

Project SABI SGBV Manual for  
Transport Workers and Organisations  
in the Informal Sector

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Why is talking about gender-based violence in transport systems important?</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Definition of terms</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>What Nigerian Law Prohibits GBV?</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Facts and Figures</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Factors that enable GBV in the transport sector</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Who can be an Offender of Sexual Violence?</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Our Key Allies</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>What structures do we need in place to ensure safety for women and girls?</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>What the government can do...</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>What Transport Workers and bus operators can do...</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>What transport workers (drivers, conductors and cleaners) can do...</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Women as transport workers</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>How to carry a step-down training</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>How to Create a GBV Disciplinary Committee</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>How to Create a Policy</b>	<b>8</b>

## **1. Foreword**

In the wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the world witnessed a tremendous spike in the number of cases of gender-based violence, especially against women and girls. From Lagos to Enugu, Akwa Ibom to Minna, Katsina to Ogun- we were thrown into the dark hole of daily trending news of heartbreaking hashtags of either a lady murdered or kidnapped.

Just as we may think this is another event or happenstance in the cyber-space, it is sad to know that these individuals as humans could be our sisters and nieces, and our neighbours and colleagues. The only way to combat this “shadow” pandemic is to fight it aggressively, tactically and mindfully. How best do you combat this menace, if we don't drill down to the root cause?

This is the exact reason why we are implementing Project SABI - this is a definite and bespoke proactive response to the looming violence against women and girls, through a grassroots engagement with Men and Boys. Through the beautiful partnership with our friends at Boys Quarters Africa, led by Solomon O. Ayodele, who has been leading a men-themed movement in combating this violence; we truly believe that this initiative will transcend a mere one-off impact but a lasting landmark in the history of gender engagement.

We are deeply excited about this Project and we really hope this manual is going to birth historical engagements within our informal sector.

**Hamzat Lawal**  
**CEO, Connected Development**

## **2. Acknowledgments**

The mere understanding that the fight against Gender-based violence isn't a 100 Metre Dash is enough reason to appreciate the community effort of everyone involved in making this manual a reality and also the eventual implementation of the Project SABI initiative.

Special Thanks to Voice for their hands and hearts towards this unique initiative, looking at ending violence through the granular engagement of Men and Boys.

Big Thanks to Ojonwa Miachi, a gender expert, Hyeladzira James Mshelia of Connected Development and Solomon O. Ayodele of Boys Quarters Africa for tirelessly working on this piece, and bringing this into reality.

Of course, the Communication team who handled the proof reading and eventual designs - Joy James and Stephen Akinfala.

No doubts, the strong women making things happen from the Programs Team - Lucy Abagi, Hyeladzira James Mshelia, Busayo Fache and all the champions across the different states.

## **Background**

- **About Project Sabi**

This project answers the seemingly simple but complex question, “shey you sabi?”; a pidgin-English Nigerian expression of “do you know?”. It's about educating men/boys on how their attitudes and practices are crucial to fostering an equal & safe society. The central idea is to stimulate a movement aimed at ending all forms of violence against Women and Girls, by capacity strengthening strategic and multi-dimensional engagement led by Men and Boys as advocates, in Lagos, Abuja, and Enugu.

CODE and Boys Quarters through an effective mobilization and stakeholders engagement approach would ensure an increasingly growing number of men who will acknowledge and understand how sexism, male dominance, and male privilege lay the foundation for all forms of violence against women and girls, and also create an avenue for Men (Boys) to reflect on their powers and privileges, and understand that real and sustainable change won't be possible until these Men become full allies and partners on this journey.

This grassroots engagement approach with Men and Boys will directly impact and empower victims, young people across the project states, with ne no cessary information on their roles as responders, diverse communication and reporting channels, and the need to mobilize mass voices to collectively speak out against this silent pandemic. These would be achieved through the positioned 5 Focal Areas.

To provide a safe space for women, girls, and victims of gender-based violence to interact and rant on the depth of this endemic, considering the role of men; through an effective psychosocial support system and divergent support groups.

To democratize the participation of Men as key players in the fight against Sexual and Gender-Based violence and strengthen their capacity as ‘he-for-she’ champions; by leading strategic advocacy and multi-dimensional stakeholders engagement against gender-based violence in the Project States and also drive an immersive cluster-based town-halls for Local/Informal bodies like Transport Union, Cooperatives, etc.

