

GENDER JUSTICE

PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS

FEMINIST LEADERSHIP

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

PARTICIPATORY LEADERSHIP

ANNUAL REPORT

RC No.908183

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Our Thematic Areas

<p>Gender Justice</p> <p>This is Central and the core of VSI programming.</p>	<p>Sexual and reproductive health and rights</p> <p>Through VSI various programs women and girls have taken ownership of their bodies.</p>
<p>Partnerships</p> <p>Through partnerships our voices are amplified and greater results are achieved.</p>	<p>Participatory leadership/ women's decision-making</p> <p>Through our approach to leadership and advocacy for women and girls' participation, the circle of learning has been expanding.</p>
<p>Education/Research</p> <p>VSI contributes to learning and results that impact women, girls and vulnerable groups.</p>	

The Years in Numbers

<p>WORKSHOPS ATTENDED</p> <p>35</p>	<p>CAMPAIGNS ATTENDED</p> <p>5</p>
<p>TRAININGS OF TRAINERS</p> <p>3</p>	<p>MEDIA EVENTS ATTENDED</p> <p>2</p>
<p>PUBLICATIONS</p> <p>3</p>	 <p>The image is a screenshot of a social media post from the account 'vsi_ng' in Lagos, Nigeria. It depicts a woman in a radio studio, wearing large headphones and speaking into a professional microphone. She is seated at a desk with a laptop. Behind her is a banner for 'EKO 89.7FM' with the slogan '1st on your mind'. The banner is covered in handwritten signatures and notes, including '#WMTxtor' and 'Mama H. (Sister) Olatunji'. The overall scene is a professional broadcast environment.</p>

INDIVIDUALS REACHED

WOMEN 4,000,000	MEN 2,000,000
GIRLS 300	Boys 200
KEY INFLUENCERS 200	Media 30



Executive Summary

In 2021 Vision Spring Initiatives made giant strides in terms of implementing projects, getting more grants, recruiting and training more volunteers for its Girl Impact Project, partnering with other NGOs and successfully registering with the Ministry for Women Affairs. Vision Spring Initiatives was also granted United Nations ECOSOC status.

During the implementation of VSI projects, the organisation realized that due to the global Covid-19 pandemic, existing gender imbalances became worse and intensified as reports of violence against women, especially domestic violence, heightened. Yet survivors found it harder to seek help and access support. The lockdown, school closures and economic decline left women and girls poorer, out of school and out of jobs, and more vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, forced marriages and harassment.

According to the latest estimates, nearly 1 in 3 women aged 15 years and older, around the world have been subjected to physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, non-partner or both, at least once in their lifetime, indicating that levels of Violence against Women and Girls have remained largely unchanged over the last decade.

These numbers do not reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and would be even higher if they included the full continuum of violence that affect women and girls including sexual harassment, violence in digital contexts, harmful practices and sexual exploitation. It is also not inclusive of all forms of violence prevalent for lesbian, bisexual, queer and trans women, women with disabilities and women in displaced communities.

