

# BEING A GIRL IN NIGERIA

## A STORY FROM AN ACTIVIST

### SAUDATU MAHDI



is a 1978 graduate of Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria, and had her post graduate qualification from the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) graduating with distinction. She has served as Advisor for Nigeria on UN CEDAW Committee and a nominee for its membership in 2006. She is a Fellow of Nigeria's Institute for Corporate Administration, a recipient of national and international awards, including the American Ms Magazine 2004 Woman of the Year Award,

She received a Ralph U. Stone Memorial Scholarship CEDPA award for acclaimed Change Agents. In 2011 she was awarded the National Honour of MFR by the Federal Government of Nigeria. She served on the Council of Nigeria's National Human Rights Commission.



Saudatu is head of

**Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative, WRAPA**, a national non-profit, one of 7 recipients of 2014 MacArthur Foundation Award for Creative and Effective Institutions. Under her leadership, WRAPA has gained a positive reputation, expertise for touching the lives of women, increased awareness and respect for women's human dignity leading to positive shifts in institutions of faith and culture.



Her leadership in mobilizing women to demand for rights to protection from gender-based violence came to fruition with the passage of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act. The House of Representatives and Senate passed the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Bill (VAPP) in 2013 and 2015 respectively.

Her work spans gender advocacy and policy analysis, gender based violence, women's rights under Shari'a, women in democracy, education, with a number of studies on bodily integrity of women and girls.