



COI QUERY

Country of Origin	NIGERIA
Title	Situation of single Muslim women, particularly Yoruba, without family or support network in Lagos, including availability of support services and ability to access housing and employment
	June 2023 – July 2024
Reference period	1. Background
Topic(s)	2. Availability of support services
	3. Access to housing and employment
Date of completion	25 July 2024
Query Code	Q46-2024
Contributing EU+ COI units (if applicable)	N/A



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COI QUERY RESPONSE - Nigeria

Situation of single Muslim women, particularly Yoruba, without family or support network in Lagos, including availability of support services and ability to access housing and employment

1. Background

Information on single Muslim women, particularly Yoruba, without family or support network in Lagos, could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query. However, the following information on single women in Nigeria may be relevant.

Sources cited in the 2023 General Country of Origin Information Report on Nigeria by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands stated that ‘the situation for single women was difficult throughout Nigeria, although this varied greatly according to region and ethnic group.’¹ In December 2023, a counsellor interviewed by the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) highlighted that societal stigma, economic challenges, and emotional struggles significantly impacted the mental health of single mothers in Nigeria.²

The United States Department of State (USDOS) Annual report on human rights in 2022 indicated that unmarried women in Nigeria ‘endured many forms of discrimination.’³ Similarly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands reported that women experienced ‘significant discrimination’ in different fields, including in ‘education, employment and inheritance’, as well as gender-based violence’ (GBV).⁴

Information on gender-based violence in Lagos can be found in the EUAA Query [Gender-based violence \(GBV\) in Lagos](#), published on 10 July 2024

2. Availability of support services

Information on support services for single Muslim women, particularly Yoruba, without family or support network in Lagos could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query. However, the following information on single women in Nigeria may be relevant.

The Lagos State Ministry of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation (WAPA) comprises various units dedicated to the empowerment of women and the reduction of poverty through skill

¹ Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Country of Origin Information Report Nigeria, January 2023, [url](#), p. 59

² NAN, Counsellor appeals to public to destigmatise single motherhood, 16 December 2023, [url](#)

³ USDOS, 2022 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Nigeria, 20 March 2023, [url](#)

⁴ Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, General Country of Origin Information Report Nigeria, January 2023, [url](#), p. 59



acquisition programmes and targeted support initiatives.⁵ For instance, a Facebook post by the government of Lagos state shared that WAPA launched on 1 July 2022 a free short-term skills acquisition program for female members of different Islamic organizations, ‘including Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN), Al Mu’izz, Nasrul-lahi-li Fathi Society of Nigeria (NASFAT) and the Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN)’.⁶

In 2024, media sources reported on a project launched by the Oladele Fajemirokun Foundation⁷ in the Ibeju-Lekki area of Lagos State, which provided vocational skills to over 1 000 young mothers, including ‘single mothers without male support in their households.’⁸

Sources provided lists of local organisations based in Lagos and in Nigeria offering support services to women.⁹ Among these is the Jireh Doo Foundation (JDF), a women-led organization that provides resources and assistance to underserved individuals across Nigeria, including single mothers.¹⁰

3. Access to housing and employment

Information on access to housing for Muslim women, particularly Yoruba, without family or support network in Lagos, could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query. However, the following information on single women in Lagos may be relevant.

According to a study published in September 2023 in the Journal of Housing and the Built Environment,¹¹ survey data indicated presence discrimination in the Lagos rental market and the ‘majority of the victims were female headed households.’¹² Media also reported on cases when landlords and estate agents in Lagos refused to rent to single women.¹³ Several single women interviewed by media sources were asked ‘embarrassing and humiliating’ questions while looking for an apartment,¹⁴ and were discriminated based on their marital status¹⁵, fear of perceived misconduct or inconsistencies in bill payments.¹⁶ A single mother interviewed by another local newspaper stated that an estate agent suggested her perceived ‘waywardness’

⁵ Nigeria, WAPA, Ministry of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, n.d., [url](#)

⁶ Nigeria, Lagos State Government, [Facebook], Lagos Organises Short-Term Training, Empowerment Programme For Muslim Women, posted on: 1 July 2022, [url](#)

⁷ The Oladele Fajemirokun Foundation is a Nigerian non-governmental organization dedicated to providing community services. Oladele Fajemirokun Foundation, [Instagram], n.d., [url](#)

⁸ Leadership, IWD 2024: Foundation Empowers 1,000 Women In Lagos, February 2024, [url](#); Nation (The), Foundation empowers 1000 women in Lagos, 9 March 2024, [url](#)

⁹ Invictus Africa, Lagos, n.d., [url](#); Work and School, Best NGO for Single Mothers in Nigeria, 17 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁰ JDF, Who we are, n.d., [url](#)

¹¹ Journal of Housing and Built Environment, Overview, n.d., [url](#)

¹² Aliu I.R., Gender, ethnicity and residential discrimination: interpreting implicit discriminations in Lagos rental housing market, 30 September 2023 [url](#)

¹³ Daily Trust, Our Frustration Getting Apartments to Rent In Lagos – Single Ladies, 11 December 2022, [url](#); Premium Times, Stop discriminating, punishing us- Single ladies to Lagos landlords, 13 May 2024, [url](#); News Central TV, Gender Bias: Lagos Landlord Refuses to Rent to Single Women | Jasiri EP 15 [Online video], 26 January 2024, [url](#)

¹⁴ Daily Trust, Our Frustration Getting Apartments to Rent In Lagos – Single Ladies, 11 December 2022, [url](#)

¹⁵ Premium Times, Stop discriminating, punishing us- Single ladies to Lagos landlords, 13 May 2024, [url](#);

¹⁶ Daily Trust, Our Frustration Getting Apartments to Rent In Lagos – Single Ladies, 11 December 2022, [url](#);



was the reason she was a single mother and tried to convince her former landlord not to rent to her.¹⁷ While the source did not specify the exact location, it discussed the broader challenges faced by single mothers in Nigeria.¹⁸

Information on access to employment for Muslim women, particularly Yoruba, without family or support network in Lagos, could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query. However, the following information on single women in Nigeria may be relevant.

A study on ‘Gender-Disaggregated Data Analysis of the Nigerian Lending Market’ published in 2022 found that 98 % of Nigerian women were excluded from formal credit markets.¹⁹ Furthermore, according to the National Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE) Policy and Action Plan, married women and women in the youngest and oldest age groups are more likely to have access to bank accounts and financial services compared to single women.²⁰

¹⁷ Punch, Single mothers relive battle with hardship, discrimination in search of love, 30 March 2024, [url](#)

¹⁸ Punch, Single mothers relive battle with hardship, discrimination in search of love, 30 March 2024, [url](#)

¹⁹ Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisor’s (GCE), Understanding Women’s Access to Credit and Loans, May 2022, [url](#), p. 2

²⁰ Nigeria, National Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE) Policy and Action Plan, May 2023, [url](#), p. 53



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