

State Context



Teenage pregnancy rate (adolescent birth rate)

13.8%



Fertility Rate

5%



Life Expectancy Female (years)

64



Life Expectancy Male (years)

58



Unemployment Rate

40.40%

Access to Legal Justice

Number of Specialized Family support units



NA

Number of Dedicated GBV Judges in Courts.



NA

Number of GBV Pro Bono units and legal units per population



NA

Support Services

Number of active shelters in the state



4

Number of sexual assaults referral center in the state



1

Number of documented GBV cases, victims, and survivors



NA

GBV Cases

Reported Cases



2,662

Closed Cases



212

Open Cases



1,015

Index Ranking (out of 36 States)

2022

Laws and Policies



Access to Legal Justice







Support Services



Information and Awareness



Budget and Spending

S/N	Indicators	Key Findings	Recommendations
1	 <p>Laws and Policies</p>	<p>Few people know about the laws on GBV in the FCT, which are, primarily, the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, 2015, and the Child's Right Act, 2003.</p> <p>Weak systems and lack of implementation of the laws.</p> <p>Illiteracy and language barriers in understanding the laws and using them.</p> <p>Exclusion of some vital issues and groups in the provisions of the laws and policies.</p>	<p>Strong systems, structures and strategy should be adopted to ensure wider awareness about the GBV-related laws and policies in the FCT.</p> <p>The laws and policies should be reviewed, and systems put in place for effective implementation.</p> <p>The laws should be simplified into local languages</p> <p>Inclusion of relevant clauses in the laws and policies to ensure recognition and provision for the peculiar needs of marginalized groups.</p>
2	 <p>Access to Legal Justice</p>	<p>Accessing legal justice in the court can be complex and long.</p> <p>Dire implications of negative cultural and patriarchal systems on access to legal justice</p> <p>Witness protection programs are ineffective</p>	<p>Efforts should be made to remove bureaucratic bottlenecks and obstructs access to legal justice, as well as reduce the timeframe for court processes.</p> <p>Establish GBV mobile courts in all Area Councils and communities, as well as appoint and train GBV designated judges.</p> <p>Collaboratively work with relevant stakeholders in gradually shifting or transforming negative cultural norms and patriarchal systems.</p> <p>Strengthen the witness protection program in the FCT, as well as regularly communicate it to build confidence in the populace.</p>
3	 <p>Support Services</p>	<p>Insufficient number of Shelters and SARC to cater to the FCT population.</p> <p>The shelters and SARC are not easily accessible for GBV victims/survivors with disabilities</p> <p>Inadequate funds and facilities to provide holistic support services to GBV victims and survivors.</p> <p>There is need to strengthen both the formal and informal justice systems.</p>	<p>Establish more Shelters and SARCs across the FCT, in all Area Councils and communities.</p> <p>Ensure easy accessibility of SARCs and Shelters by putting in place PwD-sensitive measures.</p> <p>Allocate budget for and increase spending on the provision of support services to GBV victims/survivors.</p> <p>Ensure synergy and partnership between key formal and informal stakeholders to ensure justice systems is in alignment with the principle of legal justice.</p>
4	 <p>Information and Awareness</p>	<p>Lack of adequate and proper knowledge and information about GBV.</p> <p>Some families and religious leaders do not want comprehensive sex education to be taught in schools.</p> <p>GBV-related IEC materials are not sufficiently inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.</p>	<p>Strong awareness programs should be carried out by GBV experts and widely spread across all communities.</p> <p>Sex education should be encouraged and made compulsory in schools. However, there is first a need to sensitize and educate parents, guardians, religious leaders, etc on the content of CSEs, and its benefits to young people.</p> <p>The IEC materials should be made available, accessible, and inclusive of/for persons with disabilities. For instance, the materials should be in Braille for the blind.</p>



Laws and Policies

Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?

82.14% **Yes** 17.85% **No** -- **Not Sure**

Do you agree that awareness of GBV laws and policies will prevent GBV?

