

Annual Report 2025

“3 YEARS STRONG: ADVANCING JUSTICE, EQUALITY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY”



1. Executive Summary



In 2025, Minority Watch marked its third anniversary, consolidating its role as a leading legal advocacy organization defending the rights of LGBTQI persons, people living with HIV (PLHIV), and other vulnerable groups in Nigeria.

The year was defined by:

- Strategic litigation shaping human rights jurisprudence
- Expanded partnerships and coalition-building
- Increased grassroots legal empowerment
- Continued resistance against systemic discrimination and violence

Despite institutional challenges, Minority Watch strengthened its commitment to using the law as a tool for social transformation.

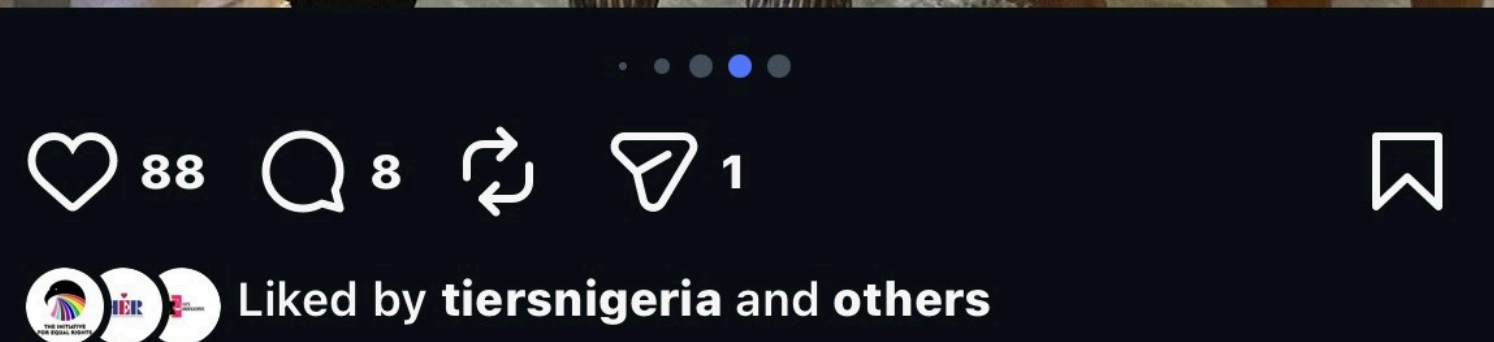


2. Organizational Milestone

3rd Anniversary – January 24, 2025

Minority Watch celebrated three years of impact, reaffirming its long-term goal:

To support courts in developing legal precedents that protect marginalized communities in Nigeria.



3. Strategic Priorities

In 2025, the organization focused on:

- Strategic Litigation: Driving systemic change through precedent-setting cases
- Access to Justice: Expanding pro bono legal services
- Advocacy & Policy Engagement: Challenging discriminatory laws and practices
- Capacity Building: Strengthening legal and community resilience
- Movement Building: Collaborating with local and international partners



4. Legal Advocacy & Litigation

4.1 Landmark HIV Discrimination Case

- Court ruled that compulsory HIV testing as employment condition is unlawful
- Awarded damages to the claimant
- Held both employer and testing facility accountable

Impact:

A major legal milestone against workplace discrimination in Nigeria.



SUIT NO.:
IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION BY YAHAYA ABOLARINWA FOR AN ORDER FOR THE ENFORCEMENT OF HIS FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS. 03

1D/18430 MHR/2024

AND

BETWEEN

YAHAYA ABOLARINWA

APPLICANT

AND

GABRIELLE CHASE MEDIA COMPANY LTD RESPONDENT

ORIGINATING MOTION

BROUGHT PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 34, 37 & 42 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA 1999 (AS AMENDED); ARTICLES 5 & 12 OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF 1948, SECTIONS 4(1) & (2), 8(1), AND 9(1) OF THE HIV AND AIDS (ANTI-DISCRIMINATION) ACT, 2014; ARTICLE 1 OF THE DISCRIMINATION (EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATION) CONVENTION, 1958 (NO. 111), ORDER 2 OF THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS (ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURE) RULES, 2009 AND UNDER THE INHERENT JURISDICTION OF THE HONOURABLE COURT

TAKE NOTICE that this Honourable Court will be moved on the day of 2024 at the hour of 9 O' clock in the forenoon or so soon thereafter as Counsel may be heard praying the Honourable Court for the enforcement of the Applicant's Fundamental Rights in terms of the reliefs as set out in the statement in support of this application, to wit:

- I. **A DECLARATION** that the subjection of the Applicant to a compulsory HIV test by the Respondent as a condition for continuing to participate in the Style Magnate Fashion Reality Show of 2024 is in violation of Sections 34 and 37 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended), Articles 5 & 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948; and Sections 8(1) and 9(1) of the HIV and AIDS (Anti-Discrimination) Act, 2014; and is therefore unconstitutional and unlawful.



