

Edo State



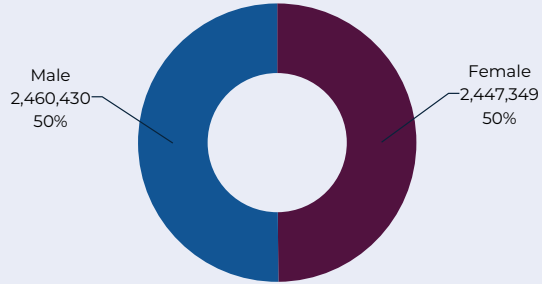
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2024 Edition

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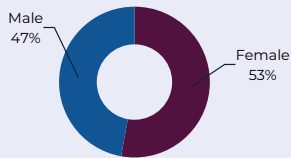




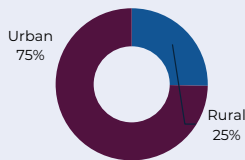
Total Population
4,907,779



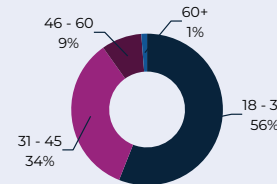
Respondents: 407



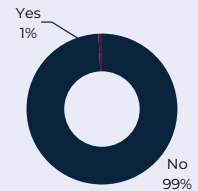
Location



Age Group



Disability Status



GBV Context



No. of GBV cases **110**



No. of active Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) **1**



No. of active shelters **5**



No. of Family Support Units (FSUs) **1**

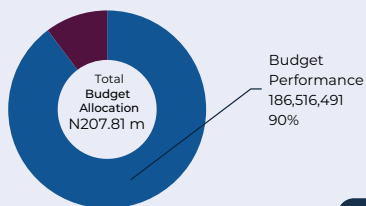


Index Grades

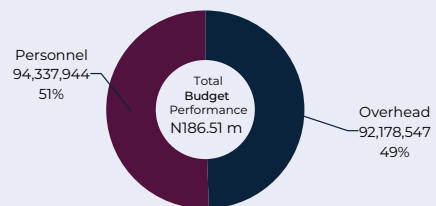
- Laws and Policies ●
- Access to Legal Justice ●
- Support Services ●
- Information and Awareness ●
- Budget and Spending ●

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

Budget Performance (2023)

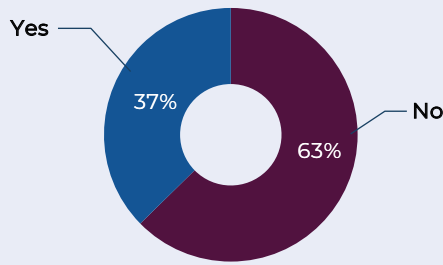


Budget Expenditure (2023)



Per Capita Spending **N38**

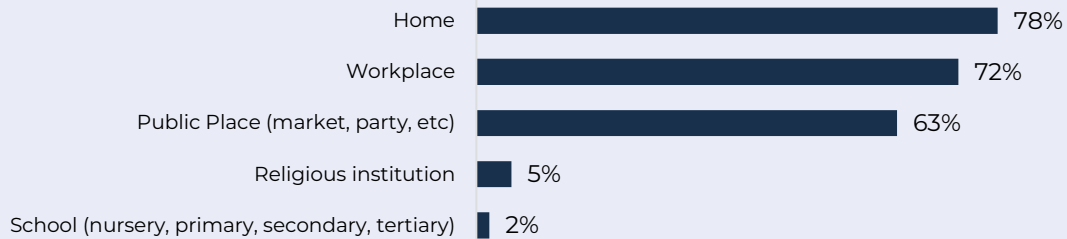
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence (GBV) in the last five years?



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



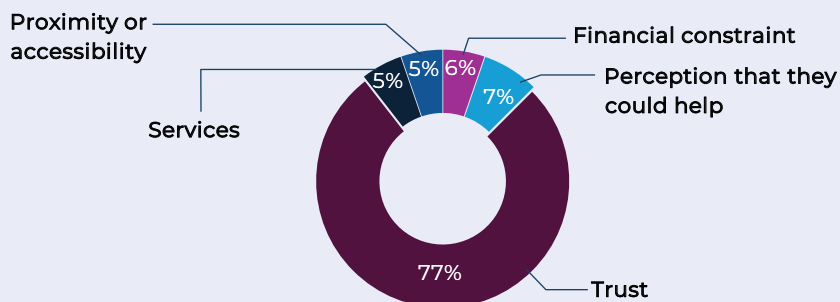
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?

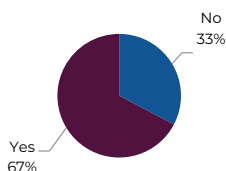


Why did you or the person choose where to seek help?

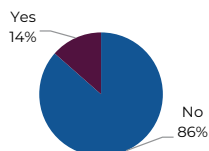


Laws and Policies

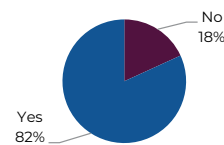
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

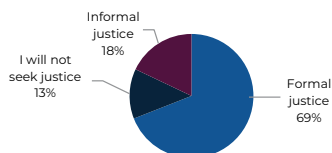


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

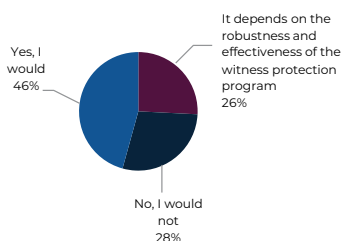


Access to Legal Justice

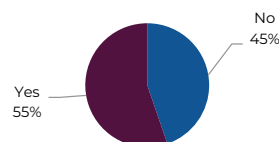
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

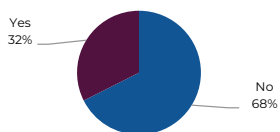


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victims/survivors?