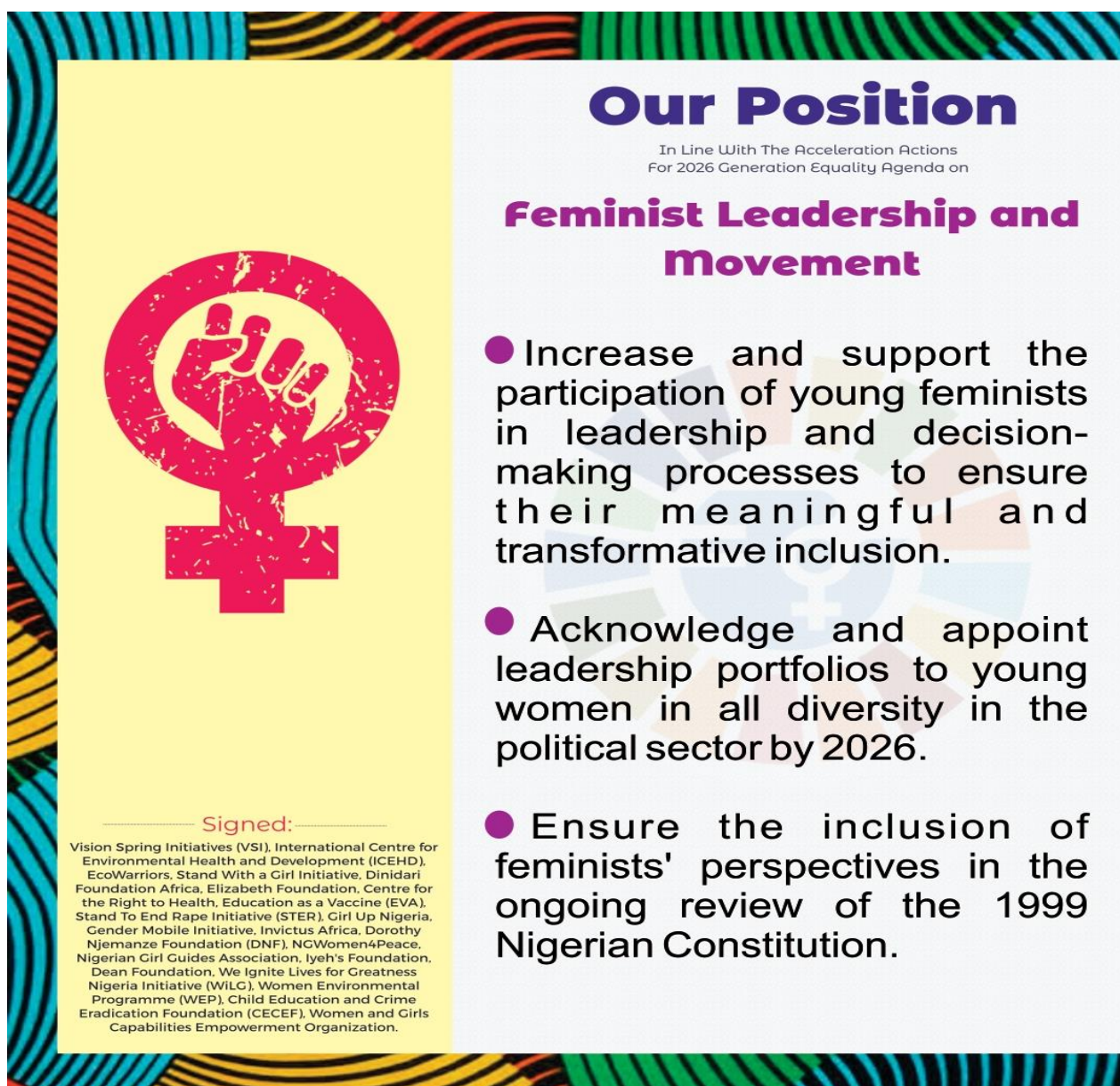
Globally, 243 million women and girls were abused by an intimate partner in the past year. Meanwhile, less than 40 per cent of women who experience violence report it or seek help. There is no denying that women and girls and gender expansive persons are living through a gender equality crisis.

In April 2020, when the pandemic spread across the world and the UN Secretary-General called for “peace at home”, Nigeria was one of the 146 Member States that responded with a strong statement of commitment yet there is little to show for this response to the call. Likewise in June 2020, the 36 state governors in Nigeria declared a state of emergency on gender-based violence.

It has been estimated that 11 million girls may not return to school because of COVID-19, thereby increasing their risk of child marriage. The economic fallout is expected to push 47 million more women and girls into extreme poverty in 2021, reversing decades of progress and perpetuating structural inequalities that reinforce VAWG.

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that the world was unprepared to respond to the rapid escalation of all forms of VAWG. If we want to ensure that no woman or girl is left behind, we need comprehensive and inclusive approaches that can be adapted to rapidly changing contexts, preventing and responding to all forms of VAWG.

In 2021, Vision Spring Initiatives intensified her work on policy reforms, mitigation, and analysis of laws and policies that puts women and girls at disadvantage.



Our Position
In Line With The Acceleration Actions
For 2026 Generation Equality Agenda on

Feminist Leadership and Movement

- Increase and support the participation of young feminists in leadership and decision-making processes to ensure their meaningful and transformative inclusion.
- Acknowledge and appoint leadership portfolios to young women in all diversity in the political sector by 2026.
- Ensure the inclusion of feminists' perspectives in the ongoing review of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution.

Signed:
Vision Spring Initiatives (VSI), International Centre for Environmental Health and Development (ICEHD), EcoWarriors, Stand With a Girl Initiative, Dinidari Foundation Africa, Elizabeth Foundation, Centre for the Right to Health, Education as a Vaccine (EVA), Stand To End Rape Initiative (STER), Girl Up Nigeria, Gender Mobile Initiative, Invictus Africa, Dorothy Njemanze Foundation (DNF), NGWomen4Peace, Nigerian Girl Guides Association, Iyeh's Foundation, Dean Foundation, We Ignite Lives for Greatness Nigeria Initiative (WiLG), Women Environmental Programme (WEP), Child Education and Crime Eradication Foundation (CECEF), Women and Girls Capabilities Empowerment Organization.

