Institute decries growing cases of sexual violence against boys, men

Date: 2024-11-19

Source: https://punchng.com/institute-decries-growing-cases-of-sexual-violence-against-boys-men/

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, on Tuesday, said there is an increase in the number of boys and men who now suffer sexual violence.  
  
This was as it noted that Nigeria cannot promote and achieve sustainable democracy and good governance without tackling the worrying issues of sexual and gender-based violence.  
  
According to a statement on Tuesday, the institute said that while women and girls are the most vulnerable and susceptible to SGBV, and need to be supported and protected, boys and men who suffer from SGBV also need to be protected.  
  
It, therefore, urged all critical stakeholders, including the government at the Federal and state levels, civil society organisations, the private sector, and others, to deepen collaboration to accelerate progress towards ending SGBV in Nigeria.  
  
The Director, Africa and West Asia Region, International IDEA, Dr. Roba Sharamo, disclosed this in Abuja, during the 10th Network Conference of Sexual Assault Referral Centres organised by the Rule of Law and Anti-corruption Programme, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Justice Sexual and Gender-based Violence Response Unit.  
  
He said, “The conference is part of the activities to commemorate the 16 days of activism this year, and various studies we have done, including the women in political participation environment, produced by International IDEA this year, that shows that one of the key factors preventing women from getting into politics is the sexual and gender-based violence against women candidates, and also the issues of abuse on social media, that continues to undermine the effective participation of women in that regard.  
  
“It is important to understand that as we try to promote democracy and good governance, we cannot do that in an environment that is hostile to more than half of the African population, which are women. It is, therefore, important that we look at the issues of SGBV.  
  
“SGBV against women is not just a serious human rights issue and justice issue, the increasing number of boys and men who suffer from sexual and gender-based violence does not also diminish the focus on the same.”  
  
Stating the importance of the Sexual Assault Referral Centres and their achievements since their establishment, Sharamo said, “The first SARC, the Mirabel Centre, was established in 2018, to offer a safe environment for survivors of sexual assault, and the data that we have shows that of the 47 SARCs established across 22 states, 51,127 survivors have been assisted through the various centres since 2013.  
  
“With more centres being established, the conference of the Network of SARCs since 2016, continues to look at all the achievements that we continue to make.”  
  
In her remarks, the Minister of Women Affairs, Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim, who was represented by the Director, Women Development, Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, Friya Bulus, stressed that the SGBV campaign this year will allow the government, development partners, civil society organisations, and the private sector to accelerate progress towards ending violence against women and girls.  
  
“The campaign this year is to ensure sustained advocacy, raise awareness about gender-based violence, despite previous efforts made, and mobilise more stakeholders to take action against gender-based violence, and to provide support services to gender-based survivors”, she said.