

THE WAVES PROJECT

WOMEN
AGAINST
VIOLENCE
EMPOWERED
THROUGH
SUSTAINABILITY

**Promoting Women's Economic Growth
Against Violence through Sustainable
Practices in Kano.**

2025



FIRST EDITION



FATIMA MUSA ALIYU
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
BCAI

Ending gender-based violence (GBV) demands a holistic approach and at Bridge Connect, we are deeply committed to ensuring that we apply various creative approaches toward achieving this. From collaborating with governments on GBV policy reforms, to engaging communities in shifting harmful behaviors, to directly empowering women with essential economic skills and resources that are enabling them to become self-reliant and protect their dignity. We are incredibly proud of the impactful work we have done with the Government of Canada through the WAVES project and are grateful to the Kano State Government for their invaluable support.



JULIET NWOBODO
PROJECT LEAD
WAVES PROJECT

Working with the WAVES women and other stakeholders to execute this project has been a rewarding experience. I have seen their dedication to acquiring new skills, building self-confidence, and achieving financial independence. I have also seen how through the WAVES project, they have not only expanded their businesses but have also become vocal advocates against **Gender-Based Violence**. Watching them take control of their futures and inspire others has been deeply fulfilling, and I look forward to empowering even more women in the future. The WAVES project is truly a model worth scaling, as its impact has been evident in such a short period.

“ Globally 1 in 3 women experience physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, mostly by an intimate partner ” (WHO). This issue does not only have a profound impact on survivors and their families but also carries significant social and economic consequences. Reducing violence against women and girls requires a comprehensive community-driven approach with sustained engagement from multiple stakeholders.”

Introduction

WHY THE WAVES PROJECT

On July 9, 2024, a bill to repeal and reenact the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act passed its second reading in the National House of Assembly. While Kano State has yet to adopt the VAPP Act, notable progress has been made by the government, key MDAs, CSOs, and other stakeholders to align the Act with the Penal Code using a utilitarian approach. However, the move to repeal the Act threatens to undo years of progress, jeopardizing efforts to combat Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and its detrimental effects, particularly on women's economic independence.

Recognizing the urgency of this issue, our team developed the Women Against Violence Empowered through Sustainability (WAVES) project. The first phase of this project is a 5 months mentorship program for 50 women currently being funded by the High Commission of Canada to Nigeria through the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI



WAVES VISION AND MISSION



VISION

To Promote **Women's Economic Growth and Resilience Against Gender-based Violence Through Sustainable Practices.**

GOAL

To empower **100,000** women across Northern Nigeria over the next five years with the skills, resources, and support needed for economic independence while equipping them to actively **advocate against Gender-Based Violence (GBV).**



Why This Matters – An estimated **35%** of women approximately **818** million worldwide over the age of 15 have experienced physical or sexual violence. The most prevalent form is intimate partner violence (IPV), affecting 30% of women globally, while 7% have faced sexual violence by non-partners (**WHO**). The economic cost of violence against women and girls (VAWG) is estimated to range between 1.2% and 3.7% of GDP, with new data expected in the coming years. Women and girls face violence at home, in the workplace, in marketplaces, and during their commute, limiting their ability to earn an income, reducing business productivity, and hindering economic growth.



Poverty is a risk factor associated with gender-based violence; it also often intersects with and reinforces gender inequality. Economic empowerment is a proven pathway to reducing vulnerability to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and fostering long-term social and economic stability. In Northern Nigeria, many women face financial dependence, limited access to opportunities, and systemic barriers that hinder their growth. By equipping women with the skills and resources to achieve financial independence through sustainable practices, the WAVES Project transforms individual lives, strengthens families, uplifts communities, and drives sustainable development, ensuring a safer, more just society for future generations.



Our Activities & Interventions



→ Workshop on Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

To train 50 women on GBV prevention, Reporting, and access to support services

We organized a comprehensive three-day workshop focused on gender-based violence (GBV) for all participants. Collaborating with expert facilitators, the sessions equipped women with knowledge on critical GBV topics, including practical strategies to identify, challenge, and safely report incidents. To ensure sustained support, we established a direct referral pathway connecting participants to the WARAKA SARC Center, streamlining access to specialized care and reporting mechanisms for survivors.