The Generation Equality Forum 2021 fuelled a powerful and lasting coalition for gender equality. It presented a vital moment for activists, feminists, youth and allies to achieve transformative change for generations to come. Vision Spring Initiatives partnered with organizations in Nigeria to monitor commitments and participation made by the Nigerian government while supporting young women to participate and engage fully during the forum.



VSI through AmplifyChange grant support provides advocacy capacity for vulnerable women and girls in the six geo-political zones in Nigeria.

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: A society where gender equality and social justice becomes part of everyday life.

Our mission: Is to provide our constituents- Women, girls and other minority groups' with practical tools for self-development, voice and action through research, education, advocacy and movement building.

We strongly believe that fundamental 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 and inclusion (Central and the core of VSI programming)
2. Education and Research
3. Participatory Leadership/Political education
4. Sexual and reproductive health and rights
5. Partnerships and Movement building

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, minority and vulnerable 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.



Vision Spring Initiatives through support from AmplifyChange partners with Nigerian Sex Workers (NSWA) to provide comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights service

2. **Education and Research:**

Vision Spring Initiatives Girl Impact Project enables young girls and a few boys to 'unlearn' gender stereotypes and gain knowledge on gender and SRHR. 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 charge 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, counsellors, school debates.

Research -All interventions promote evidence-based research.



Students of Sceptre International College share knowledge on career development with Funso Adeolu a popular actor and movie producer in Nigeria

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, VAWG, sexual violence and responding to them.



Group exercise on message development for sexual and reproductive health and rights advocacy in Nigeria

- 5. Partnerships and Movement Building:** {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)

Vision Spring Initiatives partners with sister agencies and government agencies to ensure that women who face all forms of violence are supported. In the year under

review, the cases reported to the organisations was handled in partnership with the Domestic and Sexual Violence Response agency formerly an arm of the Ministry of Justice but now constituted as an agency, Mirabel Centre, Child Protection Network, Office of the Public Defender, Police gender desk, DPP, the Social Welfare in both Kosofe and Ikorodu local governments.

Cases of rape and defilement of minors were reported to appropriate authorities. Cases of abandonment and battery are handled and referrals made where and when necessary. While handling these cases, the organisation continued to build capacity of women and girls for self-preservation and protection.

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. In 2021, the organisation took part in the Child Protection Network awareness week where they had a walk and enlightened people on the importance of advocating for and protecting the rights of children.

During the course of the walk, there was a detour to the Palace of the Oba Ayangburen of Ikorodu and Vision Spring Initiatives staff and other members met with the palaaace chiefs who attended to the group. The coordinator informed the chiefs about Child Protection Network week and the importance of preventing child abuse and responding to cases of survivors. In response the chiefs appreciated CPN for the good work and also promised to keep spreading the information in Ikorodu environs for safety of children.

Parents, youths and everyone the group came in contact with were sensitized during the walk. It was agreed that CPN Ikorodu contacts would work in specific areas covering cases of child defilement, neglect or slavery.

A group of about 25 National Youth Service Corps members were sensitized at the Ikorodu Local Government secretariat and contacts of the leadership of CPN Ikorodu was given to the beneficiaries.



Ruth and Precious both representative of Vision Spring Initiatives during the Child Protection Network sensitization walk.

Other interventions by the organisation are responses to solidarity calls and writing of joint statements condemning all forms of violence against women and girls. The organisation is a member of the following groups in Nigeria:

- Feminists groups
- Interfaith Diversity Network of West Africa
- Gender updates group
- Lagoswomen2030
- Justice Support Network

- Lagos state Covid-19 CSOS
- Nigeria Universal Health Coverage Advocacy group
- Connecting the Dot Platform
- Domestic and Sexual Violence response team and NGOs platform
- Legal strategy team
- Child Protection Network
- Action group Free Civic spaces
- Spaces for Change
- Coalition for the Defence of Sexual Rights
- Lagos state Ministry for Women Affairs and Social Development

The partnerships led to development of joint statements and a few visits to strategic agencies demanding an end to all forms of violence against women and girls.

The organization responded to cases of violence against women by rescuing abused women from abusive marriage, relationships. A number of children were also rescued from child slavery and abuse by those who promised to send them to school. The organisation partnered with the Women Affairs Ministry to provide shelter to an indigent girl raped and ensured that justice was served while the abuser is locked up. The organisation also supported autopsy by engaging lawyers and medical personnel to handle the case of death of a woman in an abusive marriage. Other cases ranged from counselling to provision of psychosocial support for rescued women.