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minoritywatch_nigeria Sometime in August, 2024, we, on

challenging the judgment delivered in favour of our client in our first HIV- related workplace discrimination case. Their eight (8) grounds of appeal are as follows:

1. Jurisdictional Error – The learned trial judge is said to have wrongly assumed jurisdiction to entertain a fundamental rights claim in circumstances the appellant believes did not meet constitutional thresholds.

2. Failure to Evaluate Evidence – It is argued that the trial court did not assess the full body of evidence presented, leading to a decision said to have caused a miscarriage of justice.

3. Misapplication of the HIV & AIDS (Anti-Discrimination) Act 2024 – The judge allegedly failed to consider the operational realities of the 1st Defendant's business when applying the law, particularly on the HIV test requirement.

4. Misconstruction of Factual Intent – The appeal challenges how the trial court interpreted the facts surrounding a provisional job offer that had yet to crystallize into a formal employment contract.

5. Error in Finding Existence of a Binding Contract – According to the Appellant, the offer to the Respondent was clearly conditional, and the judge erred in law by holding that a binding employment relationship had already formed.

6. Discountenancing Vital Contractual Evidence – It is alleged that the court ignored critical evidence from the Appellant on the sanctity and structure of the contract negotiation process, again leading to a miscarriage of justice.

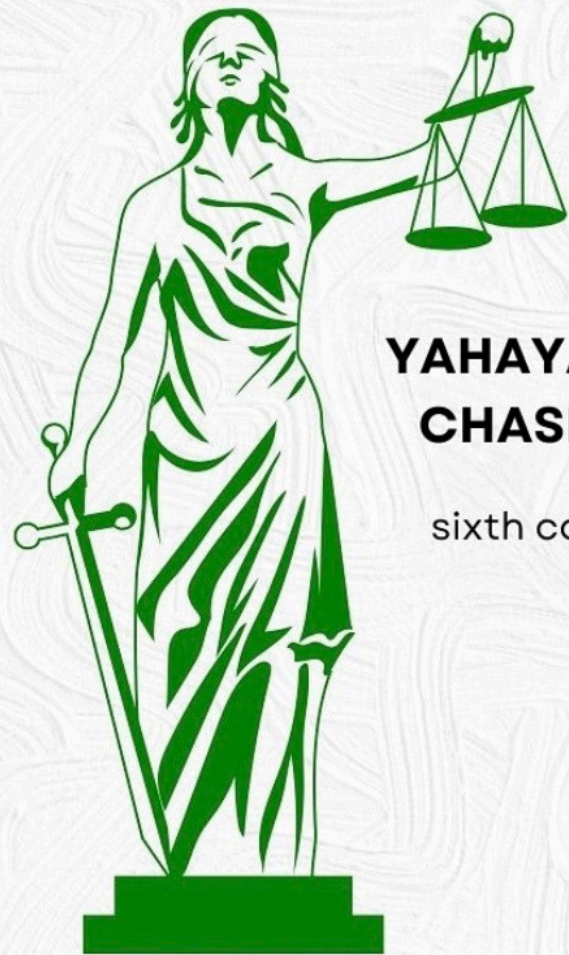
7. Contradiction on Credibility vs Damages – The trial court reportedly found inconsistencies in the Respondent's testimony which affected the damage claims, but still relied on the same testimony to award damages—a contradiction



4.2 Appeal & Enforcement

Defendant filed appeal challenging:

- Jurisdiction
- Evidence evaluation
- Application of HIV Anti-Discrimination law
- Court ordered partial stay of execution, requiring financial deposit



YAHAYA ABOLARINWA V. GABRIELLE CHASE MEDIA COMPANY LIMITED.

sixth court proceedings in suit number
ID/18430MFHR/2024



4.3 Setback in Reality Show HIV Case

- Court dismissed fundamental rights claim, classifying it as contractual
- Minority Watch continues legal reflection on strategy



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minoritywatch_nigeria CASE UPDATE: our fundamental rights enforcement case seeking to enforce the rights of the Applicant who was subjected to a compulsory HIV test without his consent and dismissed from a fashion reality show on grounds of his health status came up for hearing today before Honourable Justice O.A Odusanya.

