

The Effectiveness of Widow Support Systems in the Rural Areas of Rivers State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT The study examined the effectiveness of widow support systems in the rural areas of Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives were to identify available support systems for rural widows in Rivers State and to determine how effective the support systems were to meet the needs of widows in the study area. The sample size for the study was 300 rural women selected using multiple sampling techniques. Data were obtained using structured questionnaire and recorded responses during Focus Group Discussion (FGD) sessions. Data gathered were analyzed using percentage mean and standard deviation. The findings include: availability of support systems ranging from traditional to conventional, the support systems were ineffective to meet the needs of rural widows. It was therefore, recommended that, governments (Federal, State and local) should do more to alleviate the sufferings of rural widows through the implementations of all rights obligations (International and locals) and the institution of social service programmes targeted towards widows. Also widows should form associations, an umbrella body through which they can make their voices heard by those in position to help them live meaningful lives.