2. Education and Research

It has been estimated that 11 million girls may not return to school because of COVID-19 pandemic, thereby increasing their risk of child marriage. Nigeria is yet to have a 100% enrolment for girls as desired by the provisions of the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women (BWCW) Platform for Action (PFA). With the drawbacks on progress made with girls' education due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the United Nations Population Fund predicts that an additional 13 million child marriages can be expected to happen globally in another decade. UNICEF in 2018 reported that 22 million Nigerian children aged 0-5 do not have access to early childhood education. According to the report, one of the reasons proffered for the low participation particularly in the Northern part of the country was as a result of insurgency. Another set-back is early and forced marriages. Nigeria has the highest rates of child marriage in West and Central Africa and the third highest globally, with estimates pegging it at over 20 million child brides as at 2018.



Students watch a video on career development during VSI's GirlImpact Project

According to Minister of State for Education, Chukwuemeka Nwajiuba, Nigeria had the highest number of out-of-school children in the sub-Saharan Africa region. In 2021, Vision Spring Initiatives published *Beijing+25: Perspectives of Young Women in Nigeria*. A report on the state of implementation and progress on achieving the twelve thematic areas in the Beijing Declaration.

Also, this year, the organisation launched [Voices – our GirlImpact year one report](#). The report contains 65 answered questions on sex, sexuality and gender roles asked by the students during the weekly sessions with them. For more information, kindly visit Under the project the organisation held training of trainers for 15 new volunteers. <https://vsinigeria.org/girl-impact-project/>



Tobi Ayodele of VSI facilitating the GirlImpact volunteers' training

Vision Spring Initiatives is focused on supporting government effort in educating the girl child by making education interesting and participatory. The organisation currently partners with two schools in Lagos state; De Keepers College and Sceptre International.



Tobi Ayodele during a consultative meeting on the review of the implementation of the VAPP Act.



Students of De Keepers College respond to questions posed by VSI volunteers during the weekly sessions.



VSI's Girlimpact volunteers take group picture



Students of De Keepers College dialogue with Funso Adeolu-Actor and Film producer during one of the school visits

Training methods employed to make learning participatory include group discussions, creative and art displays, visual representation, role plays and experience sharing which proved very productive. This was evidenced by the increase in knowledge and the enthusiasm with which the students welcomed VSI staff and volunteers to the school.



VSI staff and teachers at De Keepers in a group picture after the sessions

3. Participatory Leadership / Political education Project

Nigerian women have always played a significant role in the democratic process since 1999 when Nigeria returned to democratic rule. Unfortunately, twenty-two years after Nigeria returned to democracy and twenty-five years after the country adopted the Beijing Platform and Declaration for Action, progress made is yet to translate into huge gains in terms of women's participation in both elective and appointive positions. This is a growing concern to many Nigerians especially since this has been the case despite concerted efforts by the government, non-governmental organizations, civil society, women's rights activists, and women's group to increase the level of participation of women in politics in line with the declaration made at the fourth World Conference on women in Beijing, which advocated 30% affirmative action.



Partners at the Federal High Court Abuja

In Nigeria, the extant National Gender Policy (NGP 2006) recommended 35% affirmative action instead and sought for a more inclusive representation of women with at least 35% of both elective political and appointive public service positions respectively. Despite the recommendation by the Affirmative Action, the government has not been able to keep this promise.

Vision Spring Initiatives is currently partnering with ten organisations in Strategic Litigation. In 2019 the organisation joined other civil society organisations to gain skills in strategic litigation when series of engagement with government to prioritize women's

leadership failed. In 2020, it joined the Nigerian Women Trust Fund and other civil society organization to file suit against the Nigerian government joining president Muhammed Buhari and the attorney general of the federation as defendants. The continued predominant appointment of men to decision making positions excluding women is discriminatory against women and in violation of sections 147 and 42 of the Nigerian Constitution amongst other consensus documents.

Vision Spring Initiatives is a co-plaintiff in this case which will be decided on March 30, 2022. Other engagements include advocacy for the passage and implementation of the Violence against Persons Prohibition Act and the Gender and Equal opportunities Bill.

Women and young women's political participation is still a major challenge because Nigeria still does not have a system that protects and promotes the political inclusion of women. The process of ensuring increased young women involvement in governance, power, and decision making is still a work in progress, even though there have been some gains over the past two decades. Nigerian women constitute about half of the population of the country, yet despite their numerical strength and active participation as campaign agents, mobilizers, and most faithful voters at every election, they have always faced challenges and resistance in their effort to be politically empowered.

On April 22, 2021, a bill that sought to alter the provisions of the 1999 Constitution seeking to create 111 additional special seats for women in the National Assembly was read for the first time. The bill which has now passed second reading in the House of Representatives is being sponsored by the Deputy Chief Whip of the House of Representatives, Hon. Nkeiruka Onyejiocha and 85 others. The proposed bill will create **37** additional seats in the Senate and **74** in the House of Representatives for women if passed into law. Furthermore, should the bill be passed into law, the State Houses of Assembly will also get three (**3**) special seats per state exclusively for women. This invariably will mean that if this bill passes, the Senate will have a guaranteed **25.3%** women's representation while the House of Representatives will have a guaranteed **17%** representation of women. The bill intends to alter Sections 48, 49, 71, 77, 91, and 117 of the Nigerian Constitution.

