aspirants

-Constitutional and legal reforms

-Political party quotas and other forms of alternative action to mainstream women in the party structure

-Eliminating violence and engaging with traditional and religious institutions including cultures opposed to women leadership

-Engaging with religious institutions

- Voluntary party quotas instituted by political parties

- Fulfilment of the 35% Affirmative Action

- Operationalization of the Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill

The meeting agreed that INEC is in a position especially given its oversight functions to ensure women's inclusion in the political space.

The following five (5) action Points was agreed upon to guide advocacy for increased women participation and elections in 2019:

1. Mobilize more women to participate in Continuous Voters' Registration
2. Engagement with political parties
3. Increased advocacy to strategic stakeholders on advancing women's political participation General advocacy to key stakeholders
4. Engagement of media and media training for women
5. Advocacy to inter agency security committee to include more women security officials in the elections

In conclusion Amina Salihu a human rights activist said women must redefine what winning means to them, hold each other's hands, find their voices, work with men and celebrate those who identify with women, while protecting the agenda.



Vision Spring Initiatives in partnership with WLDCN, Ajoke Ayishat Foundation and INEC Lagos at the Stakeholders dialogue on women's participation

Establishment of Alliance for Inclusion

The events happening in the year and women's poor representation at both appointive and elective positions led to the establishment of 'Alliance for Inclusion'

by Vision Spring Initiatives and other feminist organizations working on women's political participation.

Alliance for inclusion which was formed after series of deliberations is a movement of concerned Nigerians aimed at creating space politically and socio-economically for women, youth and persons with disabilities who continue to remain marginalized and excluded from the decision making process in Nigeria.

The movement is committed to creative thinking and action to transform the lives of every Nigerian and Nigeria into a place where all persons enjoy equal opportunities, social justice, economic benefits, educational and other amenities. The work of the movement is shaped by its belief that Nigerians deserve more!!!

We will advocate and work to restore the rescinding values of our society, a society where governance and public service work for everybody.

Our aim is to reach the masses that ordinarily are only used for voting, those people who are usually regarded as spectators in politics-market women, artisans, farmers and other excluded groups who see themselves as campaigners and not contesters.

Armed with the understanding of the purpose of the group, members were encouraged to commence mobilization based on the above value propositions and target groups. There are plans to register a women's political party and women politicians will be encouraged to vie for leadership positions when duly registered.



Tolu of VSI at a research validation on impact of insurgencies on women with Ayesha Imam and Hauwa Biu.

3. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Our Sexual and Reproductive health and rights intervention received a boost in the years under review as partners such as INCREASE, IPAS International, IPAS Nigeria and In-roads United States supported our interventions. We published statements, demanding accountability from governments and other agencies such as the budgetary office on SRHR, media and health ministries.



Vision Spring Initiatives ending abortion stigma competition

Vision Spring Initiatives held planning meetings with staff and volunteers to identify institutions and young people who will benefit from its competition on ending abortion stigma. This was followed by identifying judges to determine the criteria for qualifying or choosing the best entries. Three judges grounded in human rights and health issues were identified for this purpose. Thereafter the organization designed one page concept note which was widely distributed through website and social media, other means include through text messages and poster pasting at strategic places.



Vision Spring Initiatives presents first prize to Tobiloba Ayodele on its SRHR project



Newspaper report of the SRHR event

The goal of the project was to enhance beneficiary's capacity on SRHR decision making and subsequently become advocates on SRHR issues at their various areas of influence.

The objective of the project which was collation of entries, award ceremony and training on ending unsafe abortion include the following:

- Promote sexual and reproductive health knowledge amongst adolescents aged 18-24.
- Partner with adolescents to end all forms of abortion stigma
- Create awareness on the challenges of unsafe abortion and build capacity and knowledge of beneficiaries to reach out to peers
- Enhance capacity of young persons to commence advocacy for repeal of negative abortion laws in partnership with Vision Spring Initiatives
- Increase knowledge on safer sex practices which will ultimately be stepped down to other adolescents, leading to reduced unsafe abortion and stigma.

At the end of the award ceremony, short training on ending unsafe abortion was held. The event was widely documented. This led to additional support by IPAS Nigeria. The second event led to a more focused training where 30 young women benefitted. There was a pre and post test to determine knowledge level and an end of project evaluation.



