



Annual Report

Year - 2019



31st - December 2019

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1. Forwards:

GRA's Board Secretary (Haruna Mohammed)



The year 2019 was marked by dedication, determination, and a shared commitment to making a difference. During challenges and complexities, our team's resilience and collaborative spirit shone brightly. It is this spirit that has driven our progress and underscored the impact we have achieved. Our achievements, as eloquently highlighted by the Executive Director, are a testament to the power of collective action. They symbolize the positive change we can create when we come together with a shared purpose. These achievements serve as a reminder that, no matter the odds, progress is possible when we remain steadfast in our beliefs. Looking ahead, the road to social justice for marginalised individuals and communities is still long, but it is a journey worth taking. Our dedication is unwavering, and our efforts are infused with hope and optimism. Every step we take, every partnership we forge, contributes to a world that is fairer, safer, and more inclusive. As we embark on a new chapter, let us do so with renewed determination and a shared commitment to make a lasting impact. Our journey is ongoing, and with your continued support, we will continue to write a story of change that transcends the pages of any annual report. (BS)

GRA's Executive Director (Timothy Ali Yohanna)

The year 2019 was marked by significant achievements that underscore the meaningful impact we have made on our journey. Our collaboration with ActionAid UK on the "Scooping Research Support on Trafficking in Nigeria" initiative exemplifies our commitment to addressing deeply concerning issues. This partnership demonstrates our ability to take action, harnessing research as a catalyst for change. The SCO-HRI project update is a stark reminder of the challenges that persist, particularly in the face of human rights abuses. The cases reported from Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states, as well as the distressing incidents along the Lake-Chad regions, remind us of the importance of our work. It is through our advocacy and intervention that we strive to hold both state and non-state actors accountable for their actions. In the pursuit of a safer and more just world, capacity building is paramount. Our "Capacity Building on Digital/Physical Security" initiative symbolizes our commitment to equipping individuals with the tools they need to navigate



an ever-changing landscape, ensuring their safety and well-being. The event in collaboration with the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) featuring Dr. Denis Mukwege was a remarkable moment. His expertise and insights on Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) added depth and perspective to our ongoing efforts, inspiring us all to redouble our commitment to eradicating such violence. As we look back on the accomplishments of 2019, we recognize that our work goes beyond projects and initiatives—it is a movement that seeks to create lasting change in our society. Every achievement, no matter how small, contributes to a larger narrative of progress, equality, and justice - let us remember that our efforts are not bound by a single year; they are part of an enduring legacy. (ED)

2. About Grassroots Researchers Associations (GRA):



The Grassroots Researchers Association (GRA) is a non-profit, nonpartisan rights-based organisation that was established in 2016 and registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission of Nigeria as a local content hub for the purpose of supporting grassroots initiatives and actions based on research that advance community development, justice, and victim support. The vision has become the reference point for facilitating grassroots development as an active grassroots mobiliser towards improving the total quality of human life and social justice in Nigeria. Accountability, local content, result-oriented tactics, innovation, and enthusiasm are our steadfast commitments as key values.

Our programmes span the areas of governance, social economic development, and conflict, security, and justice. Mission: To be an active grassroots mobiliser towards improving the quality of human life and social justice Vision: To become the reference point for facilitating grassroots development, justice and victims support.

The organisation has registered as civil societies and works with many stakeholders with a functioning head office in Abuja, Nigeria as well as regional offices in the North-East and North Central regions. We operate with independent governance structures which include a 7-member women-led board of trustees, a 9-member advisory board, 18 operational staff members who are permanent employees, 42 volunteers, and more than 300 community mobilizers.

Our organization's strengths lie in our emphasis on promoting local content, utilizing local language, networks, and volunteers, maintaining a local presence, and prioritizing digital security. Areas of improvement include staff capacity and turnover, financial procedures and policies, contextual understanding of issues, and staff management. We are exploring opportunities to increase our online presence, leverage local content, and establish relationships with local institutions, networks, and state actors. We acknowledge the challenges posed by limited access to local communities due to insecurity caused by both state and non-state actors.

We engage with various stakeholders, including funders, civil societies, victims, institutions and communities, local government, and the state. Our engagements encompass identifying, promoting, advocating, monitoring, supporting, sensitizing, and documenting. Our organization focuses on four main themes: climate change, conflict, security and justice, local governance, and socioeconomic development.