The proposed bill is the right step giving the fact that the Beijing declaration of 30% and the Nigerian Gender Policy of 35% are yet to be implemented. The bill if passed moves Nigeria a niche closer to the desired aim of equitable representation. This is another angle of affirmative action for women in Nigeria.

A comparative analysis of the 2011, 2015, and 2019 elections is apt in an era where

Office	1999		2003		2007		2011		2015		2019	
	Seats Available	Women	Seats Available	Women	Seats Available	Women	Seats Available	Women	Seats Available	Women	Seats Available	Women
President	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Senate	109	3(2.8)	109	4(3.7)	109	9(8.3)	109	7(6.4)	109	8(7.3)	109	8(7.3)
House of Reps.	360	7(1.9)	360	21(5.8)	360	27(6.9)	360	19(5.3)	360	19(5.3)	360	11(3.1)
Governor	36	0	36	0	36	0	36	0	36	0	36	0
D – Gov.	36	1(2.8)	36	2(5.5)	36	6(16.7)	36	3(8.3)	36	4(11.5)	36	4(11.5)
State House Assembly	990	24(2.4)	990	40(3.9)	990	57(5.8)	990	69(7)	990	50(5.1)	990	40
LGA Chair	710	13(1.8)	774	15(1.9)	740	27(3.6)	740	-	774	0	774	N/A
Councillors	6368	69(1.1)	6368	267(4.2)	6368	235(3.7)	6368	-	6368	0	6368	N/A
Ministers	47	7(14.9)	47	7(14.9)	27	7(25.9)	42	12(28.9)	30	6(20)	43	7(16.3)

persistent gender gaps exist in political leadership despite rigorous policy reforms. Despite the increasing number of women now participating in politics either as voters or candidates, the statistics of women in political leadership are not commensurate. It can be argued that challenges militating against women’s emergence in political leadership range from patriarchal values to lack of internal democracy among political parties, gender discrimination, and lack of funds and electoral violence amongst others.

Table of Women’s Representation at all levels of Governance from 1999 – 2019. Source: NWTf

The table above provides information on the number of women elected to public office from 1999 to 2019. From the analysis shown in the table above, there was no remarkable departure from the tradition of circumscribing women's role in the political process and the benefits accruing to them for their efforts. Gender sentiments to a large extent dictate winners and losers of elections. Trends in women's marginalization have also shown a persistent regression in some of the gains women have made in recent electoral cycles. This trend of losing gains in some women elected into positions was seen in 2015 and was repeated in the 2019 elections. Women are underrepresented in political positions despite the percentage of women in the voting population of Nigeria. Women occupy about **5.8%** of the political offices in Nigeria while men occupy about **94.2%** of the political offices. (INEC: 2019).



VSI partner making a presentation during the Generation Equality Forum Consultative meeting with national stakeholders.

4. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Comprehensive Sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls still have not received adequate attention. Through support from Global Fund for Women, VSI launched the first weekly Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights radio show titled WhatnWhere Radio show. One opportunity the pandemic provided was the chance to do things in new ways. The pandemic revealed the need for an extensive Comprehensive Sexuality Education and reproductive health services implementation. Likewise, the pandemic intensified the development and implementation of digital sexuality education and the provision of services.



The **whatnwhere radio show** aired every Tuesday on Eko fm and answered questions on SRHR and provided information on where to access safe and non-discriminatory sexual and reproductive services. A unique feature about the show was that it had the majority of young women below 30 years as guests. This enabled young women to talk about what reproductive rights means to them, the challenges and stigma they face in accessing reproductive services, and healthcare institutions and centers that provide

non-discriminatory sexual and reproductive services and information. The program recorded 6 million listeners in a month and 200,000 listeners in a day.



Elizabeth Talatu speaks on VSI’s radio program on accelerating SRHR interventions for young people in Nigeria

To listen to any of the episodes click [here](#).



Cross section of civil society partners at the advocacy in practice training organised by VSI

The organization also continued her weekly SRHR sessions in the two secondary schools under the #Girlimpact project which was launched in 2020. This year the organisation published [Voices](#) which served as the year one report of the project. The publication also included answers to questions asked by the students on sex, sexuality and gender.