Second award winner. Josephine Aseme, got book scholarship received on her behalf by Madam Ese

Through the IPAS project we got the commitment of 2 schools to partner with VSI to create awareness on ending unsafe abortion and stigma.

Our greatest lesson was the desire of young people to be equipped with information. During the award ceremony, we had to spend extra hours

responding to SRHR needs of young people. We also realized that young people have been socialized to think that abortion stigma is necessary to stop young people from engaging in abortion. Another lesson is abortion has been demonized by religious groups. To this end, we have resolved to work more with faith based groups and young people of faith.



Tolu stressing a point during the SRHR training for girls

The first prize of laptop computer was won by an undergraduate Ayodele Oluwatobi who is very excited to own a laptop computer to facilitate her course work. The second prize winner Josephine Aseme got book scholarship award while the third prize winner got an opportunity to intern with Vision Spring Initiatives. In the coming years, Vision Spring Initiatives will like to reach more boys as their role is critical in supporting girls in the effort to end all forms of sexual and gender based violence including unsafe abortions. (award winning poems and essays)

Through support from German Consulate, Vision Spring Initiative partnered with Access to Rights and Health Development Initiatives (ARDHI) working on SRHR for young people to provide counselling and psychosocial support training for 40 men and girls identified from various LGAs in Lagos state. This was closely followed by another training supported by International Centre for Sexual and reproductive health and rights. Some of the sessions presented included rights and responsibilities, effect of torture and extortion of civilians by law

enforcement agencies. This was a response to incessant arrests of key populations in Nigeria. The organization also appeared in court to provide support to those charged to court.

The organization in partnership with Interfaith Diversity Network of West Africa and Levites Initiatives responded to arrest of 100 young people arrested by SARs Nigeria. In partnership, they were all bailed from detention, provided with psychosocial education and training.

The organization in partnership with COC Netherlands through consultancy provided research on the lives of sexual minorities in 4 countries viz: Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Ghana and Liberia. It is currently working on developing reports from the research.

In 2018, the organization served as fiscal host to four nascent organizations and one regional network towards accessing funds to implement their interventions. The organization also received funding from University of Maryland, Baltimore towards the size estimation intervention for key population in Nigeria including reporting and supervising organizations selected in Lagos state to undertake the study.

4. Networks / Exchange Program / Youth Outreach

During the reporting period, the organization with an aim towards achieving its mandate partnered with the following agencies:

Connecting the Dot project of INCREASE is an initiative of International Centre for Sexual and reproductive health and rights. This project seeks to address the weak state of cross movement and multi-sectoral collaboration for advocacy for delicate (controversial) Sexual Reproductive Rights issues. It also seeks to build capacities of young activists on intersectionality of rights and to connect cyber activism to policy corridors lobbying and street demonstrations, rallies and campaigns. Graduates of Connecting the Dots will form network of activists that will provide the missing buffer for frontline sexual rights defenders; lending their voices and providing a critical mass for broad range of sexual rights advocacy.



Meeting with activists at ICASA in 2016

LagosWomen2030 is a pressure group of women activists working to monitor the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, Civil society groups working on various thematic areas of the goals team up and draw government attention on the implementations needs including holding up red flags when expectations are not met. Vision Spring Initiatives as a member contributes and attends projects by

sister organizations. We work as allies in protecting and defending a broad range of human rights issues.



Nigeria delegates at the 19th ICASA event in 2016

In 2018, Vision Spring Initiatives through consultancy awarded to it by Legal Defense and Assistance Project (LEDAP) developed the sexual and gender based violence training manual for police in Lagos state. The purpose of the Training Manual is to improve the skills of police personnel in handling cases of sexual and gender-based violence by instilling ethical principles and increasing awareness among the force personnel, general population and decision makers on the importance of gender based violence as a human rights issue and its common occurrence. The organization has since stepped down trainings in Lagos state of Nigeria reaching more than 2,000 police personnel.