→ Needs Assessment

To examine the socio-economic characteristics, existing business practices, and operational challenges, and evaluate resources and opportunities that can support business growth and sustainability.

We partnered with a consultant, a world trade leader who served as the principal consultant for the needs assessment while also working hand in hand with the project team. This seasoned consultant deployed a rigorous mixed-methodology approach, combining data-driven analytics with in-depth qualitative insights to map the socio-economic landscapes, evaluate prevailing business practices, and pinpoint systemic challenges and actionable opportunities for women entrepreneurs. The result was a comprehensive report used to inform targeted, equity-driven programming.

Our Activities & Interventions



Strategic Advocacy

To conduct strategic advocacy for the implementation of the VAPP Act by engaging key stakeholders through direct advocacy efforts and leveraging the **16 Days of Activism** to raise awareness on Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

During the **16 Days of Activism 2024**, we partnered with Premier Radio Kano and Wazobia FM Kano to air advocacy programs in Hausa and English, featuring WAVES participants who shared personal experiences and urged action against GBV. Simultaneously, **BCAI** engaged key stakeholders including the Ministry of Women, Children, and Disabled, the Kano State House of Assembly, and the Ministry of Justice to advocate for the protection and effective implementation of the VAPP Act. Our key demands included preventing its repeal, amending and enforcing it, establishing more SARC centers across the four emirates, and ensuring adequate funding for existing centers.



Business Development Service Workshop

To deliver contextualized training on financial literacy, business development, planning, and marketing strategies to 50 WAVES women

We partnered with a business development consultant who used the results of our assessment to deliver tailored training to the WAVES women. The training program was divided into two parts: a three-day general business training session tailored to the women-specific business sectors, followed by a two-day practical session focusing on business registration and business account opening processes, enabling them to succeed in



Climate Smart Agriculture Workshop

To provide **climate-smart agriculture training to 50 women**, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to build sustainable agribusinesses while leveraging the circular economy to drive climate action.

We trained **50 WAVES participants** in climate-smart agriculture, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to adopt sustainable farming and poultry practices. The training took place at the Horti Nigeria learning site with practical facilities to support hands-on learning and skill development.

OUR IMPACT

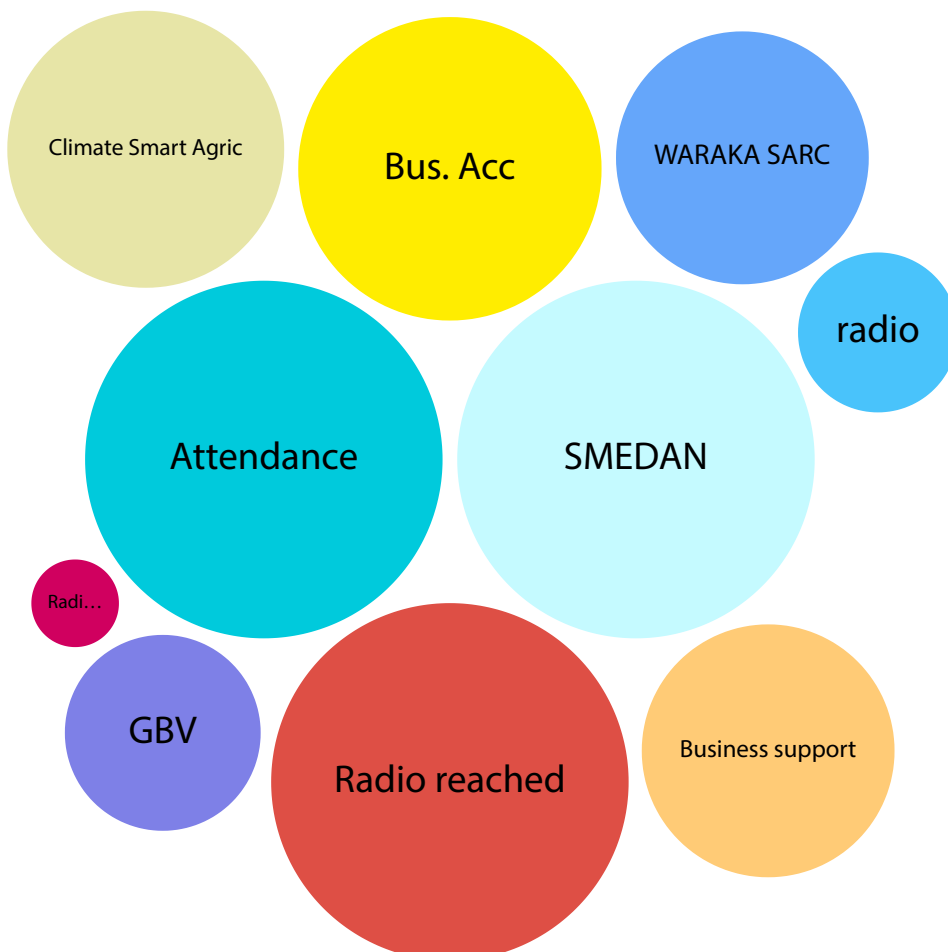
The assessment revealed that most women are self-employed, engaged in informal agribusiness activities such as vegetable farming and poultry, and make significant contributions to household incomes. However, they face challenges including limited technical skills, inadequate access to finance, and the impacts of gender-based violence (GBV). Barriers to their business growth include high input costs, poor market linkages, lack of branding, and limited access to financial services and infrastructure.