To mobilize and create an institutional Boys Against Gender-Based Violence Club, where boys are assisted to confront the age-long and culturally inherited biases about Women and Girls, and help them in addressing issues like anger management, social adjustment, conflict resolution, emotional stability, and consent, in order to create an equal and safe society, where tangible results are experienced in the immediate future.

To unearth the role and impact of religion and how religious leaders can actively participate in combating the rise of Sexual and Gender Based Violence across the Project states. This would be done through an immersive capacity strengthening session with Male Religious Leaders and a push for the creation of Gender-Based Violence Desk across this strategic institution.

Curate an engaging and educating digital social platform where Men and Boys can unpack their misogynist level and tendencies, hence, galvanizing them as major allies and change agents in the reporting and speaking up against sexual and gender-based violence, which in turn drastically reduces the rate of violence against women and girl.

- **About CODE**

Founded in 2012, Connected Development [CODE] is a non-governmental organization [NGO] whose mission is to empower marginalized communities in Africa. We strengthen local communities by creating platforms for dialogue, enabling informed debate, and building capacities of citizens on how to hold their government accountable through FollowTheMoney. CODE provides marginalized and vulnerable communities with resources to amplify their voices with independence and integrity while providing the communities with information that ushers social and economic progress. To enhance effective democratic governance and accountability, CODE creates platforms [mobile and web technologies] that close the feedback loop between citizens and the government. With global expertise and reach, we focus on community outreach, influencing policies, practices, and knowledge mobilization. CODE's commitment to participatory capacity & community building and monitoring and evaluation creates effective and sustainable programs even within the most challenging environments.

In 2016, CODE won the ONE Africa Award which recognizes, rewards, and advances the exceptional work of African-based organizations; dedicated to helping the continent achieve Sustainable Development Goals. Also in May 2019, during the United Nations SDG Global Festival of Action in Bonn, Germany, FollowTheMoney won the UN SDG Mobilizer Award. The Award is aimed at recognizing changemakers and organizations who demonstrate more successes in mobilizing citizens or volunteers to act for the realization of SDGs 2030 agenda. Also, during the Council of Europe's World Forum for Democracy 2019 in Strasbourg France, FollowTheMoney won the Democracy Innovation Award. This award recognizes FollowTheMoney as one of the leading ground-breaking initiatives in the world, that promotes democratic principles and influences government policies for the acceleration of socio-economic developments.

Connected Development(CODE) has activated its effective advocacy strategies to galvanize the public as change agents against sexual and gender-based violence through its strong social media platforms and over 7,000 members on the ifollowthemoney.org platform. Across national and subnational governments, we are advocating for the adoption of legislative and institutional frameworks in eradicating sexual and gender-based violence and protecting the rights of women and girls. We are also advocating for gender-responsive public service delivery and female inclusion in community development committees to ensure gender-responsive interventions- (CDC) thereby empowering women to be fully integrated into the decision-making entities at all levels of governance.

CODE has supported SGBV related issues and collaborated with TechHER, EVA, Dorothy Njemanze Foundation, STER, etc - Pro-women and SGBV-focused NGOs in space.

- **About Boys Quarters Africa**

Boys Quarters Africa (Registered as Boy-Child Reformation Initiative) is a Boychild transformation movement, missioned with the core objective of Educating, Rightly Empowering and Advocating for the Boychild.

This vision transcends mere social enterprise but a movement to raise a new tribe of Boys who will be better humans, who will rise to the demands of life and project the right kind of masculinity, fit enough for the desired future.

We truly believe that there are limited inspiring bridges of transition for the Boy Child. Bridges that would help them see a redefinition of masculinity and live a life beyond the whining and complaints about the masculine gender.

In the last 24 months, the Boy Child Reformation Initiative (Boys Quarters Africa) has driven a conversation-based movement in mobilizing Men to end all forms of violence against women and girls. These are executed through divergent grass-root community engagement, digital engagements, and other online campaigns.

We have partnered with varying government outfits in driving these conversations and worked with similar organizations in the same cause. (Lagos Ministry of Women Affairs & Social Development, Oyo State Ministry of Women Affairs & Social Works, WARIF, Cece Yara, Lagos State Domestic Violence Response Team, and many more). In all, we've been able to engage close 6,000 Boys, 170 Men, and over 60 Families across 11 Cities in Africa, via our projects like the Boys Too Campaign, Exchange Project, International Boy Child Summit, Project SABI, Guyversations, and others.