The organization has been partnering with Women Law Development Centre of Nigeria to demand women's participation in decision making position. The two organizations in partnership with Ajoke Aishat Afolabi Foundation and INEC Lagos held dialogue with relevant stakeholders preparatory to the 2019 elections. Some of the outcomes of the series of consultations include the following:

- Improved understanding of election processes and roles to be played by partners
- Proposed areas of collaboration for the implementation of series of activities leading to 2019 elections agreed upon and carried out

- Improved media relationship with INEC, civil society and general public
- Implementation of the manifestoes of political parties
- Increased registration of women and new entrants in the Continuous votes Registration

Vision Spring Initiatives is a member of CSO League Network established by Planned Parenthood Federation of Africa (IPPF-Africa region). CSO League is *an umbrella of CSOs* advocating for Human rights including SRR, providing access to quality SRH services, recognising special needs of youths, poor, persons living in conflict areas/humanitarian crises and all vulnerable persons by leveraging capacities among members and working in partnerships. In 2018 and 2019 monitored the implementation of regional commitments by member countries and attended strategic conversation towards the implementation of robust sexual and reproductive health and rights in Africa.

In 2017, Vision Spring Initiatives through technical support by IRAW Asia Pacific participated at Nigeria's CEDAW Review meeting which took place in Geneva. The organization had participated in development of Shadow report by civil society which was presented at the CEDAW review meeting. The organization is also working with other sister organization to monitor the implementation of the concluding comments from the committee.

In 2015, Vision Spring Initiatives received two separate support from IPAS Nigeria to implement

Vision Spring Initiatives is a member of Interfaith Diversity Network of West Africa. The Network is a regional network of activists, faith based individuals, advocates and individual activists working for inclusion of diverse persons to create a world governed by respect and dignity. We seek a day where all persons irrespective of religious beliefs become great allies in the quest for a safe and free society for all humans. The convener of the network strongly believe that humans are born free and equal and should enjoy their full human rights and achieve their full potentials in a safe and loving society irrespective of background and belief.

The organization is a member of Coalition for the Defense of Sexual rights. This is an advocacy platform for the implementation of the sexual and reproductive health

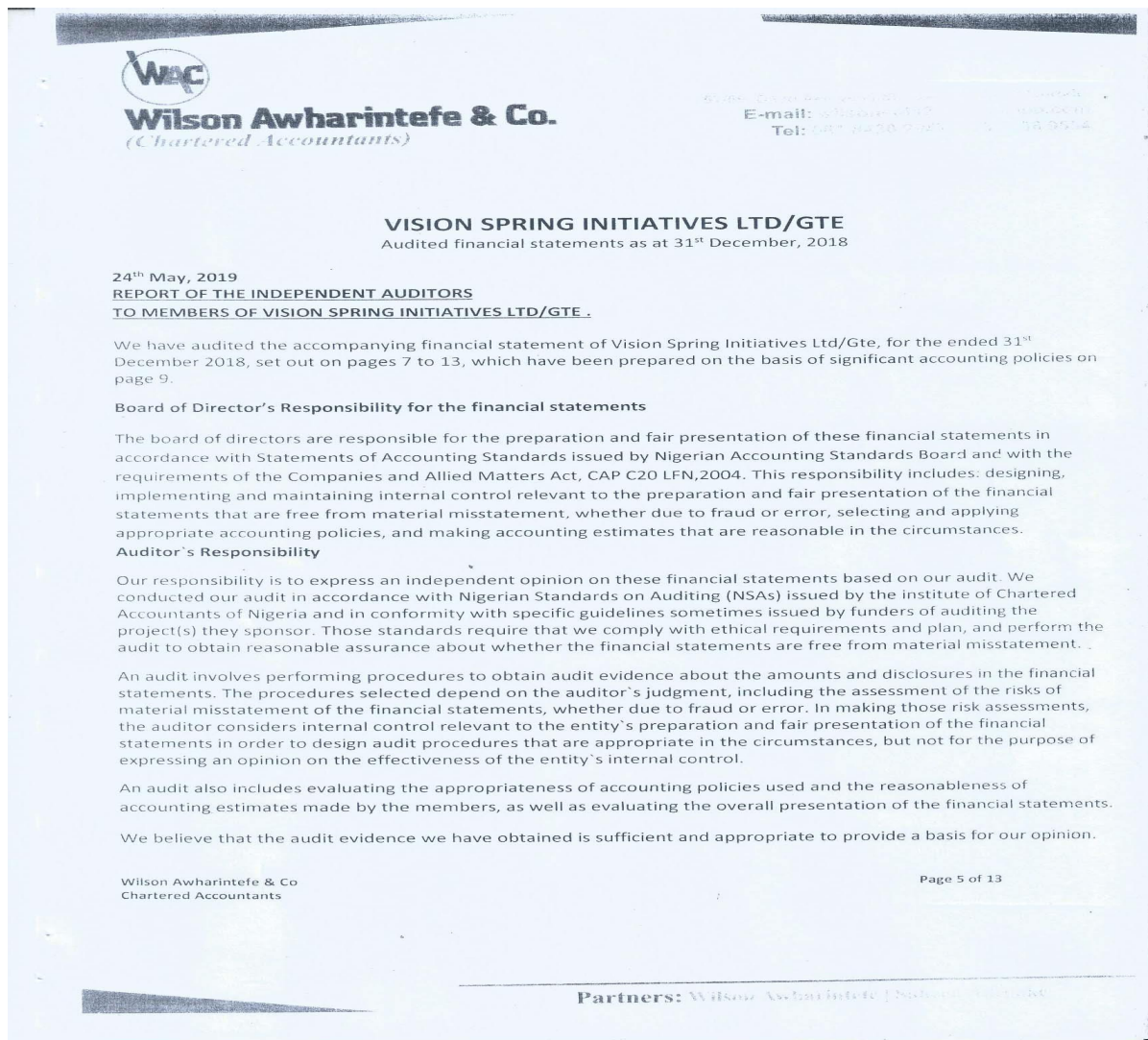
and rights of all Nigerians. It has been in the forefront of pushing for robust HIV intervention for sexual orientation and advocacy for the realization of rights of all citizens.