Recommendations from the assessment were taken into consideration and the report from the needs assessment was used to design a robust five-day business development service training for all women leveraging the expertise of a Business Development consultant, Mr Badamasi Aliyu Abdullahi.



OUR IMPACT

- **50** women across 11 LGAs in Kano were enrolled in the WAVES Program
- **100%** attendance recorded across all activities
- **20%** of the women participated as guests during the radio advocacy on GBV.
- **50** Women were given direct links to counselors at WARAKA SARC center for referral services
- **40%** of women reported carrying out a step-down GBV training in their community
- **72%** of the women opened a business account for the first time
- **100%** of the women formally registered their business with SMEDAN
- **6** radio programs across 2 radio stations
- **2** million radio reach within 3 weeks
- **1** Woman set up her first Greenhouse after the business development training
- **60%** of participants were introduced to climate-smart agriculture for the first time.
- **50** women received farming tools, including water sprayers, fertilizers, seeds, and greenhouse materials, to improve their agricultural practices.



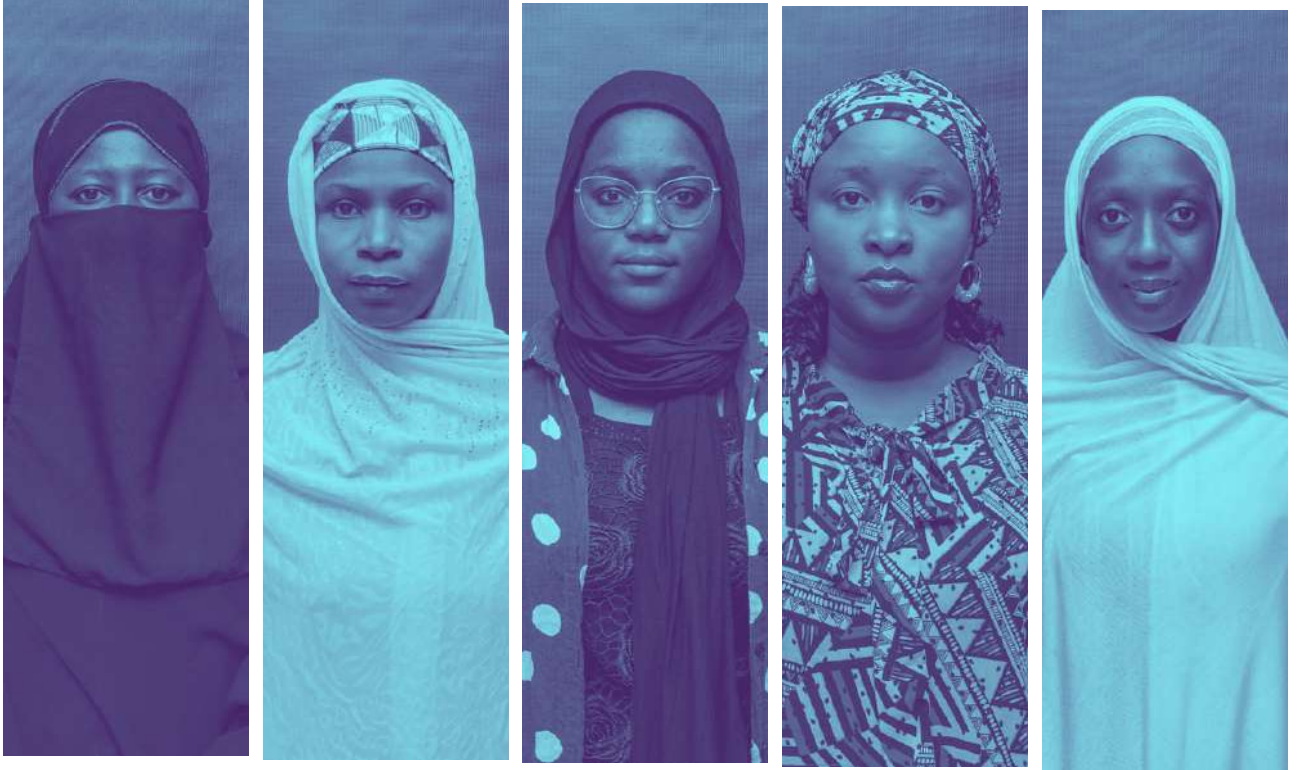
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Women reported carrying out a GBV step down training in their community

IMPACT STORIES & TESTIMONIALS



Aisha Ado



I would like to start by saying that I learned a lot from this training right from the first day. This program truly opened my eyes, especially after attending the earlier GBV workshop. Inspired by that learning, I organized a small group of younger women in my community who sell street food. I realized that the lack of a steady income and proper knowledge about running a business can exacerbate GBV, particularly financial abuse. During one of our discussions, a lady shared her GBV experience with me. Using the knowledge I gained from the training, I advised her to start a small business to become economically empowered and gain the confidence to leave an abusive relationship.

Sadiya Haruna Said

I am grateful for our last GBV workshop. From what I learned, I have been teaching other women in my community, empowering them with knowledge to improve their situations. I must also say that the needs assessment was eye-opening. Through the business development training, I realized that many of the issues I had been struggling with in my business which I even mentioned during my needs assessment were directly addressed during the workshop. I was really surprised at how well the BDSP understood my pain points and provided practical solutions. Also, I learned so much about tracking my income and expenses, which will help me better manage my business finances. This training has also connected me with other women, and I am excited about the possibility of forming business partnerships, especially through the cooperatives we were taught about.