The resultant effect of our campaign is the redefinition of the #HeforShe movement and the enablement of more safe spaces for Women and Girls to share their stories, find help and get justice as required.

### **3. Introduction**

Public transport structures provide affordable opportunities to ease freedom of movement for people worldwide. It is a vital tool to foster increased socio-economic outcomes that include better access to employment, formal and informal education as well as healthcare. This shows how crucial road and transport workers are to the economy.

Despite these advantages, the uncertainty of safety in transport systems restricts women and girls' freedom of movement towards economic liberty and agency. Alarming, public transportation is ranked as the second-highest place for the occurrence of sexual

harrasment<sup>1</sup> and a survey by EMPOWER partners in Lagos substantiates this claim as 70% of women in Lagos have witnessed harassment in public transport and nearly half of the passengers have experienced a form of GBV in public transport systems.<sup>2</sup>

The severity of GBV in public transports can be fatal. At least, in 2022, the media reported incidences of sexual harassment, rape and the resultant death of young women in public transports across Nigeria.<sup>3</sup> The economic cost of GBV as well as the interconnection with transportation inhibits women's ability to earn, get educated, enjoy recreation, build social capital and get access to quality healthcare. Harassment and GBV in public transport is an infringement on human rights and dignity of survivors and victims. More than ever before, it has become necessary to galvanise action to mitigate all forms of GBV in public transport spaces.

To this end, Project SABI is working with the Transport Union Workers to galvanize action to end GBV in public transport systems through this initiative which is funded by VOICE. One of the ways we aim to engender action is by creating awareness that challenges existing internalised norms through sensitization and awareness, hence the need for a manual that captures the terminologies and guidance, as well as procedures for mitigating GBV in public transports.

This manual focuses on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) more because of the disproportionate incidence of GBV against women as opposed to men. However, this manual can also be applied to marginalised men, boys, and other gender minorities that experience different forms of GBV that infringe on their human rights.

#### **4. Objectives**

- Improve the knowledge of road and transport workers on GBV in the transport system
- Increase the number of allies working to reduce GBV in the transport system
- Foster step-down training/informal discussions with participants' peers.
- Strengthen policies within state-level Transport Union that mitigate GBV

#### **5. Why is talking about gender-based violence in transport systems important?**

- Deprives women and girls of access to learning and earning
- When women and girls are less empowered than their other counterparts, it impedes on the sustained growth of human capital, hence affecting the country's ability to produce more goods and services
- Decreased employment limits taxes and national earnings

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[https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/harassmap/media/uploaded-files/287\\_Summaryreport\\_eng\\_low-1.pdf](https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/harassmap/media/uploaded-files/287_Summaryreport_eng_low-1.pdf)

2

<https://transport-links.com/why-do-we-miss-the-connection-between-transport-and-sexual-harassment-in-nigeria/>

3

<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/515868-how-lady-was-killed-after-boarding-brt-bus-was-kidnapped-driver.html>



- Increases occurrences of mental health disabilities
- It further overburdens the healthcare, justice, social work and law enforcement systems with their already existing limited capacity.

## **6. Definition of terms**

We will begin with a few definitions of terms so we are all on the same page! All definitions have been culled from the UN Women and USAID website.

### **Gender-Based Violence**

Gender-based violence (GBV) means harmful acts directed at an individual or a group of individuals based on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms. The term is primarily used to underscore the fact that structural, gender-based power differentials place women and girls at risk for multiple forms of violence. While women and girls suffer disproportionately from GBV, men and boys can also be targeted.

### **Violence against women and girls**

Violence against women and girls is defined as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women and girls, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. Violence against women and girls encompasses, but is not limited to, physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family or within the general community, and perpetrated or condoned by the State.

### **Consent**

No means No. Yes means Yes. Consent is an agreement between participants to engage in sexual activity or enter into marriage. It must be freely and actively given and cannot be provided by someone who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or by someone underage. Consent is specific, meaning that consent to one act does not imply consent to any others, and reversible, meaning that it may be revoked at any time.

### **Domestic violence**

Domestic violence, also called domestic abuse or intimate partner violence, is any pattern of behaviour that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. It encompasses all physical, sexual, emotional, economic and psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This is one of the most common forms of violence experienced by women globally.

### **Sexual violence**

Sexual violence is any sexual act committed against the will of another person, either when this person does not give consent or when consent cannot be given because the person is a child, has a mental disability, or is severely intoxicated or unconscious as a result of alcohol or drugs.

Sexual violence can appear in many forms.