Group of 6 organizations

In 2015 Vision Spring Initiatives conceived of the idea to identify sister organizations whose work focus on ending all forms of violence against women, girls and other vulnerable groups. This led to the formation of Group of 6 (G6). In March 2015 the group comprising Gender and Development Action, Partnership for Justice, Vision Spring Initiatives, Women Law Development Centre of Nigeria, Echoes of Women in Africa and Women's Rights and Health Project developed a 75 page review of Beijing +20 supported by Justice for All (J4A). On return from the Commission on the Status of Women meeting in New York, the organizations carried out a step down training for other CSOs and relevant agencies to position them for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. A work plan was developed to guide its work in this regard.



5.Administration and Finance



VISION SPRING INITIATIVES LTD/GTE
Audited financial statements as at 31st December, 2018

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VISION SPRING INITIATIVES LTD/GTE

Audited financial statements as at 31st December, 2018

CORPORATE INFORMATION

REGISTERED OFFICE

2B, Kofoworola Street, Dele Kuti Estate, Beach Road Ebute,
Ikorodu, Lagos State

Email: visionspringinitiatives@yahoo.com

visionspringprojects@yahoo.com

Website: www.visionspringinitiatives.org

Facebook: [visionspringinitiatives](https://www.facebook.com/visionspringinitiatives)

Twitter: [@vsi_ng](https://twitter.com/vsi_ng)

AUDITORS

Wilson Awharintefe & Co
Chartered Accountants,
59, Dayo Akinyemi Street,
Owutu-Ikorodu, Lagos.

SOLICITORS

K.C. Umenjamma Esq.
1, Atiba Street, Opposite Binitie Hotel,
Computer Village,
Ikeja, Lagos.

BANKERS

Polaris Bank
Ogudu Road,
Ogudu-Ojota, Lagos.

BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. Ann Ojimba
Dr. Toyin Ajao
Barrister Chioma Ogwuegbu
Barrister Nkemdilim Amelia Izuako
Dolapo Dola-lami
Baijatu Bello
Ngozi Nwosu-Juba

VISION SPRING INITIATIVES LTD/GTE

Audited financial statements as at 31st December, 2018

Statement of Directors' Responsibilities

The companies and Allied Matters Act 1990 requires Director to prepare financial statements for each financial period that give a true and fair view of the state of financial affairs of the company at the end of the period and of its profit and loss. The responsibilities include ensuring that the company:

- a) Keeps proper accounting records that disclose, with reasonable accuracy, the financial position of the company and comply with the requirements of the companies and Allied Matters Act 1990;
- b) Establishes adequate internal controls to safeguard its assets and to prevent and detect fraud and other regularities; and
- c) Prepares its financial statements using suitable accounting policies supported by reasonable and prudent judgments and estimates, and are consistently applied.

