

**FAECARE CARRIES OUT ADVOCACY TO THE RIVERS STATE CHAIRMAN OF
NATIONAL UNION OF ROAD TRANSPORT WORKERS (NURTW) HEAD OFFICE
RIVERS STATE AND PARK CHAIRMEN IN RIVERS STATE.**

FAECARE foundation paid an advocacy visit to the National Union of Road Transport Workers Rivers State Chapter, which had the Rivers State Chairman as well as Motor Park Leaders of different parks in Rivers State, present. This is in line with the goal of the ongoing project, Disability Right Initiative project Accessibility to push for accessibility of road transportation for persons with disabilities, create awareness and also advance their rights.

During the visit, the program officer appreciated the chairman for the audience and highlighted some of the barriers highlighted: the negative attitudes of public transport drivers towards Passengers with Disabilities, impatience of drivers to when it comes to picking and assisting Passengers with Disabilities when they see them on the road, wrong assumptions that Persons with Disabilities are beggars and won't pay their fares, exploitation of Persons with disabilities like persons with visual impairment who may not be able to tell complete change, and drivers out rightly refusing to carry passengers with disabilities.

To promote accessibility, FAECARE made the following recommendations:

- Transport service providers must not discriminate against Persons with Disabilities (PWDs).
- All moving vehicles should come to a complete stop at bus stops, prioritizing PWDs.
- Unions should provide clear guidelines on how to handle passengers with disabilities.
- Awareness campaigns should be conducted in parks.
- Drivers and conductors should demonstrate patience when assisting PWDs in boarding vehicles.
- Drivers and conductors should improve their attitudes and interactions with PWDs.
- Drivers must protect passengers from abuse.
- Conductors and drivers should assist PWDs in carrying their assistive devices and luggage when boarding.

It was emphasized that accessible transportation is essential for enabling Persons with Disabilities to move independently and participate fully in daily activities.

Responding to the team and issues raised, the chairman of the NURTW Comrade Tom-George Boma committed to raising the consciousness and tasked the leaders of parks who were there present at the meeting, to take the message to their parks, further addressing drivers on the issues raised. He cautioned against any form of discrimination against passengers with disabilities.

To wrap his response he gave approval for any further awareness the organization wished to hold in any parks in Port Harcourt and environs and tasked all leaders present to give audience to the organization in their parks.

This visit marks a significant milestone in creating awareness and advocating for accessible transportation in Rivers state and through this visit barrier to transportation will be much improved in the state.