FCT Sexual Assault Centre receives 345 SGBV cases in four years

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The Awyetu Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), located at Bwari General Hospital, Abuja has received a total of 345 Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) cases from 2020 to 2024.  
  
The Mandate Secretary, FCT Women Affairs Secretariat, Adedayo Benjamins-Laniyi, stated this in Abuja on Tuesday, when Najat M’jid, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence against Children, visited the centre.  
  
Mrs Benjamins-Laniyi added that 84 per cent of the cases were children under 18 years, adding that efforts are ongoing to strengthen collaboration with security agencies to bring the perpetrators of SGBV to justice.  
  
She further said that beyond security agencies, the FCT Administration would also ensure active participation of residents and community leaders in the activities of the centre.  
  
Also, Adedolapo Fasawe, Mandate Secretary, Health Services and Environment Secretariat, Federal Capital Territory Administration, explained that the centre was established in 2020.  
  
Ms Fasawe, who was represented by the Permanent Secretary in the secretariat, Baba-Gana Adam, said that the centre was established by the British Council on behalf of the European Union.  
  
She added that under the EU’s Rule of Law and Anticorruption (ROLAC) Programme, the centre was established to provide comprehensive medical, psychological, and legal support to survivors of sexual violence.  
  
Also, the Medical Director of the hospital, Ibrahim Mijinyawa said that out of the 345 cases, 313 were females, representing 90.7 per cent while 32 were males representing 9.3 per cent.  
  
Mr Mijinyawa added that 289 of the cases, representing 83.7 per cent were children below 19 years, while the remaining 56 representing 16.3 per cent were people above 18 years.  
  
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The Centre Manager, Bejide Augustine, said that a total of 18 cases were reported from January to date, out of which 16 were females and two males.  
  
Mr Augustine added that 17 of the survivors were below 18 years.  
  
He identified the services being provided at the centre to include medical examinations and treatment, forensic evidence collection in collaboration with law enforcement, and psychosocial counselling and trauma care.  
  
Others, he said, include legal aid and referral services, and community awareness and prevention programmes which were yet to commence.  
  
“The Bwari SARC operates under a survivor-centred approach, ensuring dignity, confidentiality, and access to justice for all survivors,” he said.  
  
“The centre is collaborating with other government and non-governmental organisations.”  
  
(NAN)