44% **Strongly Agree** 8% **Agree** 7% **Indifferent**
74% **Disagree** 7% **Strongly Disagree**

Do you think customary or religious laws and/or practices are sufficient in preventing and responding to GBV in the state?

30% **Yes** 20% **No** 90% **Not Sure**

The Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, 2015 and the Child’s Right Act, 2003 are the key GBV-related laws applicable in the FCT, though they are not frequently used in prosecuting cases. The VAPP Act needs some amendments, including defining “Harmful Widowhood Practices” and changing the age of minors to be under 18 years old (not under 14 years old) in alignment with the provision of the Child’s Right Act, 2003. There is also need for adequate budgetary allocation and funding of NAPTIP to ensure effective implementation of the VAPP Act and in achieving sustained, holistic support for victims/survivors of GBV. In addition, the reviewed VAPP Act should provide for the establishment of SARCs and Victim Support Fund, as well as specify the funding sources for the implementation of the Act.

Sexual harassment policies exist in public and private institutions but are rarely enforced. Customary laws are informal and handled by community leaders. Over the past eight years, some progress has been made in developing laws to strengthen GBV prevention and response, like the enactment of the federal VAPP Act in 2015. However, customary laws that condone GBV persist. Abolishing these could positively impact state laws, but more assessment is needed. Many survey respondents believe customary/religious laws are ineffective in preventing or responding to GBV. Overall, more awareness of and reforms to strengthen laws and policies are needed in FCT.

The justice system for GBV victims/survivors in the FCT is inadequate. NAPTIP, police, and agencies have reporting systems but weak prosecution due to many impeding factors. Most people seek justice through legal means, in comparison to customary approach. Legal aid is limited, as some approach NGOs, FIDA, and, sometimes, private lawyers. Legal services are not very accessible, especially

for disabled persons. Witness protection is weak. Courts do not follow the timeframe stipulated in the VAPP Act; hence, cases drag on for years. Certified judgements also take very long to be obtained from the court. Informal justice by community leaders persists, who sometimes uphold norms and practices that perpetuate often GBV. Many survey respondents believe informal systems are ineffective for justice. Progress are being made, however, including the presence of NAPTIP officers in all Area Councils, establishment of the FCTA GBV Response Centre, and having Family Support Units in police stations. But specialized GBV courts and GBV designated judges are needed. Access to justice for GBV survivors in the FCT remains a challenge. More reporting, speedier trials, legal aid, witness protection, informal system reform, and specialized GBV courts/units are, therefore, required.

The FCT has some shelters and one SARC but limited for survivors’ needs. NAPTIP, Ministry of Women Affairs, CSOs like WOTCLEF, and hospitals operate shelters providing refuge, rehabilitation, and reintegration. Services are not very disability inclusive. The SARC in Bwari Hospital offers medical treatment, counselling, and referral for legal aid. Referral pathways exist but awareness about them is limited, although there is a dashboard system that connects agencies and service providers. Informal supports like families, religious centres, and communities provide emotional aid but sometimes uphold norms and practices that perpetuate GBV. Medical units give critical care, yet forensics services are limited. The FCTA Gender SGBV Response Centre coordinates activities; but inadequate budget allocation and investment hinders effectiveness. Many survey respondents believe informal systems are ineffective for support. Budgets for shelters, SARCs, forensics, training medical staff on GBV management, public awareness on pathways,



Access to Legal Justice

Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?

16.42% **Formal justice system** 77.85% **Informal justice system** 5.71% **I will not seek justice**

If you witness GBV, would you feel safe serving as a witness during the investigation and trial?

70.71% **Yes** 14.28% **No** 6.42% **Not Sure**
8.57% **It Depends**

Do you think the informal justice systems in the state are effective and sufficient in providing justice for victims/survivors of GBV?

40.71% **Yes** 37.85% **No** 21.40% **Not Sure**



Support Services

Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?