We cater to children, women, people with disabilities, victims of SGBV, and at-risk youth in the field of socioeconomic development. In the area of conflict, security, and justice, our target audience includes SGBV and human rights abuse victims, children and people with disabilities, missing persons, offenders, and vulnerable individuals, both state and non-state actors. For climate change, we target rural and community farmers, herders, fishermen, traders, policymakers at community, local government, and state levels, as well as informal/traditional institutions. In terms of governance, our target audience includes citizens at the local government and state governance levels.

Our organization structures its strategy around knowledge products, capacity building, impact and needs assessment, datafication and systems, dialogue and sensitization, and local content documenting and storytelling. These strategies involve developing knowledge products on local content, building the capacity of local actors, assessing the needs of our target audience and local actors/communities, creating systems to track our interventions and processes, promoting dialogue and sensitization through technology, IEC materials, and town hall meetings, as well as documenting and sharing human stories, issues, challenges, and local actors' needs to enhance the quality of human life.

Our organizational structure comprises of a nine-member advisory board and seven governing councils, or board of trustees, 70% of which are led by women. The directors of operations, programmes, institutional support, and strategies collaborate closely with the executive director, who oversees managing the organization's people and financial resources. This helps decision-making inside the organization.

3. Year 2019 Under Reviews:

First Quarter Q1 (January – March) - 2019

Scooping Research Support on Trafficking in Nigeria (Action Aids UK & GRA)



Action Aid Nigeria in collaboration with Action Aids United Kingdom embarked on a 5-days short mission trip to Maiduguri between 23rd to 27th July 2018 to look at women survivors of trafficking in Nigeria. The partnership mission was basically on program-base scoping studies to identify the gaps, needs and strategies of designing a program on the needs of women survivor of conflict and trafficking in Nigeria. Grassroots Researchers Associations was represented by the head of the organization to explore the collection and analysis of the links on drivers of migration/trafficking through the research support. The lead researcher Mandana Hendessi (UK – Action Aids) worked on extensive methodology and approaches to examine women experience while

returned to Nigeria, how they were treated in community member and state authorities, what kind of services they received and the feasibility of support for former sex trafficked women to resettle back into their communities and live fulfilling lives. The scoping mission comprised a literature review, consultation meetings with NGOs and data collection at the grassroots.

BSN Activities Update & Strategies

Grassroots Researchers Associations (GRA) as a follow-up on the December 12 -13th workshop in Abuja organized by Dr. Mukwege Foundation, we reached out to all the focal persons in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe State who embarked on extensive sensitization on the need to come together as network and speak as a voice. The participants who attended the December workshop communicated the planned advocacy to the survivors in Internally displaced Camp (IDPs) and host community and agreed to start the network in Nigeria. In the same quarter, we provide an update on the status of the network to the Mukwege Foundation on the efforts made, progress and achievements about the survivor's network. As suggested at the end of the workshop, GRA specifically designed a program to reach out to 3 States where we are working but we ended up getting 5 States with a total of 131 survivors who actively showed interest and got involved in forming the network. We found out that they were eager and passionate to join the group but it is much easier for the peers to reach out to one another about the goal and objective of forming the group, especially on the need of victims of conflict – related sexual violence as highlighted below:



Activity update on SCO -HRI project



In the first quarter of 2019, GRA recorded Many cases of Human Rights abuses in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe state within the first quarter of the year. The nightmare of the human right abuses along the Lake-Chad regions were created by both state and non-state actors but the horrifying cases were committed by state actors. The ripple effect of these actions without accountability gives a negative signal that underscores the effort of the government agencies in fighting the terrorist. In all of this situations, victims of human rights abuses in all the Lake-Chad region continue to suffer

Second Quarter Q2 (April - June) 2019

CDD Event with Dr. Mukwege on Sexual Gender Base Violence (SGBV)



On 3rd July 2019, the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) organized an event on addressing sexual and gender base violence. Dr. Denis Mukwege and others speaking at CDD's event spoke extensively. There were discussions around addressing Sexual and Gender Based violence in Conflict Through Transitional Justice Grassroots Researchers Associations (GRA) with the supports and coordination of the event planner participated in the event and leveraged on the partnership between the two organization to work with other civil societies and survivors. Our primary role is to ensure that, the voices and plight of victims of sexual violence in North-Eastern Nigeria must

be heard in these discussions. Some of the survivors who addressed the audience explained that resources should be invested in their needs, they should be helped to fully rehabilitate and be able to move forward, to be given those educations they were denied.

