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KASU Urges Students to Speak Out Against Gender-Based Violence



Students of Kaduna State University (KASU) have been encouraged to speak out and make use of available support structures in the face of gender-based violence.

The call was made during a public lecture held to commemorate International Women's Day, focusing on safeguarding and gender justice within tertiary institutions.

The event was jointly organised by the Centre for the Study and Resolution of Domestic Violence (CERSDOV), the SPRiNg Programme, and the Centre for Gender Studies, Kaduna State University, as part of efforts to strengthen safeguarding systems within higher institutions.

The lecture, themed “Strengthening Safeguarding Systems in Tertiary Institutions: Policy, Practice, and Protection,” brought together academics, policy actors, students, and development partners to explore ways of promoting safer campuses and advancing gender justice.

Welcoming participants, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Strategy, Innovation and Services Delivery) of Kaduna State University,

Prof. Helen Afang Andow, reaffirmed the university's commitment to addressing issues of sexual harassment while ensuring a safe and inclusive academic environment for all students. She urged students to always speak out and utilize available support mechanisms whenever their rights are violated.

Also speaking, Professor of Criminology and Gender Studies, Prof. Hauwa'u Evelyn Yusuf, encouraged students to resist all forms of gender-based violence and harassment by speaking up and seeking help when necessary.

Prof. Yusuf, who is also the Director of the Centre for the Study and Resolution of Domestic Violence (CERSDOV), shared personal experiences and emphasized the importance of awareness, courage, and collective responsibility in creating safe learning environments.

In her presentation, Bilkisu Yusuf of the Department of Sociology KASU, stressed the importance of knowing the available support systems for survivors of gender-based violence. She highlighted

the services provided by the Salama Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Kakuri, Kaduna, which offers free medical care, forensic evidence collection, HIV Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), legal aid, and counselling support for survivors.

She further explained that CERSDOV provides crisis support, advocacy, and survivor-centred guidance, assuring participants that all support services prioritize confidentiality and dignity. According to her, accessible support systems, including disability inclusive services, are essential to ensuring that all survivors receive the assistance they need.

Delivering his remarks, the Kaduna State Representative of the Spring Programme, Bazani Emmanuel, highlighted the importance of collaboration between institutions, civil society organisations, and government agencies in addressing gender-based violence and strengthening institutional safeguarding policies.

Goodwill messages were also delivered by the Director of the Centre for Gender Studies, Dr. Deborah J. Bijimi, Prof. Rahilatu Ahmad Muhammad, and Her worship Sa'adatuHamma of the Kaduna State Multi door court. In her message, Her Worship Hamma, advised students to make wise decisions when choosing life partners, noting that such choices have long-term implications for personal well-being and

stability.

During the interactive session, students actively participated by asking questions and sharing concerns about sexual harassment, reporting mechanisms, and available support systems within the university.

Responding, the speakers provided guidance on how students can safely report cases through institutional channels at Kaduna State University, as well as through external support organisations such as CERSDOV.

The event also highlighted reporting channels available within Kaduna State University, including the anonymous reporting platform on the university website, the Student Affairs Division, University Counseling Services, and the Campus Security Unit.

Participants were also encouraged to utilize national support services such as the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs GBV helpline, the National Human Rights Commission hotline, and police emergency lines when necessary.

The programme concluded with a renewed call for collective action among students, staff, and stakeholders to strengthen safeguarding mechanisms and ensure that campuses remain safe spaces where the rights, dignity, and voices of all women and girls are respected and protected.