The Directors accept responsibility for the annual financial statements, which have been prepared using appropriate accounting policies supported by reasonable and prudent judgments and estimates, in conformity with Nigerian Accounting Standards and the requirements of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 1990.

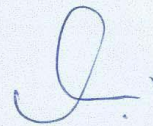
The Directors are of the opinion that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial affairs of the company and of its profit or loss. The directors further accept responsibility for the maintenance of accounting records that may be relied upon in the preparation of financial statements, as well as adequate systems of internal financial control.

Nothing has come to the attention of the directors to indicate that the company will not remain a going concern for at least twelve months from the date of this statement.

20th May, 2019



Dr. Ann Ojimba
Chair of Board



Ngozi Nwosu-Juba
Project Director



Wilson Awharintefe & Co.
(Chartered Accountants)

Plot 10, Oshodi, Lagos State
E-mail: info@wac.com.ng
Tel: 01 430 2243

VISION SPRING INITIATIVES LTD/GTE

Audited financial statements as at 31st December, 2018

24th May, 2019

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS

TO MEMBERS OF VISION SPRING INITIATIVES LTD/GTE .

We have audited the accompanying financial statement of Vision Spring Initiatives Ltd/Gte, for the ended 31st December 2018, set out on pages 7 to 13, which have been prepared on the basis of significant accounting policies on page 9.

Board of Director's Responsibility for the financial statements

The board of directors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Statements of Accounting Standards issued by Nigerian Accounting Standards Board and with the requirements of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, CAP C20 LFN,2004. This responsibility includes: designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies, and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an independent opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Nigerian Standards on Auditing (NSAs) issued by the institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria and in conformity with specific guidelines sometimes issued by funders of auditing the project(s) they sponsor. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan, and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control.

An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the members, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Wilson Awharintefe & Co
Chartered Accountants

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Partners: Wilson Awharintefe | info@wac.com.ng


OPINION

In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company financial position as at 31st December 2018 in accordance with statements of Accounting Standards issued by Nigerian Accounting Standards Board and the Companies and Allied Matters Act, CAP C20 LFN. 2004.

Report on other legal requirements

The Companies and Allied Matters Act, CAP C20 LFN,2004 requires that in carrying out our audit we consider and report to you on the following matters. We confirm that:

- 1) We have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purpose of our audit.
- 2) In our opinion, proper books of account have been kept by the company; and
- 3) The company's Balance sheet and inflow and outflow accounts are in agreement with the books of accounts.


Wilson Awharintefe
FRC/2019/ICAN/00000019058
For: **WILSON AWHARINTEFE & CO**
(Chartered Accountants)
Lagos.



VISION SPRING INITIATIVES LTD/GTE
Audited Financial Statements as at 31st December, 2018

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2018**

	Note	2018 N	2016 N
Assets			
Non-current Asset:			
Property, Plant & Machinery	1	4,094,350	4,266,750
Current Asset:			
Receivables		Nil	Nil
Rent prepaid		Nil	300,000
Bank & cash balances		<u>10,254,658</u>	<u>102,400</u>
Total Assets		14,349,008	4,669,150
LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Audit fee		100,000	80,000
Sundry expenses		<u>Nil</u>	<u>98,600</u>
Net asset		<u>14,249,008</u>	<u>4,490,550</u>
FINANCED BY:			
Accumulated fund	2	357,476	36,865
Grants	3	6,069,032	3,640,230
Utilized Fund c/fwd		<u>7,822,500</u>	<u>813,555</u>
Total Funds Employed		<u>14,249,008</u>	<u>4,490,550</u>