The project currently trains over 200 students at two schools in two local government areas of Lagos state; Sceptre International Secondary School Kosofe and De Keepers International School Ikorodu. The organisation had developed the year two manual comprising topics on Human Rights, Creativity and Innovation, Love, Friendship and Romantic relationships, gender-based violence, as well as sexual and reproductive health and rights. While this training aims to provide coordinated approach and response to SRHR, our overall goal is to have a balanced society and serve the development needs of young women and men in secondary schools in Nigeria.

We hope that other schools and institutions might replicate or partner with Vision Spring Initiatives. The project is also preparatory steps to the establishment of VSI's gender and leadership institute.

With support from IPAS Nigeria, Vision Spring Initiatives conducted a value clarification and attitude transformation (VCAT) training for CSOs from the 20 Local Government Areas in Lagos state. The training served to enhance access to safe abortion services, information and referrals for women and girls in these local government areas through the trained CSOs. VSI work is deeply rooted in protecting the rights of women and girls and ensuring non-discriminatory and non-judgemental access to sexual and reproductive services and information hence the need for the training.



Cross section of civil society partners representing different local government areas in Lagos at the IPAS supported training



Doris of IPAS and VSI staff pose for pictures after the one-day sensitization training

6. Partnerships and Movement Building

Vision Spring Initiatives believes in the power of partnership and movement building. Through support from Global Fund for Children, the organisation held series of interventions on generation equality.

VSI partnered with Education as a Vaccine (EVA), African Young Women's Leadership and Advocacy Alliance (AYWLAA), Zamara Foundation and other organizations in Africa to strengthen the knowledge of African young feminists leading to Generation Equality. The goal of the project was to strengthen the capacity and amplify the voices of the African Young Women and girls in Leadership and Advocacy to champion engagement and advocate for sexual and reproductive health and bodily autonomy, feminist leadership and movement, economic justice and the protection of the rights of women and girls before, during and after Generation Equality Forum in Paris.

The organisation hosted 3 webinars to educate over 100 young women and girls in Africa on the need and how to engage at the Generation Equality Forum, created awareness on GEF, discussion on the action coalitions and how to engage with them and its relevance to young feminists.



Representative of young women in Nigeria Sarbyen Sheni, reads the Position Paper on generation equality forum

The organisation used Instagram and Twitter to [host live sessions](#) about what to expect, how to engage and influence policies and statements at the Generation Equality Forum.



VSI volunteers at a GirlImpact training of Trainers

Oluwatobi Ayodele represented VSI at the Advocacy Accelerator meetings with other African countries on Generation Equality. The purpose of the meetings was to strengthen the capacity and knowledge of young African feminists on advocacy, organizing, driving online/offline campaigns and feminist movements. The meetings also provided space for open conversations and bringing new ideas to achieving gender equality in Africa. Through the Advocacy Accelerator meetings, the organisation engaged meaningfully with other African countries during and after the Generation Equality Forum.

Vision Spring Initiative organized a Generation Equality Writing Workshop for 12 young feminists in Nigeria. The aim was to build the capacity of young feminists on the thematic areas in the Beijing declaration and platform for action including its structural objectives and methods of contextualizing each area from a young feminist perspective.

Participants for the workshop were drawn and carefully selected for their line of work and in relation to the thematic areas of the Beijing Declaration. The selection led to the gathering of feminist lawyers, psychologists, writers, and communications consultants. At the end of the training, participants selected each chapter of the Beijing Declaration to review and provide recommendations on. The outcome of this produced the [first review of the Beijing Declaration by young people in Nigeria](#). The review which is different from the usual reviews of the Beijing Declaration because of the intersectional and inclusive approach used in finding gaps in all the critical areas of concern and providing transformative recommendations. The organisation hopes to engage policymakers and relevant stakeholders with this document to implement recommendations.

VSI in partnership with International Centre for Environmental and Health Development hosted 25 youth-focused CSOs on the review of the Position paper on generation equality presented to National stakeholders in November 2021. The aim of the meeting was to discuss Nigerian status on gender equality and brainstorm on promoting uniform, targeted, concrete and measurable actions to drive the Generation Equality Forum (GEF)'s 2026 roadmap agenda. The meeting also reviewed an existing Position Paper on specific issues particularly on bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights, feminist action on climate change and feminist leadership and movement. The demands of the position paper centred on the needs of adolescents and young people in their diversity and solutions were recommended using an intersectional and inclusive approach.

It was also an opportunity to create increased awareness and heighten national advocacy about Generation Equality with the position paper. In attendance were young feminists and team leads of youth-focused NGOs. The event held at the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria, Abuja. The meeting ended with producing a [strong position paper](#) which was agreed on and signed by all the NGOs present. In order to increase

awareness about the position paper, the organisation shared it virtually and more NGOs agreed to the demands and signed on it.