- **Sexual harassment:** Sexual harassment encompasses non-consensual physical contact, like grabbing, pinching, slapping, or rubbing against another person in a sexual way. It also includes non-physical forms, such as catcalls, sexual comments about a person’s body or appearance, demands for sexual favors, sexually suggestive staring, stalking, and exposing one’s sex organs.

Verbal	Non-Verbal	Physical
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cat calling</li> <li>• Whistling</li> <li>• Unwanted sexual teasing or remarks</li> <li>• Sexual comments about clothing or looks</li> <li>• Being asked for sexual favors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showing pornography (e.g. naked pictures)</li> <li>• Exposing genitals/masturbating</li> <li>• Unwanted sexual looks or gestures</li> <li>• Stalking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poking with penis</li> <li>• Patting on the buttocks</li> <li>• Touching/rubbing/squeezing breasts</li> <li>• Brushing up against a woman</li> </ul>

Adapted from Madan and Nalla, 2016

(USAID, 2020)<sup>4</sup>

- **Rape:** Rape is any non-consensual vaginal, anal or oral penetration of another person with any bodily part or object. This can be by any person known or unknown to the survivor, within marriage and relationships, and during armed conflict.
- **Corrective rape:** Corrective rape is a form of rape of perpetrated against someone on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It is intended to force the victim to conform to heterosexuality or normative gender identity.
- **Rape culture:** Rape culture is the social environment that allows sexual violence to be normalized and justified. It is rooted in patriarchy and fueled by persistent gender inequalities and biases about gender and sexuality.

## Human trafficking

Human trafficking is the acquisition and exploitation of people, through means such as force, fraud, coercion, or deception. This heinous crime ensnares millions of women and girls worldwide, many of whom are sexually exploited.

### 7. What Nigerian Law Prohibits GBV?

The Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law (VAPP) law was launched to tackle “all forms of violence against persons in private and public life” and ensure “maximum protection and effective remedies for victims and punishment of offenders.” The VAPP law has been enacted at federal level and 18 out 36 states and the FCT have domesticated the law at state level.

<sup>4</sup> [https://urban-links.org/wp-content/uploads/GBV-on-Transportation\\_6-26-2020\\_updated\\_DM.pdf](https://urban-links.org/wp-content/uploads/GBV-on-Transportation_6-26-2020_updated_DM.pdf)

## 8. Facts and Figures

- 70% had witnessed harassment in public transport and nearly half of the passengers had experienced a form of GBV in public transport systems.<sup>5</sup>
- Globally, an estimated 736 million women—almost one in three—have been subjected to physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both at least once in their life (30 per cent of women aged 15 and older).<sup>6</sup>
- 30% of females globally have reported that their first sexual experience was forced.<sup>7</sup>

## 9. Factors that enable GBV in the transport sector

- Overcrowded buses allows for close proximity for perpetrators
- Inadequate policies, rules and regulations in place at all levels
- Gender and social norms that normalize assumptions that men are more superior to women
- Some people assume that different forms of harassment, eg catcalling or verbal comments are acceptable.
- Limited security presence

## 10. Who can be an Offender of Sexual Violence?

- Co-passengers
- Operators
- Conductors
- Drivers<sup>89</sup>

## 11. Our Key Allies

The majority of transport and road workers are men and boys. So, this manual is tailored to the assumption that mostly men, and the fewer women working in the sector will step down and use the manual. Therefore, our allies are:

- Transport Union staff
- Men and boys working as drivers, conductors and other roles in the transport sector
- Women and girls working in the transport sector

## 12. What structures do we need in place to ensure safety for women and girls?

- Bright lights in parks and bus stops
- Panic Buttons to press. Some buses may not have panic buttons but fliers posted around the bus can suffice
- More open walk allies to avoid blind hidden spots for instance, for overhead bridges

## 13. What the government can do...

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<https://transport-links.com/why-do-we-miss-the-connection-between-transport-and-sexual-harassment-in-nigeria/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures>

<sup>7</sup> Relief Web

<sup>8</sup> Studies show that drivers are less likely to harass than co-passengers. However, final passengers might be at risk.