Dr. Ann Ojimba
Chair of the Board

Ngozi Nwosu-Juba
Project Director

Directors

Wilson Awharintefe & Co
Chartered Accountants

VISION SPRING INITIATIVES LTD/GTE

Audited Financial Statements as at 31st December, 2018

STATEMENT OF INFLOW AND OUTFLOW ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 2018

	Note	2018 N	2016 N
GROSS CASH INFLOW	5	36,036,900	23,390,700
LESS: FIXED ASSETS PURCHASES		NIL	(800,000)
LESS WORK IN PROGRESS		(7,822,500)	
NET FLOW OF CASH		<u>28,214,400</u>	<u>22,590,700</u>
DEDUCT: OUTFLOW/ DISBURSEMENTS			
Projects Executed	6	25,814,304	20,465,000
Administrative Overhead	7	2,079,485	1,811,165
TOTAL OUTFLOW/DISBURSMENTS		<u>27,893,789</u>	<u>22,276,165</u>
EXCESS OF INFLOW OVER OUTFLOW		<u>320,611</u>	<u>314,535</u>

Wilson Awharintefe & Co
Chartered Accountants

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VISION SPRING INITIATIVES LTD/GTE

Audited financial statements as at 31st December, 2018

Accounting Policies

1. **Accounting Convention:** The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention.
2. **Income:** The Income shown in the accounts include all the amount received from donors for all programmes
3. **Foreign Currency Transaction:** Transaction arising in foreign currency are converted to Naira at the approximate rate of exchange ruling at the dates of the transaction. Foreign currency balances are converted to the Naira at the official rates of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. Any differences arising on the conversion to Naira are dealt with in the statement of inflow and outflow.
4. **Fixed Assets:** Fixed Assets are stated at the cost less depreciation.
5. **Depreciation:** Depreciation charges on fixed assets are calculated at the following rates to write off the cost of the assets on a straight line basis over the expected useful lives of the assets.

Landed Property	0%
Office Equipment	20%
Furniture, Fittings, Books	15%

VISION SPRING INITIATIVES LTD/GTE

Audited Financial Statements as at 31st December, 2018

NOTE: 1	FIXED ASSET			
	LANDED PROPERTY N	OFFICE EQUIPMENT N	FURNITURE BOOKS & FITTING N	TOTAL N
Cost b/fwd.	3,950,000	597,150	286,000	4,833,150
Additions	<u>NIL</u>	<u>NIL</u>	<u>NIL</u>	<u>NIL</u>
Total	<u>3,950,000</u>	<u>597,150</u>	<u>286,000</u>	<u>4,833,150</u>
DEPRECIATION:				
Brought Forward	NIL	481,900	124,500	606,400
For the year	<u>NIL</u>	<u>89,500</u>	<u>42,900</u>	<u>132,400</u>
Total	NIL	<u>571,400</u>	<u>167,400</u>	<u>738,800</u>
NET BOOK VALUE:				
AT 31/12/18	3,950,000	25,750	118,600	4,094,350
AT 31/12/16	3,950,000	115,250	161,500	4,226,750

NOTE 2: ACCUMULATED FUND	2018 N	2016 N
Accumulated Fund b/fwd.	36,865	(277,673)
Excess of inflow over outflow	<u>320,611</u>	<u>314,535</u>
Accumulated Fund c/fwd.	<u>357,476</u>	<u>36,865</u>

NOTE 3: GRANTS	2018 N	2016 N
Grants b/fwd.	3,640,230	3,640,230
Loans by the board	<u>2,428,802</u>	<u>Nil</u>
Total c/fwd.	<u>6,069,032</u>	<u>3,640,230</u>

NOTE: 5**IN-FLOWS****SOURCE OF FUNDS RECEIVED:**

	N
1. In-Roads, United States	875,000
2. Frontline AIDS	7,822,500
3. COC Netherlands	4,339,400
4. Mama Cash	4,200,000
5. Astrea foundation	4,200,000
6. Lush Charity Pot UK	1,800,000
7. IPAS Nigeria	500,000
8. International Centre for Sexual & Reproductive health	1,000,000
9. University of Maryland (Baltimore)	11,000,000
10. LEDAP Nigeria- Consultancy	<u>300,000</u>
Total funds	<u>36,036,900</u>