VSI in partnership with International Centre for Environmental and Health Development hosted a National Consultative Conference with the stakeholders on Generation Equality. The partners invited representatives from the Federal Ministries of Women Affairs, Environment, Health, Agriculture and Education alongside youth-focused CSOs and feminist-led organizations. The National Television Authority (NTA) was also in attendance to cover the event. VSI and ICEHD alongside other CSOs made presentations on what the Generation Equality Forum is all about and the Action Coalitions. Also at the conference, [a position paper](#) that explains critically the urgency of treating the demands on the three action coalitions highlighted which are bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights, feminist action on climate change and feminist leadership and movement was read. The Director of Gender Unit of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture lauded the work put together and reaffirmed the urgency of implementing demands on feminist action on climate change as highlighted in the position paper. She also encouraged collaboration with CSOs and the Ministry in achieving the demands. Representatives of the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and the Federal Ministry of Health also commended the demands of the position paper as it reflects the present realities of women and girls in Nigeria.



Ngozi Nwosu-Juba of VSI gives welcome remarks during the generation equality event at Abuja

Aside from representatives of the Ministries that were present, the conference also had in attendance relevant agencies as the Human Rights Commission, Women Environmental Programme and other NGOs.

Vision Spring Initiatives in collaboration with International Centre for Environmental Health and Development held a post #GenerationEquality Forum stakeholders meeting which had in attendance young people, religious and traditional leaders, youth-focused CSOs and media. One of the objectives of the meeting was to create uniform and measurable actions to drive and promote the Generation Equality Global Acceleration Plan and 2026 roadmap agenda. The meeting ended with various groups creating pathways for monitoring the government's commitment and accountability towards the Generation Equality agenda.



VSI through support from AmplifyChange organized two regional trainings to analyse portions of the criminal code and penal code on SRHR and its impact on vulnerable women in the Northern and Southern regions in Nigeria. The trainings held in July and August respectively and had a total of 60 female sex workers as participants. A thorough analysis revealed that sex work is indeed not criminalized in Nigeria like sex workers were made to think. Instead, it criminalizes their clients and other beneficiaries such as unlicensed brothels. The analysis brought to fore, the loopholes in the law while capacitating sex workers on other laws such as the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Anti-Torture Acts, International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), Maputo Protocol and the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act that supersede the Criminal Code and Penal Code. Sex workers were made to understand that in situations of conflict between any provision of the Act and any other provision on similar offences in the Penal Code and Criminal Code, the provisions of the VAPP Act supersedes. The training went further to enlighten sex workers on the impact of harmful gender stereotypes on the sexual and reproductive health and strategies to break free from the stereotypes; safe abortion; strategies to safe sex negotiation; and contraceptive devices/commodities.



Representative from the Ministry of Environment speaks about their work during VSI's generation equality event at Abuja



Participants pose for a picture during VSI event

VSI organised consultative advocacy meeting for CSOs on October 28 and 29th. It aimed to help develop an advocacy toolkit which would be used for further research. Advocacy was defined and its importance. Advocacy was differentiated from activism and the importance of using the right based approach especially when dealing with key stakeholders. Series of questions pertaining to the project and the stakeholders were analyzed which was then used to develop a comprehensive toolkit comprising of all the important stakeholders.



Cross section of participants during an SRHR training by Dr. Ndidi Bowei, VSI's consultant



Participants at the workshop pose for a photo

VSI's Monitoring and Evaluation Officer Ruth represented the organisation at a workshop organised by WARD C on the use of social audit tracker to monitor and generate data on the impact of Covid-19, how to interface with government agencies and service providers, and how to engage with CSOs from other African and Asian countries on different strategies of intervention. A presentation on Understanding the concept of accountability and transparency and the role of Civil Societies was made by Mr Oyebisi Oluseyi (Executive Director of Nigerian Network of NGOs) who explained the important role Civil societies play in planning – Performance – Reporting and Scrutiny process of government budgets to ensure that they implement all that they proposed. He stated the need to hold the public, private sectors, government establishments and citizens accountable. The meeting was held on 26th and 27th October 2021.

At the end of the presentation, participants were put in groups based on senatorial district and a tracker was developed which was used to carry out further research on the statistics of those Key Population that were given covid-19 palliatives which would then help in holding the government accountable.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and Officer Ruth and Regina the Office Manager represented Vision Spring Initiatives at a Human Rights training on Alternatives to Violence organised by Police Reform and Welfare Action (PRAWA) on November 11 and 12, 2021. The training took place at the Police College, Ikeja and practical solutions

were given on how to end violence in Nigeria especially through use of several non-violent alternatives. Due to the EndSars protest which was hijacked and led to a lot of violence, the need to inform people on several alternatives as well as build the shattered trust the citizens had with police and armed personnel saw to the implementation of the training which comprised of knowledge and experience sharing, playing series of games which involves ways to build trust and how to show empathy.

