

GRACE'S PLACE

A safe haven for female victims of domestic violence

A Designer Woman Initiative



From The Designer Women's desk

By Debola Oni

Children suffer so much from domestic violence, either directly or indirectly. The trauma of seeing a parent being violated leaves personal scars or in cases like Sandra they bear on their bodies the wounds of war. The former being invisible yet damaging while the latter disfigures permanently.

We share these stories to uncover the real people beyond the statistics with the hope that they will stir you up to do something. The needs are enormous : From the baby abandoned by its father while yet unborn who suffered part of physical violence as its father plummeted its mothers womb, then there is the baby whose father abandons and rejects them at the hospital. Again there is the baby who lies on the couch screaming its lungs out while daddy turns its mother into a punching bag. Screaming, screaming at the top of its lungs but can only hear its mother screaming in agony as a blow lands on her head. What can we say to the two year old who is a pawn in the hands of feuding parents divided by domestic violence, or the children yanked out of school and who advice their mother to run for her dear life, a responsibility no child should have to bear..

What's New?

4 APRIL 2021

5 MAY 2021

6 JUNE 2021



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SCAN ME

This second quarter we had D who is in her early twenties come in with two lovely children. They had been living under damp and cold conditions in an unfinished building at Makoko. Being fed with handouts from two Samaritans. We also had to send money to H who had been trafficked to Libya and who delivered her daughter while staying at the Shelter for over four months last year.

Survivor "B" is getting more stable and goes to visit her children when she can afford to with the hope that she will soon get a place of her own and be able to have custody of these wonderful children.

Our team participated in a Project SAFE scheduled demo and technology training (via zoom) towards mitigating sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Nigeria. it was paramount to us because we learnt how to maximize the use of our technology tools to provide support and ensure efficient response coordination between all support organizations in the referral pathway.

The success story that came through and was least expected was the miraculous settling of the disagreement between Survivor C in the company of her 4 kids with their father, this proves that truly Jesus indeed rules our lives.

On April 19th 2021, Survivor E joined the shelter. She's just eighteen years old, beautiful, graceful like a gazelle, intelligent, deep, articulate and resourceful. The first time I set my eyes on her she was wearing the darkest sunglasses to protect her eyes even indoors. She had just been discharged from weeks in hospital to Grace's Place after series of operations to her eye. Why? Daddy and Mummy tied her up, beat her and wounded one of her eyes because she went for morning mass. The surgeries couldn't save the eye and it had to be evacuated, so she's blind in that eye. That's not all; tests revealed that the she has glaucoma in the other eye.



She tells story after story of verbal, emotional, physical and mental abuse from when she was little. This young girl is traumatized. A time when her contemporaries are being supported by their daddies go get into university she is staying with us at Grace's Place where we are doing everything to see that this long hard road eventually leads to a beautiful life through Jesus Christ. We pray that the Sun of Righteousness will mend her brokenness.

I recall A who was in Grace's Place briefly in December. She suffered permanent damage to her ear from blows from her husband while her two children witnessed all the abuse. Tragically, it was her daughter who told her to flee for her life. That's part of the fallout of abuse, when children begin to take on the role of parent. I was sitting on a mediation recently, while the couple were passing the buck, back and forth as to who was abusing who, it popped up that their daughter was sexually abusing other children in primary school. We don't have to look too far to see the possible cause of this as abuse begets abuse. Their daughter had been a victim of their corporate domestic violence and been sexually abused herself.

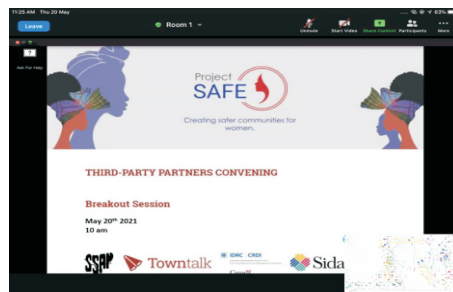


We also participated in a two-day capacity building program for community-based women groups/activist on advocacy and communication strategies for anti-trafficking interventions in Lagos State. The purpose of the capacity building program was to strengthen the capacities of women-led groups to carry out their mandates effectively, more gender-responsively and to enhance the capacity of women to advocate against forced migration and trafficking of women and girls within their communities. Survivor I and her 2year old baby who has been sleeping on benches were reconciled and both parties agreed to undergo

serious counselling



On the 11th of May 2021, we were part of a virtual meeting organized by The Population Council to discuss about the formation of a practice for ending violence against women in Nigeria (eVAWG) and development of a data governance framework for the National GBV dashboard.



On the 20th of May 2021, Project SAFE organized a workshop as part of its efforts to improve response coordination between organisations focused on eliminating GBV. These partnerships aim to create a robust referral linkage system for GBV survivors to medical, legal, and psychosocial support. The essential of the workshop is for Fast-Tracking Effective Response Coordination Amid GBV Support Providers and Grace's Place will soon be entering into a partnership with Project Safe.



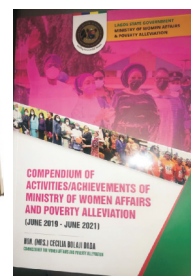
27th of May 2021 which commemorates Children's day every year, was when we held our first soap making training at Grace's Place. We have realized over time

that apart from the spiritual and emotional support of our survivors they

need some skill acquisition. We have therefore decided to add some form of skill acquisition to our in-house curricula at Grace's Place.



On the 1st and 2nd of June 2021 we attended the Lagos Zonal Public Hearing on The Review of the 1999 Constitution .with focus on the alteration of bills which involves electoral matters, the judiciary, local governments , fundamental human rights, gender equality, and increased participation of women and vulnerable groups in governance.



On the 22nd of June we attended

The WAPA CONNECT 2021, to be part of the insightful, informative and engaging discussion with the governor of Lagos State, Mr .Babajide Olusola Sanwo –Olu, in the need for women to remain and expand decision making which will build an equal, inclusive and sustainable economy .

On 29th of June, we attended a stakeholders meeting to review the Lagos State Protection Against Violence Law 2015 at the invitation of DSVRT

“When it comes to abuse,if you believe there’s no way out. There is always help. There is always a way out”.....Rev. Donna Mulvey.



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We counsel cases which do not escalate to Shelter.

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