Capacity Building on Digital/Physical Security

Grassroots Researchers Associations (GRA) organized 5 Days trainings between 5th – 10th August 2019 on Digital Safety, Privacy and Information Management. The training was conducted by 7 Staff of GRA at the regional and head office to pass on training that was received from Front Line Defenders in Dublin. Some of the key issues discussed included risk assessment, awareness and common sense of approaches on



threats, vulnerability and capacity to deal with the situation. The trainer discussed holistically computer and phone security, protecting files and destroying sensitive information to avoid traces of work on a system. Other aspects included keeping an internet communication private and bypassing internet censorship and general protection procedures. At the end of the training, the participants were able to learn new protection procedures and got access to other useful materials to guide them

CDD organised high level meeting with Dr. Mukwege



CDD brought together 3 key local Non-governmental Organization to discuss issues related to human rights in the context of conflict. The partners included the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in charge of Campaign against sexual and gender based violence in Borno State. The African Youth for Peace Development and Empowerment Foundation (AFRYDEV) is in charge of strengthening sexual and gender based violence prevention and response through effective engagement of local actors in Yobe State. Grassroots Researchers Associations (GRA) would be looking at strengthening capacity and oversight on the use of human rights principles in counter terrorism across the Lake Chad region. The meeting came to an end after a

series of presentations by Shamsudeen Yusuf of CDD on the effective documentation of Human rights violation and evidence gathering. He also talked about the CDD's intervention through local partners, building synergy to promote human right in North-Eastern Nigeria. On the same Agenda, Lukman Adefola of CDD brought the meeting to a close with specific remark on a next step

Third Quarter Q3 (July - September) 2019

Project Planning Meeting of Building Survivor's Network:



The project's planning meeting was part of its inception activities that followed a scoping visit to Nigeria and a workshop held on December 12 & 13 2018 by staff of the Dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation in collaboration with Grassroots Researchers Association and Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development in Abuja. The meeting was organised by Grassroots Researchers Association (GRA) with 6 survivors, 3 focal persons each selected from Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States in addition to 2 staff of GRA including Samuel Orahii and Birma Buba making a total of 11 participants. The agenda of the meeting was

to introduce the project and its partners as well as plan on strategic priorities of the project under the following headings: The project seeks to build a national network in Nigeria, with chapters in each states of the federation. At the moment, he said 3 states in the Northeast, including Borno, Adamawa and Yobe have been selected for the pilot test. The BSN Project is being funded by the Dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation based in the Netherlands; an international human rights organisation dedicated to end rape as a weapon of war worldwide by connecting survivors worldwide, promoting the application of holistic care, and engaging influential stakeholders to advocate for an end to wartime sexual violence everywhere in the world.

Stakeholders Engagement/Training: SCO-HRI Project

The Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) organized a stakeholder meetings and training to the local partners that are implementing the SCO-HRI project in North-Eastern Nigeria. The meeting was anchored and chaired by Shamsudeen Yusuf who gave a welcome address, welcoming partners and also the staff of CDD to the partners meeting. Afterwards, a brief introduction was given by individuals of different organisations present at the venue in Maiduguri Borno State. The meeting was attended by 3 sub granted local partners, which includes African Youth for Peace Development and Empowerment Foundation (AFRYDEV), Grassroots Researchers Association GRA and the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Maiduguri Branch. The meeting was focused on CDD's intervention through local partners and building synergies to promote human rights in the North East. within the society.



Election of Network Leadership of BSN



The network's leadership election began with sensitization of participants about the three leadership posts for the polls, which included State Coordinator, Secretary and Public Relations Officer (PRO). The survivors were given guidelines and criteria for the election. After presenting the guidelines, the survivors met for 10 minutes in their groups and nominated 3 candidates of their choice and presented to the plenary. GRA Staff monitored the process to make sure that fairness was observed. At the end of the group meeting, only Bakassi community presented two (2) nominees to the plenary as Gubio camp requested to be allowed to return and consult among themselves before they would decide on a nominee. The plenary accepted their decision and also adopted the two (2)

nominees from Bakassi community. The candidates were presented to the plenary with their positions and were verbally adopted by members of the network. The meeting ended with refreshment and group photographs. Ninety-Seven (97) survivors attended the meeting.

