

A group of 14 young women in the Vicinity of Girei near Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria have taken part in a series of participatory workshops focusing on what young women's work involves and the challenges they face when they combine work with education

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We have a Say



Young women have a say, do not suppress our voice; we have the right to be heard and the right to equal opportunities

We Have a Say

The Situation

In Girei community, young women interact and engage in different kinds of work such as Hawking, Petty trading, Teaching etc. Young women combine work and education due to poor family background, traditions and social norms, unwillingness of the men to work, excessive domestic chores, too many family responsibility, domestic Violence, sexual harassment from their lecturers at schools and place of work. This in turn becomes a burden to them and limiting their aspirations to work and education.

Problems

In our society women do not have a say or an opinion on issues with regards to work, education and family, women are seen as inferior beings due to traditional beliefs and sometimes, young women are given out for marriage at an early age thereby terminating their quest to schooling and work. Furthermore, more young women face challenges such as rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment, kidnapping,

gender inequality and lack of support/assistance from relatives and family. It is generally believed that young women have no voice even on their education, work and marriages and this have greatly affected our social interactions as young women, and the society pays little or no attention to it.

SOLUTIONS

Religious leaders should remind the men about what Islam teaches and the way to handle their lives.

Early marriage should be discouraged

Street hawking by young women and children should be discouraged

Men should also take up fatherly responsibilities of sponsorship and paying school fees and bills and to provide for the family

Men should understand with women in terms of their (needs) whenever they (women) are tired

Young women should be supported by husbands, parents and the community to attain higher levels of education

We young women should be determined in pursuing our careers because if you are determined for things to change you can change it

Women should not be made to farm in order to feed and take care of the family

Families should contact marriage guardians/counsellors when they have problems they cannot resolve within the family

Issues of domestic violence and kidnapping should be reported to the police and action be taken according to the law

Men should be involved in taking care of children and in all domestic chores

Family meetings: during family meetings the men dominance can be addressed

Young Women empowerment/skills acquisition centers should be built

The community and Government should address the long term belief that women are inferior