Parties were absent.

5. Criminal Justice Interventions

5.1 Kito Gang Prosecutions

- Active involvement in multiple cases involving:
- Assault
- Extortion
- Kidnapping targeting LGBTQI individuals

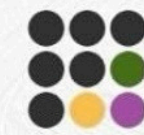
Key outcomes:

- Arrests and prosecutions initiated
- Bail applications denied in serious cases
- Ongoing trials with witness testimonies



5.2 Survivor Support

- Legal representation for victims
- Court monitoring (“watching brief”)
- Advocacy for accountability and deterrence



MINORITY WATCH

03



THE STATE OF LAGOS V. ESAMA JOEL & 8 ORS

First court proceedings in charge number
LD/25702C/2025



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minoritywatch_nigeria We are happy to announce that 8 of the 9 kito criminal gang members arrested at Lekki on 17th March, 2024, were produced in court today, 10th June, 2025 before Honourable Justice Muyideen of the High Court of Lagos State.

O.A Jackson announced her appearance for the State. Chizelu Emejulu announced his appearance as counsel holding watching brief for all the nominal complainants.

12th February, 2025.

The Commissioner of Police, FCT
Police Command Headquarters,
Zaria Street 9, Federal Capital
Territory, Abuja.

Dear Sir,

**RE: DEMAND FOR INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF
THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF IFEANYI POPULARLY
KNOWN AS "ABUJA AREA MAMA".**

1. The above subject matter refers.
2. We write to respectfully follow up on our petition dated 8th August, 2024, wherein we requested that your good office commence an investigation into the tragic death of one Ifeanyi; an FCT Abuja based transgender person who is popularly known as "Abuja Area Mama" (hereinafter referred to as "the deceased")
3. It has been more than six months since the death of the deceased and our initial communication, yet we have not received any response whatsoever from your office or seen any sufficient and relevant result of any investigation commenced by your office toward identifying those who attacked and murdered the deceased in cold blood.

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6. Abuja Area Mama Case (AAM)

6.1 Advocacy Efforts

- Filed petitions demanding police investigation
- Sustained public awareness campaigns

6.2 Legal Action

- Filed Fundamental Rights Enforcement suit against the Nigeria Police Force
- Argued that failure to investigate constitutes violation of the right to life



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minoritywatch nigeria Recall that six months ago, we



6.3 Public Engagement

- National media coverage
- Radio advocacy amplifying the issue

Significance:

This case represents a critical test of state accountability in protecting marginalized lives.

7. Policy & Legislative Advocacy

Opposition to Discriminatory Laws

- Critically challenged proposed Kano State bill on same-sex relationships
- Highlighted constitutional inconsistencies
- Continued public education on the **Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (SSMPA)**

area now known as Nigeria, they sought to define sexual activities between consenting male adults alongside bestiality — to make the reader believe there is a link between gay sex and bestiality.

There is no such connection in reality.

In the same vein, there is no real connection between the gay and lesbian identity and “gang things going on in Nigeria.” The purported connection exists only in the mind of the maker of this video.

2 Whether homosexuality is permitted under Nigerian law:



To begin with, the term “homosexuality” is not known to law in Nigeria. What is known to law is “sodomy” or “carnal knowledge against the order of nature.”

Therefore, what is prohibited by law are specific acts, not the identity.

Homosexuality, in its ordinary sense, refers to a pattern of emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction between people of the same sex or gender. In simple terms, a homosexual person is someone who may fall in love with, or feel physically attracted to, others of their own gender.