<sup>9</sup> [https://urban-links.org/wp-content/uploads/GBV-on-Transportation\\_6-26-2020\\_updated\\_DM.pdf](https://urban-links.org/wp-content/uploads/GBV-on-Transportation_6-26-2020_updated_DM.pdf)

- Adequate budgets and constant maintenance of transport structures
- GBV transportation policy
- Include women in the decision making and design process
- Ensure a structural design of public transport systems lowers the likelihood of GBV
- Ensure information of where to report GBV is publicly available
- Increased availability of public transport vehicles
- Improved training and recruitment of women in the transport sector
- Ensure women transport workers understand their rights to a GBV-free work environment through training during registration
- Increase the presence of mobile security
- Align transport system with GBV first responders- security, legal and healthcare sector
- Improve access to gender-specific public toilets

#### **14. What Transport Union and bus operators can do...**

- Create a policy on GBV
- Make sure simplified GBV rules are posted in parks and buses as a requirement
- Disciplinary committee to investigate cases of gender-based violence
- Creation of a hotline
- Ensure information of where to report GBV is publicly available
- Increased availability of public transport vehicles
- Ensure women transport workers understand their rights to a GBV-free work environment through training during registration
- Improved training and recruitment of women in the transport sector
- Increased leadership of women in Transport Union
- Actively respond to reported cases with speed
- Increase the presence of mobile security
- Align transport system with GBV first responders- security, legal and healthcare sectors
- Public announcements in parks and buses

#### **15. What transport workers (drivers, conductors and cleaners) can do...**

- Comply with anti-sexual harassment rules
- Make sure posters on rules and emergency numbers are posted on your bus
- Make sure both conductor and driver are aligned on the rules
- Ensure information on where to report GBV is publicly available
- Public announcements in parks and buses

#### **16. Women as transport workers**

Women as transport workers different forms of discrimination and GBV in the male-dominated sector. It is important to engage them in policymaking as well as campaigns to end GBV. It is also important to teach them, as well as their male counterparts, the policies and compliance measures that end GBV in the transport sector.

#### **17. How to carry a step-down training**

- Understand your audience- men, women, younger or older to use appropriate knowledge
- Look for the most cost-effective approach to have the training

- Safe spaces should be fostered with rules for participation so people can learn from their mistakes.
- Create an informal setting for the training to enable a safe space
- The training should be participatory and ensure full-on engagement with participants
- The Draft agenda should be simple and short, covering definitions of terms for people to understand and identify all forms of GBV
- Consult the manual for knowledge content
- Relate to personal experiences to emphasize points, for instance, speak about your experience witnessing GBV or your experience about how you tried to stop GBV or educate people on ending GBV
- It is important to understand power relations- men and women participating may not be able to express themselves freely. You can have one with just men alone or women alone. You can also organize one with senior staff.
- Don't do it alone, ask other people to support you. Before they join you, have a briefing with them to plan ahead with everyone's role clearly assigned

### 18. How to Create a GBV Disciplinary Committee

- Should include:
  - A top senior official from **Transport Union**
  - A driver
  - A conductor
  - A maintenance official
  - At least, half of the committee should be women
- The committee should have a quarterly report and meet quarterly
- The committee should have direct access to hotline or reporting mechanism

### 19. How to Create a Policy

- **Identify the problem or need:** Ending gender-based violence in the public transport system
- **Identify stakeholders:** Stakeholders relevant to the tasks, including drivers, conductors, Transport Union secretariat, CSOs, government officers amongst others should be outlined for further consultations.
- **Assign roles and leadership:** What will be the role of the Ministry of Transport, Transport Union, CODE and BQA.
- **Conduct research:** Are there existing policies or relatable policies in place that can be built on? This is to avoid duplication of effort.
- **Consult with stakeholders before you begin:** Conduct research and interviews with key stakeholders
- **Draft policy:** The organization tasked with drafting the policy completes the policy based on the information from the consultations and research to ensure inclusive, achievable and relatable laws
- **Validation from stakeholders:** Share draft with stakeholders for final reviews
- **Get final approvals** with appropriate signatures of all parties where necessary to ensure authenticity

### How to Disseminate

- Engage on social media:

- Share facts and figures
- Reshare posts about Project Sabi and other GBV initiatives
- Run conversations on your pages
- Go on radio, partners like the Project Sabi team might have radio and TV speaking opportunities
- Have conversations with family and friends
- Slot in a space in the agenda during union meetings

### **How to Measure Progress**

- You can run a simplified evaluation by
  - Having a good note taker document your informal trainings
- Asking the following questions:
  - What new information did they learn
  - How has the training changed their mindset?
  - What did they like about the training?
  - What are they going to do with the information they have learned.
  - What did they not like?
  - What needs to improve?

### **Team**

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