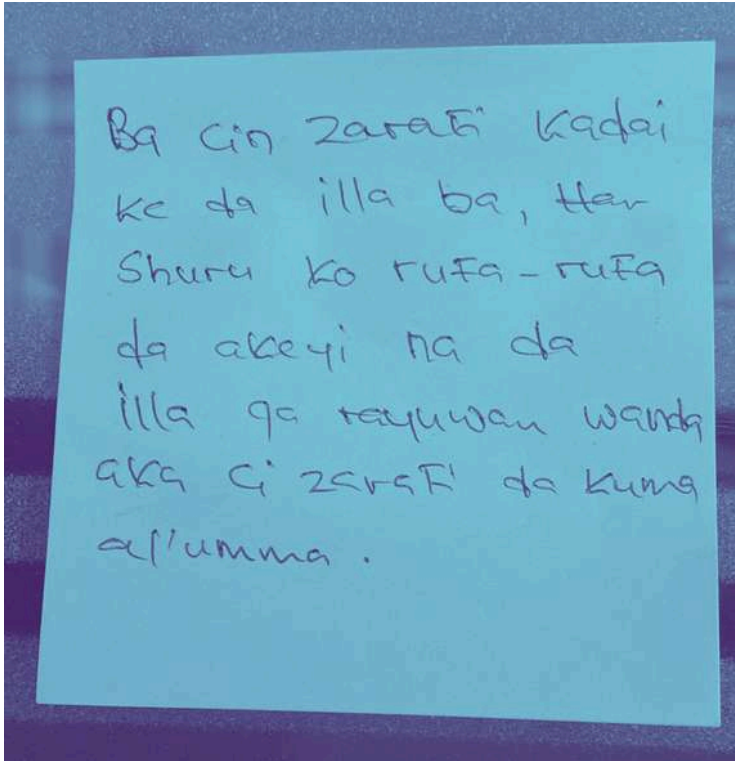


Asabe Umar



I run a poultry business, and this five-day workshop helped me identify the mistakes I've been making. I was on the verge of giving up because my chickens often die during the harmattan season, causing significant losses for a small business owner like me. However, I received mentorship from the BDSP, who specializes in poultry farming. He shared valuable tips that I began implementing immediately after the training. According to him, harmattan can actually be the best period to profit from poultry farming, especially with the festive season increasing demand. With the insights and strategies I've learned, I'm confident I can make better decisions and start seeing positive results soon.

WHATS NEXT FOR WAVES?



Over the next five years, our focus will be on scaling sustainable solutions to reach 100,000 women across Northern Nigeria by focusing on:

- Strategic partnership for systemic change.
- Capacity building rooted in local needs.
- Survivor-led initiatives to combat GBV,
- Building Ecosystems to help women transition from training to entrepreneurship.



Future Plans & Call to Action

Building on the success of our first phase, which has already laid critical groundwork in skills training, resource distribution, and advocacy networks, we aim to deepen impact by:

- Expanding reach to underserved communities where access to resources is limited.
- Strengthening entrepreneurial ecosystems.
- Sector-specific workshops and pairing participants with mentors from Nigeria's business sector.
- Continuous GBV awareness and advocacy.
- Sustainable knowledge sharing.

THE WAVES PROJECT

WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE EMPOWERED THROUGH SUSTAINABILITY

Promoting Women's Economic Growth Against Violence through Sustainable Practices in Kano.