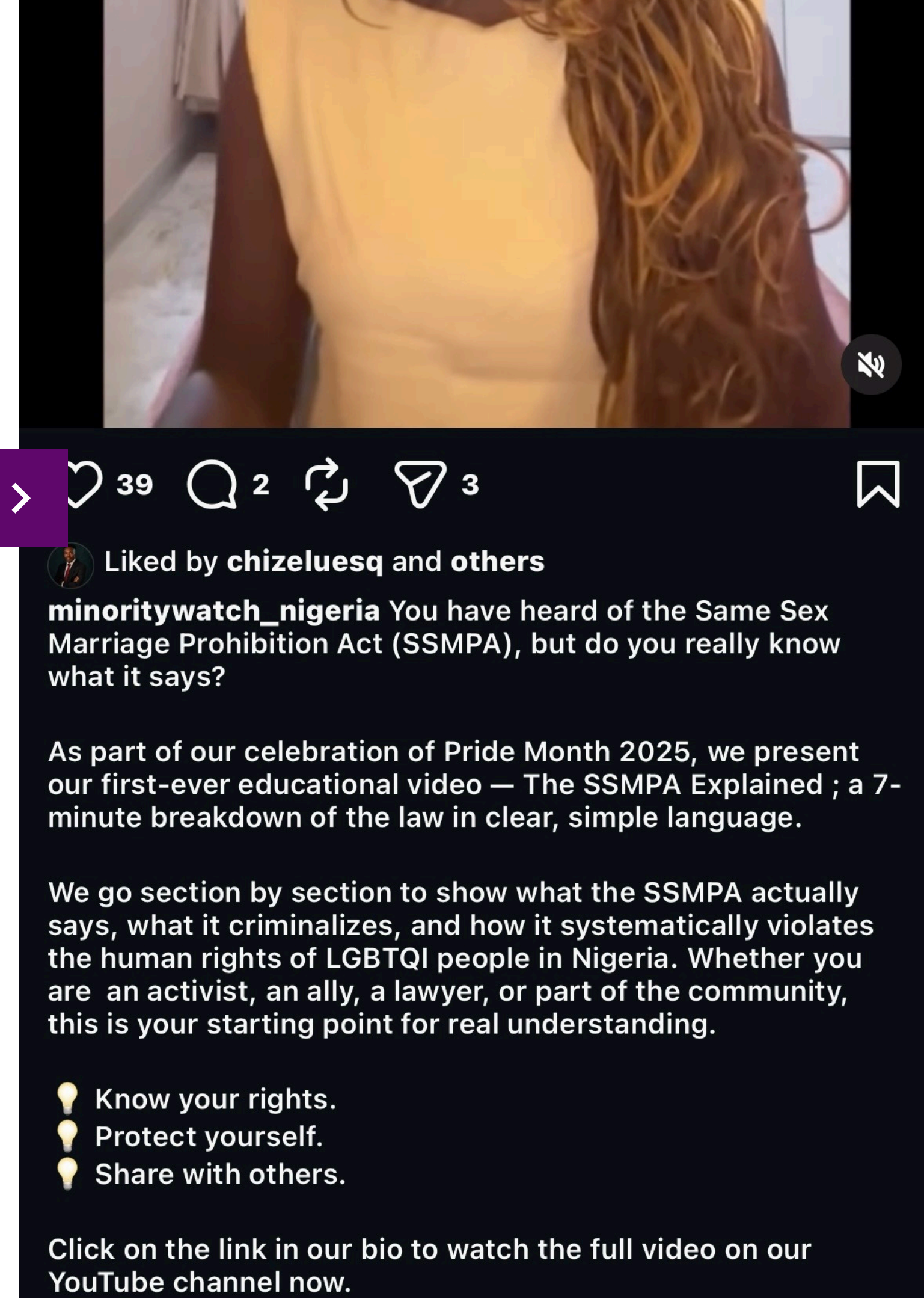
Nigerian law criminalizes specific sexual acts between persons of the same sex, same-sex marriage, and public displays of same-sex affection.

However, neither the Criminal Code, nor the Penal Code, nor the Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act (SSMPA) — nor any other law in Nigeria — criminalizes homosexuality, strictly speaking.

The law cannot, and does not, criminalize an identity or a

Legal Education Initiative

- Released educational video breaking down SSMPA provisions
- Promoted rights awareness among communities



8. Partnerships & Collaboration



Throughout 2025, Minority Watch strengthened alliances with:

- Civil society organizations
- Health and rights groups
- International partners
- Grassroots movements

Key Engagement Areas

- Strategic litigation
- Mental health support
- Police intervention systems
- Community legal education

9. Capacity Building & Programs



9.1 Legal Aid Expansion

- Recruitment of lawyers for pro bono services
- Focus on 1–15 years post-call experience

9.2 Internship Program

- Training for law and psychology students
- Practical exposure to human rights litigation



9.3 Workshops & Community Programs

- “No Justice, No Safety” human rights workshops
- TRANS-LEGALITY initiative for trans legal empowerment





10. Advocacy Visits & Stakeholder Engagement

Key engagements included:

- Government agencies (e.g., HIV control bodies)
- International diplomatic representatives
- Grassroots organizations

Focus areas:

- Legal protections for PLHIV
- Trans rights and safety
- Gender-based violence
- Health rights and access