Fourth Quarter Q4 - (October – December) 2019

SEMA Global Retreat



Grassroot Researchers Association (GRA), The National Network of sexual survivors in Nigeria expanded its membership to 550 with funding support from Mukwege Foundation. The project of building the network was implemented by Grassroots Researchers Associations (GRA). These active survivors came together and elected their leaders at the regional level and build solidarity to actively support each other. With their total commitments to the mission of the network, two of the elected leaders in Nigeria participated in the third SEMA annual

retreat that took place in Luxemburg in March 2019. They met with other 50 SEMA members from different countries in the world and discussed key issues regarding Global, Regional and National Plans to end the culture of rape and stigmatization. Part of the activities included experience-sharing to build confidence, use their voice and speak up. They came back with renewed strength, confidence and strategies to communicate the conference agenda to the other National network members across Adamawa, Borno and Yobe State.

Monthly Survivor's Meetings in BAY states

On 14th July 2019, a total of 88 victims of conflict related victims of sexual violence came together for a monthly meeting in Maiduguri Borno State. The Primary objective of the meeting was to bring sexual survivors together for the purpose of networking and solidarity, building their collective memory as a way of psychosocial support to strengthen their resilience, self-esteem and confidence. Remarking about the BSN Project, GRA Community Mobilizer and Borno State Focal introduced the project as an effort by **Grassroots Researchers Association GRA** and the **Denis Mukwege Foundation** in the Netherlands to build a platform for survivors in Nigeria to meet and share experiences with each other so as to build collective memory that would engender their healing. During the meetings, survivors shared coping strategies and discuss on ways to prevent the menace of sexual violence as well as promote breaking the silence by victims of sexual violence. **Peer Education on building self-awareness and confidence:**



Leadership Training at Yobe State



Grassroots researchers Association (GRA) with support from the Dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation held a leadership capacity building workshop for elected leaders of SGBV survivors from Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States. The training was organized as part of activities of the Building Survivors Network in Nigeria (BSN) project in order to build the leadership potentials of leaders of the survivors' network to enable them effectively manage their affairs, and to also instil in them the vision to coordinate, communicate and mobilize their membership. The workshop was a deliberate strategy that enabled the network leaders from the different states to come together and network among themselves as well as develop collective leadership synergies that will enable them amplify the voices of members of their state chapters of the network, while also

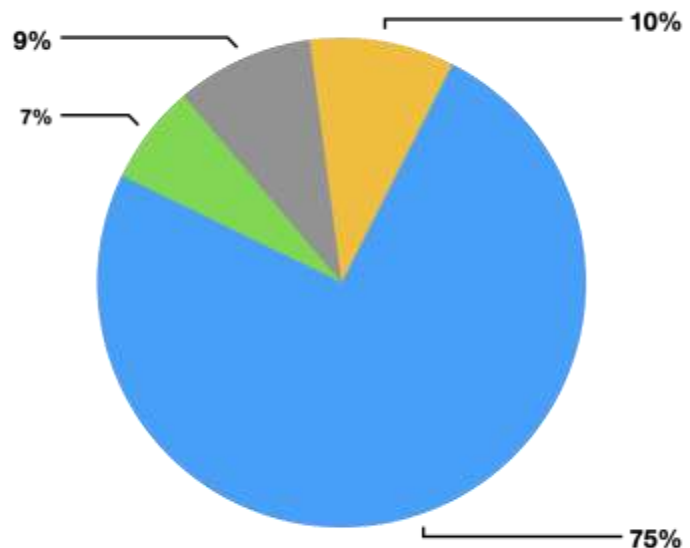
engendering in them strategic decision making and operational competency skills necessary to sustain a strong and virile network that can radiate hope and function as a family unit that promotes social, economic and legal support for victims of sexual violence.

