

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2015

Man, 40, rapes 4-yr-old girl to death in Bayelsa

●Another 7-yr-old victim dies of HIV/AIDS

By Emem Idio

YENAGOA—OFFICIALS of United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF, and other stakeholders in the protection of the rights of the child were shocked, yesterday, to hear of the case of a 40-year-old man that raped a four-year-old girl to death in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

The revelation was made by the State Coordinator of Child Protection Network, CPN, Mrs. Mariam Kombo-Ezeh.

She also revealed two other cases of child abuse, which

occurred in the state, including the death of a seven-year-old girl of complications from HIV/AIDS after being raped and infected by a man, and another 13-year-old girl gang-raped in Yenagoa, the state capital.

Speaking on *Advocacy Engagement with Policy Makers on Domestication of Child Right Act in Bayelsa*, Mrs. Kombo-Eze said cases of child abuse and inhuman treatments were on the rise in the state.

She said: "It is pathetic and the cases are on the high side. There is the need for speedy

passage of the bill on Child Rights into Law."

In her speech at the stakeholders meeting organized by the state government in collaboration with CPN, with the support of UNICEF, Enugu Field Office, the state Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Ms. Nengi Rufus-Spiff, said the present administration was shocked by the revelations and would never support child abuse under any guise.

According to her, children in Bayelsa State will be properly protected under the proposed

Bill, adding "the parents too should rise to the realities of training the boy-child to respect the girl-child. It is a thing of regret to know that the rate of such abuses is high."

In her message at the event, Chief Field Officer of UNICEF, Enugu office, Mr. Nwanaka Chude Onwurah, commended the state government on the existing policies on the protection and welfare of Bayelsa children.

Onwurah, who was represented by Charles Nzuki, expressed optimism that the Child Right Bill would soon be passed into law in Bayelsa.