24.28% Yes
75.71% No

Which GBV reporting and referral pathways are you aware of currently available in the state?

15.71% Specialised medical healthcare pathway

3.57% Psychosocial/mental health pathway

41.42% Police/security pathway

10% Legal pathway
29.28% None of the above

Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

94.17% Yes
4.17% No
1.67% Not Sure

and informal system reform are needed to improve support for GBV victims/survivors in the FCT.

The FCT uses media like radio, TV, billboards, and social media for GBV awareness but there is insufficient reach, especially for disabled persons. NAPTIP had TV programs but discontinued due to inadequate funding. Some education on sex and GBV happens in schools, but comprehensive sex education is largely lacking. IEC materials exist but often are not disability-friendly or in accessible formats like braille or simplified language. Many survey respondents confirmed limited awareness programs and materials on GBV. More inclusive education curriculum, multimedia campaigns using local languages, and specialized materials for all residents of the FCT, especially those in rural communities and disabled persons, are needed to ensure widespread knowledge of GBV as well as the available reporting and referral mechanisms and support services in FCT. When emplaced, this will help prevent GBV and empower survivors to seek assistance.



Human Angle Story

There is the story of a physically challenged woman who suffered sexual, physical, and economic violence from her alcoholic husband in AMAC Area Council. He would beat her, force her for sex, and steal her money, as she was the breadwinner of the family. She is a Fashion Designer. After intervention by the Network of Women with Disabilities, he was arrested and given an undertaking never to abuse his wife again. This allowed the survivor to regain her peace. The story illustrates how disabled women can be especially vulnerable to intimate partner violence due to dependency and lack of economic empowerment. But with access to justice and support services, they can escape abuse. This story also shows that with the right interventions, there is hope for restoring dignity and justice for GBV survivors.



Information and Awareness

Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?



45% Yes
46.42% No
9.57% Not Sure

How useful is/was the content of the GBV awareness material in educating you on GBV?

13.57% Not at all useful
33.57% A little bit useful
29.28% Mostly useful
23.57% Completely useful

Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

50% Audio/spoken content
8.57% Braille printed content
15% Visual content
8.57% Screen subtitling
23.57% Sign interpretation
25.71% Picture-based messages
18.57% Simplified messages
17.14% None of the above

Index	Indicators	Result Justification
 <p>Laws and Policies</p>	Existence of State laws that criminalize the GBV	1.0
	Quality of State VAPP Laws	0.5
	Existence and usage of customary and religious laws and policies that criminalizes GBV	0.5
	Consistent, result-producing efforts at reforming and strengthening laws, policies, and customs on GBV prevention and response within an eight-year period	0.5
 <p>Access to Legal Justice</p>	Available system of GBV reporting, prosecution, and enforcement	0.5
	Availability and accessibility to legal aid services; with/or witness protection program	1.0
	Existence of functional specialized Family Support Units (FSUs), Human Rights Desks in Police Commands or Divisions, or dedicated GBV Judges	0.5
	Existence of informal justice system, with processes and outcomes that does not perpetuate or advance GBV in the courts	0.5
 <p>Support Services</p>	Availability of at least one active shelter in each local government in a state in the courts	0.5
	Availability of accessible and user-friendly GBV Reporting and Referral Pathway	0.5
	Existence of and access to holistic support systems for GBV victims and survivors	0.5
	Existence and usage of holistic informal support systems	0.5
 <p>Information and Awareness</p>	Availability and widely disseminated GBV IECs materials	1.0
	Existence and usage of comprehensive sex education curriculum in secondary schools	1.0
	Frequent sensitization and awareness programs on GBV across all local governments in the State	0.5
	Equally accessible GBV IEC materials especially for PWDs and those in remote or rural communities	0.5
 <p>Budget and Spending</p>	Women Affairs Ministry budget allocations and spending (85% and above execution rate)	0
	Women Affairs Ministry spending per capita	0