NOTE: 6 PROJECTS EXECUTED

	N
• Training of adolescent girls on ending abortion stigma in Nigeria	2,870,000
• Partnership with 3 schools (MATE, GLADYS, HARROB) on Comprehensive sexuality education for girls between 15-18 year	2,688,000
• Human rights education and psychosocial support for 45 key for population members in Lagos.	4,125,000
• Human rights education and psychosocial support to 100 key Population members in Asaba, Delta State of Nigeria.	2,801,200
• Feminist dialogue and human rights education in Kano, North of Nigeria	3,058,000
• Responding to cases of human rights violations and making references	1,068,000
• Training of adolescent girls on SRHR/ menstrual hygiene at Veritas School, Ikeja	2,009,104
• Web/App online safe space for key population in Nigeria	1,980,000
• 4 country research on the lives of key population in Anglophone West Africa towards effective strategy for meeting SRHR needs in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Liberia	3,250,000
• Production of training manual of Police officers on effective response to Sexual and gender based violence for at key population and persons with disabilities	<u>1,965,000</u>
Total	<u>25,814,304</u>

VISION SPRING INITIATIVES LTD/GTE

Audited financial statements as at 31st December, 2018

NOTE: 7 ADMINISTRATIVE OVERHEAD

	2018	2016
	N	N
Office rent	400,000	300,000
Allowance to Voluntary Staff	860,000	950,000
Communication & Internet Expenses	127,675	115,200
Depreciation	132,400	139,280
Electricity & Generator Expenses	235,860	122,650
Printing & Stationery	75,800	48,250
Office General Expenses	109,100	41,500
Bank Charges	38,650	14,255
Audit Fee	<u>100,000</u>	<u>80,000</u>
Total	<u>2,079,485</u>	<u>1,811,165</u>

Wilson Awharintefe & Co
Chartered Accountants

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VISION SPRING INITIATIVES LTD/GTE
Audited financial statements as at 31st December, 2018

CASHFLOW STATEMENTS

	2018	
Cashflow from operating activities	N	
Excess of income over expenditure	320,611	
Add back depreciation	<u>132,400</u>	
		453,011
Changes in working capital		
Decrease in current asset	300,000	
Decrease in current liabilities	(78,600)	
		<u>221,400</u>
Net cashflow from operating activities		674,411
Cashflow from investing activities	Nil	
Cashflow from financing activities		
Grant	2,428,802	
Utilized fund	<u>7,049,045</u>	
Net cashflow from financing activities		9,477,847
Net cash & cash equivalent		10,152,158
Add: Opening cash at the beginning		<u>102,400</u>
Closing cash/cash equivalent at ending		<u>10,254,658</u>

International, regional and national meetings attended

As part of its capacity building efforts and learning, Vision Spring Initiatives attended the following meetings and events in the years under review:

Commission on the status of Women, New York 2017

Personnel

Ngozi Nwosu-Juba /Project Director

Juliet Abuah / Program Coordinator / Accounts Officer

Toluwalashe Adeniya- Program Assistant

Tobi Ayodele- Programs / ICT

Tope Oshinaike / Counsellor (Part time)

Adesoji Juba /Volunteer

Board Members

Toyin Ajao

Dolapo Dola-Lami

Baijatu Bello

Chioma Ogwuegbu

Justice Nkem Izuako

Dr. Ann Ojimba

Ngozi Nwosu-Juba (ex-officio member)

Partners

CSO League, Kenya

Group of 6 organizations (G6)

Interfaith Diversity Network of West Africa

FEMNET Kenya

Women Law Development Center of Nigeria (WLDCN)

Coalition for the Defense of Sexual Rights (CDSR)

LAGOSWOMEN2030

International Center for Sexual and Reproductive health and rights
(INCREASE)

Positive Action for Treatment Access (PATA)

Mate Secondary School

Igbobi Junior School

Supporters

In-Roads, United States

Good-Seed Petrochemical Company

IPAS Nigeria

University of Maryland Baltimore (Consultancies)

COC Netherlands (Consultancies)

International Centre for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
(INCREASE)

LEDAP (Consultancies)

Excellent Education and Community Welfare (ECEWS)

Board members' contribution in cash and kind