Ruth and Precious represented VSI at the Child Protection Network Ikorodu Awareness Walk which took place on November 18. Members shared flyers as they walk through Oba Ayangburen road to the Ikorodu Local Government. During the course of the walk, there was a detour to the Palace of the Oba Ayangburen of Ikorodu and Vision Spring Initiatives and other members of CPN met with the palace chiefs. The coordinator informed the chiefs of CPN week and the importance of preventing child abuse and responding to cases of survivors. In response the chiefs appreciated CPN for the good work and also promised to keep spreading the information in Ikorodu environs for safety of children.



Ruth and Precious pose for picture during the CPN week

The Project Director Ngozi and Monitoring and Evaluation Officer Ruth represented Vision Spring Initiatives at FIDAs second town hall meeting which took place on December 4. The project addresses gender based violence and social norms and values that entrench violence against women and girls in Odogunyan/Odonla communities in Ikorodu. The meeting was held to commemorate the UN observance of 16 Days Activism against gender-based Violence. Some of the issues discussed include gender and sex,

stereotypes that lead to subjugation of women and lead to violence. The following issues were mentioned: Harmful traditional practice especially Oro (*cultural practice common in Ikorodu*), Harmful widowhood practices which involves giving a widow to family member for marriage at the demise of her husband, making a widow swear before a deity, and similar issues like this; as well as domestic violence; Rape (distinguished between rape and defilement): Defilement involves an adult having sex with a child (minor) below 18 years and there is no such thing as consent in such cases while rape involves adults above 18 years; Cultism; Stealing; Bullying: Child abuse/ hawking/ domestic servant; and Kidnapping.



Participants at the FIDA town hall meeting

It was agreed by the community to name their planned intervention in their community DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSE TEAM (DVRT) and a committee would be created which would include key stakeholders from different professions such as Community leader, lawyer (FIDA), hospital doctors, police, social welfare, school, CSO and it must be a balance of 50:50 participations of both male and female.

Some important key stakeholders were identified and they would be structuring how to pass the message across to community members. Someone noted that some cases

cannot be resolved or handled at the CDA level and the Baales (community leaders) as well as police should be able to follow through on such cases and ensure that justice is served.

The Baale was appointed as the Chairperson of the committee, Councillor, Iyaloja, Police, religious leaders, women with disability and youth leaders would also be part of the committee which would be set up before the next meeting which would take place in 2022.

Administration

Board Update

In November 2021, Vision Spring Initiatives held a board meeting and the following emerged as board members of the organisation

Toyin Ajao	Board Chair
Aisha Mohammed	Board member
Dolapo Dola-Lami	Treasurer
AKudo Oguaghambaq	Board member
Ngozi Nwosu-Juba	Ex-Officio Member

Staff development

The organisation held a staff meeting and came up with a three-year strategic plan document developed.



Staff and board members pose for group picture during the staff and board meeting week

VSI 2021 Publications

Beijing+25: Perspectives of Young Nigerian Women

Voices: Our Girl Impact Story

VSI staff and volunteers

Ngozi Nwosu-Juba - Project Director

Tobi Ayodele - Programs Officer

Adesoji Erewami - Administrative Officer

Timothy Mboho – Accountant

Ruth Aladejare – Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

Regina Livinus – Intern/ Office Assistant

Precious Kolawole – Intern

Volunteers

Busolami Ajayi	Opeyemi Fagbemi
Opeyemi Oyeyemi	Rachael Balogun
Felicia Adaenyi	Temitope Fasuyi
Deborah Umoh	Juliana Botchey
Mary Udoh	Chinonso Duru
Abiola Kareem	Anita Graham
FOlashade Adebawo	Aderonke Eseka
Precious Kolawole	Adebimpe Adebara Chika Blessing

Partners in 2021

Interfaith Diversity Network of West Africa

FEMNET Kenya

Women Law Development Center of Nigeria (WLDCN)

Coalition for the Defence of Sexual Rights (CDSR)

LAGOSWOMEN2030

International Centre for Sexual and Reproductive health and rights (INCRESE)

De Keepers International School Ikorodu

Sceptre Secondary School Kosofe

Ajoke Ayisat Afolabi Foundation

Supporters

COC Netherlands (Consultancies)

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

Global Fund for Women

Global Fund for Children

AmplifyChange

Nigerian Women Trust Fund (consultancies)

ISDAO (fiscal hosting)

Women Advocacy, Research and Documentation Centre (consultancies)

Centre for Health and Information (Consultancies)

Board members' contribution in cash and kind

Spaces for Change (Research Grant)

IPAS Nigeria

