

Localising women, peace and security agenda in Niger and Benue states.

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Strengthening Peace and Resilience in Nigeria
(A Case Study)

Overview

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Across many conflict-affected communities in Nigeria, peace and security decisions are still made far from the women and communities most affected by violence, climate pressures, and insecurity. While the government of Nigeria has so far developed and adopted three National Action Plans for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), experience shows that effective localisation depends on State and community ownership and the institutionalisation of WPS priorities within subnational systems.

Previously, the development of local action plans on UNSCR 1325 in Nigeria would typically convene women and government agencies that work exclusively on women's issues. The SPRING approach, however, has been facilitating multi-sector participation and the engagement of different Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). This has improved coordination across institutions, strengthened the capacity of key actors, and led to the embedding of women, peace and security (WPS) priorities into various sector plans and budget thereby resourcing and therefore expanding women's participation

Context

Localisation of UNSCR 1325 in Nigeria, including in Benue and Niger state has been hindered by weak institutional systems, including limited integration of WPS commitments into sectoral plans, low political will, weak accountability, inadequate budgets and capacity gaps for coordination, monitoring and reporting, alongside reliance on donor funding. These challenges were compounded by low awareness of the WPS agenda and the NAP, persistent insecurity and widespread SGBV, weak coordination and trust deficits between communities and security actors, and women's exclusion from peace and security decision making.

While Benue has a State Action Plan (SAP) on UNSCR 1325, highly vulnerable conflict-affected Local Government Areas required Local Action Plans to address local WPS priorities. Niger state had no SAP on WPS and evidence suggests that awareness about national action plans is low in the State. Without the localisation of UNSCR 1325, the State's peace and security approach exclude women at different levels, it would be poorly coordinated and therefore unsustainable.

Approach and Activities

The programme began with **WPS assessments and contextual analysis** to identify priority peace and security risks affecting women and girls, underlying conflict drivers, and institutional gaps across prevention, protection, participation and relief and recovery response. This effort ensured that the Niger SAP and Benue LAPs respond to local realities.

Building on this evidence, SPRiNG supported Elohim Development Foundation (EDF) and Partners Nigeria West Africa (PWAN) to initiate **inclusive and participatory consultations** to ensure meaningful engagements with women, youth and persons with disabilities alongside other critical peace and security institutions.

They applied a multisectoral approach that brought together strategic MDAs, security agencies, justice actors, civil society, traditional institutions and other community actors to co-create, validate and institutionalise WPS policy frameworks for effective implementation and sustainability.

To ensure sustainability, the programme **embedded WPS priorities within sectoral mandates, planning and budgeting processes**, helping to close financing gaps and strengthen opportunities for gender responsive financing beyond donor support.

“Seeing other States domesticate the WNAP while we did not was a concern. This support is our chance to catch up and create a comprehensive homegrown plan” – Mrs. Afiniki Dauda, Deputy Speaker, Niger State House of Assembly

The programme also delivered **targeted capacity strengthening and awareness raising** on **UNSCR 1325**, gender inclusive mediation and early warning, and clarified roles and responsibilities towards improving institutional readiness. Lastly, SPRiNG **integrated inclusive, climate sensitive livelihood strategies within WPS actions** to empower concerned communities to address the root causes of conflict, strengthen resilience and sustain peace outcomes for women and girls, and established locally led multi-sectoral SAP governance and accountability structures to drive and sustain the implementation of SAPs and LAPs in Niger and Benue, respectively.

Results

The SPRiNG approach has strengthened legitimacy, increased local ownership, and laid the foundation for improved coordination and reduced siloed implementation. The process has also strengthened collaboration between communities, security actors and justice institutions. Systematic effort in consensus building mechanisms and coordination platforms supported timely, non-violent responses to emerging tensions.

In Niger State, the establishment of multisectoral SAP governance and accountability structures enabled state-led implementation framework and responses to WPS issues across sectors. In Benue State, traditional and local government authorities institutionalised women’s participation in local security and dispute resolution mechanisms.

Lessons

This initiative demonstrates that an evidenced informed GEDSI approach helped translate WPS commitments into locally owned action and improve peace and security outcomes for women and girls. Also, effective institutional collaboration can help prevent WPS efforts from remaining siloed and increase overall impact.

About the SPRiNG Programme

Strengthening Peace and Resilience in Nigeria (SPRiNG) is a UK-funded initiative designed to support a more peaceful and climate-resilient Nigeria. By addressing the root causes of conflict and vulnerability, SPRiNG works to reduce violence, strengthen local systems, and promote inclusive governance across conflict-affected areas in North-West and North-Central Nigeria.

SPRiNG is grounded in a politically informed, evidence-based approach that integrates environmental science, political economy, and conflict analysis. Our goal is to create a more stable and peaceful Nigeria where citizens benefit from reduced violence and increased resilience to the pressures of climate change.



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