PHOTO GALLERY



THE
WAVES
PROJECT

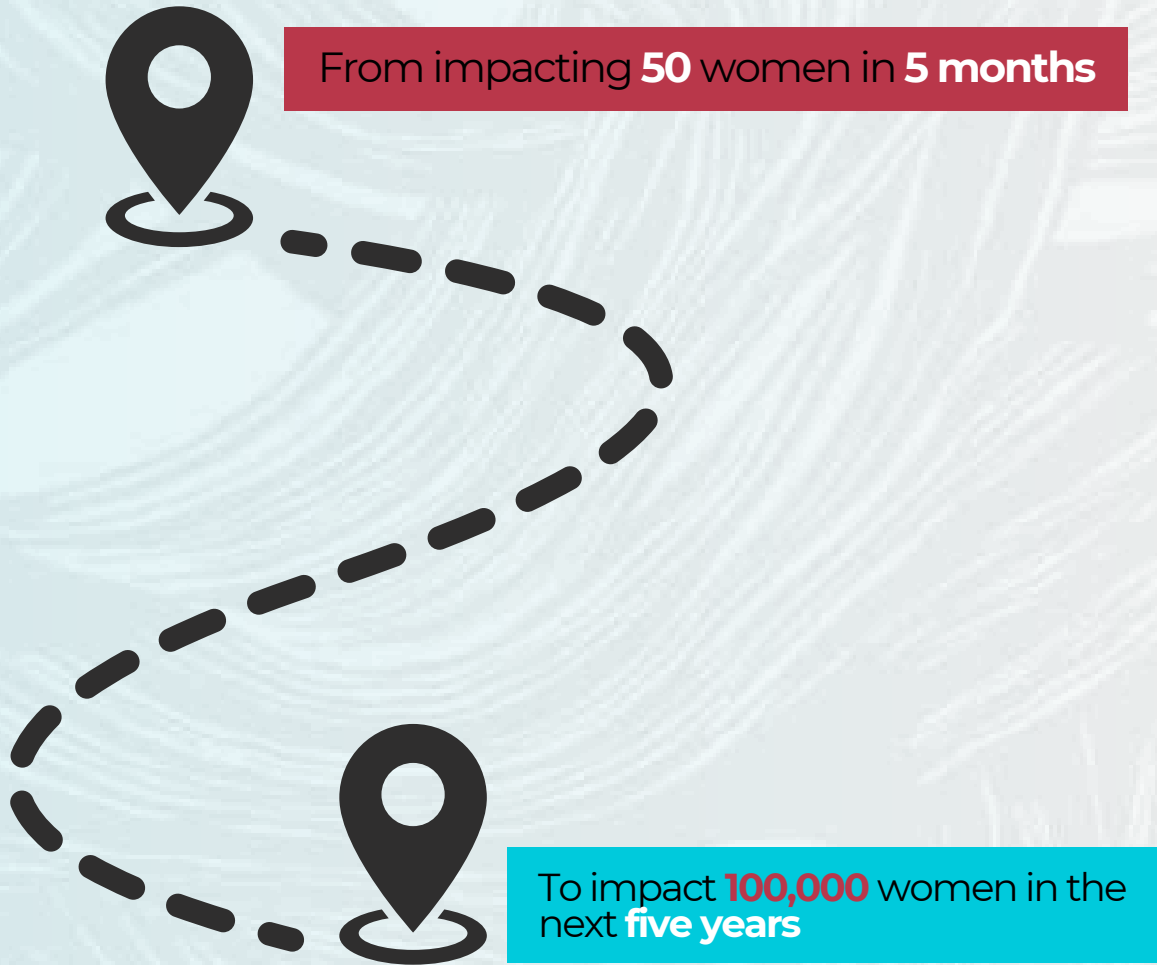
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WAVES WOMEN



Ready to take the next step?



Visit www.bridgeconnectafrica.org to donate to our cause.

To Partner: Email info@bridgeconnectafrica.org to discuss collaboration.

The WAVES Project Pilot phase is sponsored by  **CFLI/FCIL**
Canada Fund for Local Initiatives
Fonds canadien d'initiatives locales

Partners: Kano State Ministry of Women, Children and Disabled,, Horti Nigeria, WARAKA SARC



ABOUT BRIDGE CONNECT

Bridge Connect Africa Initiative (BCAI) is a non-governmental organisation dedicated to empowering and amplifying the rights of girls, women, and young people through equitable access to education, healthcare, economic empowerment, and environmental sustainability. Founded in 2018, BCAI uses strategies for policy-level advocacy, community engagements, capacity building, digital campaigns, and research to address barriers that limit progress for these groups.

We work closely with communities to co-create innovative solutions and collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, to build a future where women and young people are empowered to live safe and dignified lives. Over the past six years, BCAI has developed and implemented programs that enhance quality and equitable access to education, promote effective healthcare delivery and safety for women, girls, and young people, advocate for child protection, combat gender-based violence, and foster economic growth. These efforts have directly impacted and benefited over 200,000 individuals.

In addition to these efforts, BCAI has conducted critical policy advocacies and achieved significant legislative progress across Northern Nigeria through advocacies. These include advocating for the enactment of the Child Rights Act, championing the passage of the Free and Compulsory Education Policy in Kano State, and pushing for the harmonization of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act with the State Penal Code, impacting positively, the lives of women, girls, and children.

Through these efforts, we have worked with partners such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Population Reference Bureau (PRB), Malala Fund, the Government of Canada, PEPFAR, Jobberman Nigeria, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Auburn University, Connected Development, Youth Hub Africa, Education as a Vaccine and many others.



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