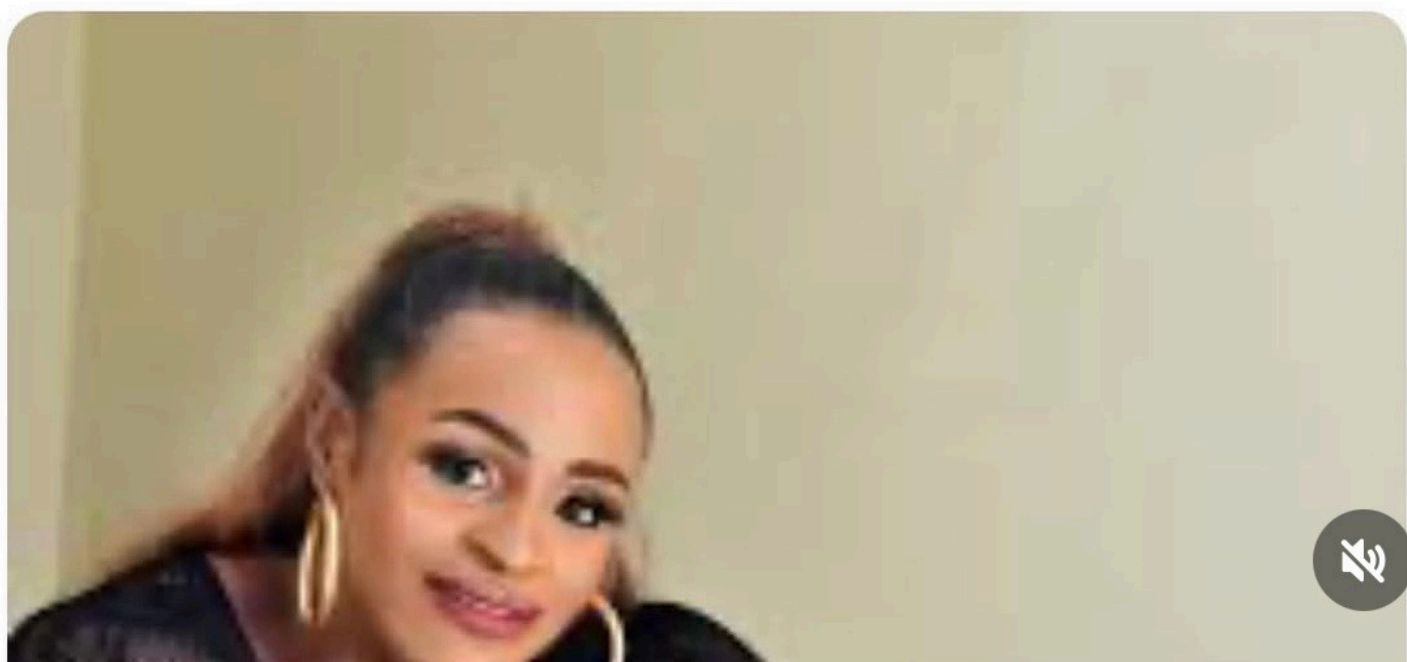
NEWS ▼ METRO SPORT LIFE ▼ TECH VIDEOS OPIN

Rights group sues police for failing to probe Abuja 'Area Mama' murder



 **By :** Adamu Abuh, Abuja  **Date:** 5 Aug 2025

Share :



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11. Public Awareness & Campaigns

Major Campaigns

- Justice for victims of violence
- Anti-kito violence awareness
- Digital safety for women and girls
- Human Rights Day advocacy

Themes

- Accountability
- Visibility
- Legal empowerment
- Community resilience

12. Achievements & Recognition

- Executive Director received Voice of Change of the Year Award (2025)
- National media recognition for advocacy efforts
- Strengthened reputation as a legal authority in minority rights protection



13. Challenges



- Delays and non-responsiveness from law enforcement
- Judicial setbacks in some cases
- Financial constraints in sustaining litigation
- Persistent stigma and discrimination

14. Financial & Resource Mobilization



- Public fundraising campaigns launched
- Highlighted cost of litigation (~~~N~~300,000 per court appearance)
- Increased reliance on donor and community support

15. Looking Ahead (2026 and Beyond)



Minority Watch aims to:

- Deepen strategic litigation for precedent-setting rulings
- Expand legal aid services
- Strengthen policy advocacy against discriminatory laws
- Scale community-based legal empowerment programs
- Enhance funding sustainability

16. Conclusion

**2025 was a year of progress,
resistance, and recalibration.**



Minority Watch continues to demonstrate that:
Legal advocacy is not only about winning cases—it is about
reshaping systems, amplifying voices, and defending dignity.
**Justice remains the goal. Law remains the tool. Community
remains the strength.**