4. Financial Year 2019:

Revenue for the Year - 2019

Building Survivors Network - MF	N7,792,769
Donations & Contributions	N690,551
Loans and Advances	N950,000
Centre for Democracy & Development	1000000
Total Revenue	N10,433,320

- Building Survivors Network - MF
- Donations & Contributions
- Loans and Advances
- Centre for Democracy & Development



GRASSROOTS RESEARCHERS ASSOCIATION

	<i>for the year ended 31st December</i>	2019	2018
	Revenue:		
	Building a Survivor Network (BSN) project	7,792,769	-
	Other contribution and donation	690,551	701,144
	Board member's contribution	-	965,960
	Loans and advances	950,000	-
	People with Disability (PWD) Project	-	4,783,499
	Centre for Democracy & Development	1,000,000	3,611,840
	Front Line Defenders	-	2,245,400
		10,433,320	12,307,843
	Expenditure:		
	Community Mobilisers/Advocacy Visits	262,300	-
	Audit and Accountancy fees	90,000	40,000
	Bank Charges	15,736	49,094
	Communication	237,100	239,100
	Capacity Building Training	290,500	739,250
	Consultancy Dec-18 Dr, Friday James	90,000	300,000

	Sevising Of Generator	52,000	
	flue Oil 7 Lubricant	26,000	
	Drafting of Financial Procedures and Manuals	-	150,000
	Dec-18Jasper Kachikwu	-	300,000
	Dec-18 Abenizer Akazhen	-	100,000
	Depreciation provision	251,660	292,100
	Electricity	12,000	11,800
	Flip Charts Stand and Flex Banner	78,500	
	Hospitality , Entertainment	1,120,000	1,103,747
	Office Expenses & Projector/Screen	114,700	578,495
	Printing & Stationery,Name Tag and Tag Holders	180,615	128,070
	Rent & Rates	1,028,720	785,417
	Miscellaneous - Photographer	15,000	
	Maintenance of Office equipment	-	-
	Transport to beneficiary	1,176,000	-
	Registration &Subscription	23,800	5,000
	Transport & Travelling,(Car Hire)	458,240	3,925,442
	Publicity, P.A System,	90,000	-
	Welfare, Survivors Feeding	1,137,400	324,400
	Wages salaries & allowancies	2,153,000	4,878,800
	Vanue	198,000	-
	Phones for Survivors Coordinators	405,000	-
	Pre-operational Expense written off	570,000	-
	Per-diem & Transport	<u>90,000</u>	<u>217,500</u>
		<u>10,166,271</u>	<u>14,168,215</u>
	Retained Surpluses/ (deficit)	<u>267,049</u>	<u>(1,860,432)</u>

5. Key Reflections & Focus

Key Reflections - Annual Report 2019

Women's Rights Approach:

Our collaboration with Action Aid Nigeria and Action Aids United Kingdom in the mission trip to Maiduguri illuminated our dedication to women's rights. By focusing on women survivors of trafficking, we engaged in program-based scooping studies that identified gaps, needs, and strategies for designing effective support programs. This partnership reaffirmed our commitment to advocating for and addressing the unique challenges faced by women survivors.

Human Rights Approach:

The year bore witness to numerous human rights abuses, particularly in the Lake-Chad regions. Our organization, Grassroots Researchers Associations (GRA), documented these abuses, highlighting the disturbing actions committed by both state and non-state actors. The absence of accountability for these actions cast a shadow on efforts to counter terrorism. The urgency to address such abuses was emphasized, as the victims continued to suffer without recourse.

Survivor-Centered Approach:

The survivor-centered ethos remained at the core of our initiatives. The monthly meetings that brought together 88 victims of conflict-related sexual violence in Maiduguri exemplified this approach. These gatherings fostered networking, solidarity, and collective memory building, offering psychosocial support to strengthen survivors' resilience, self-esteem, and confidence. The focus on their needs and well-being was central to our efforts.

Capacity Building Approach:

In the realm of capacity building, our commitment to digitization was evident. The comprehensive training on Digital Safety, Privacy, and Information Management highlighted our determination to equip individuals with skills to navigate the digital landscape safely. This training, derived from Front Line Defenders in Dublin, underscored our responsiveness to emerging challenges. The capacity-building initiatives extended beyond digital safety. The 5-day training organized by GRA facilitated knowledge transfer on crucial topics such as risk assessment, threat awareness, and capacity-building to address vulnerabilities. These efforts not only empowered participants but also contributed to a more informed and capable community.

6. Partners:



Haruna Mohammed

Board Secretary
31st/12/2019

Timothy Ali Yohanna

Executive Director
31st/12/2019