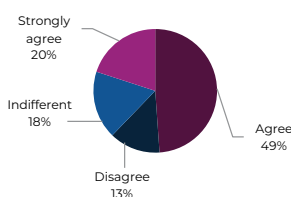


Support Services

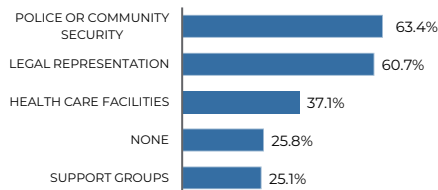
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



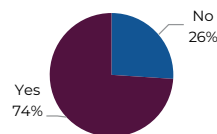
Do you believe that these shelters and/or SARCs are effectively functional, adequately equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable over time?



Which of these processes and procedures for reporting GBV-related incidents are you aware of? (Referral Pathways)

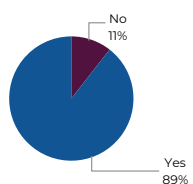


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

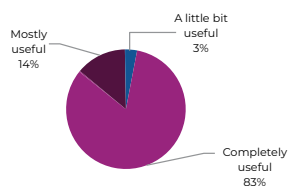


Information and Awareness

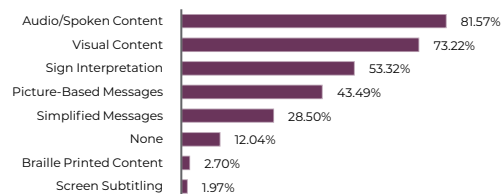
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?



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



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



Key Insights

Laws and Policies

Key GBV-related laws in Edo state include the FGM Prohibition Law (1999), the Inhuman Treatment of Widows Prohibition Law of 2001, the Child Rights Law of 2007, and the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Law 2019 amended in 2021, which is commonly used for GBV cases. Awareness of these laws is above average, with 67% of the study population familiar with them. Additionally, 79% believe these laws are effective in addressing GBV. To ensure continuous sensitization, awareness, and outreaches in urban, semi-urban, and rural communities on the existing GBV laws, the Edo state government is collaborating with some CSOs across the three senatorial districts to conduct sensitization campaigns. However, the VAPP law has gaps, notably the lack of clear definitions for emotional, verbal, and psychological abuse. Other persistent gaps include inadequate enforcement mechanisms, delays in prosecution, and insufficient training for judicial and law enforcement personnel. These gaps further highlight the need for continuous updates and review of the VAPP law and all GBV-related laws. From 2020 to October 2024, 455 SGBV cases were reported, with 447 filed, 363 ongoing, and 84 concluded, resulting in 62 convictions. Customary laws, both formal and informal, also play a role, with 82% of respondents viewing them as beneficial for preventing and addressing GBV. Periodic review of laws led to the VAPP law's adoption in 2021.

Access to Legal Justice

The state has a multiple-entry GBV reporting system involving individuals, families, CSOs, NGOs, police, hospitals, vigilantes, whistleblowers, etc. Reported cases are processed through the Family Support Unit at the State Police Command. According to the survey, 69% of the study population would seek formal justice. Legal aid is accessible to indigents through government-provided lawyers, ensuring no victim incurs legal costs. Witness protection is effective, especially for minors who testify in private chambers. Prosecution proceeds within 72 hours for minors, while adults can pursue legal action or opt for counselling. Specialized units include a Family Support Unit and Gender Desk at the Police Command; all judges handle GBV cases, although no judges are exclusively dedicated to GBV. The litigation process takes a long time, emphasizing the need for a Family Court in the three Senatorial Districts to prevent long-distance travel to the state capital. However, in the past year, the state has made some efforts to recruit more lawyers, but this is still not sufficient for the population. Traditional leaders often head the informal justice system, which lacks enforcement powers even though 84% of the study population believe informal justice systems in the State help in ensuring GBV victims/survivors get justice.

Support Services

Edo State has three private shelters and two government-owned facilities supporting GBV victims. Private shelters include those run by the Society for the Empowerment of Young Persons (SEYP), Living Your Dreams Initiative, and Brave Heart Initiatives (BHI). Government-owned facilities include the NAPTIP shelter and the Vivian Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Benin City, with a newly built shelter equipped with modern amenities and 100-bed spaces. Churches and mosques also provide temporary accommodation for victims facing threats. The Vivian SARC provides advisory and support services in the medical, mental/therapeutic, legal, and other fields. They also conduct relevant medical and forensic examinations in rape cases/violations and provide support during investigation, trial and enforcement of court judgements. The state uses specialized medical health care pathways and legal pathways; however, cases can be referred through NGOs, CSOs, police, etc., although consistent police protection for victims remains a gap. The state's referral pathway ensures GBV victims can access legal, medical, and therapeutic care at no cost, with government institutions like the Ministry of Justice and Social Development playing central roles.

Information and Awareness

The state uses Radio and Television jingles, billboards on rape, fliers, etc., to sensitize the public on GBV. They also have IEC materials that are usually distributed at GBV-organized events by the state. Additionally,

in 2023, the state signed an MOU with Kada Cinema and Entertainment Center to produce a film on GBV titled “We Will not be Silent”, though the film is not yet in circulation. Based on the survey report, 89.5% of the study population know the state’s GBV information and/or education programs or materials. Sex education is taught in Basic Science and Biology for junior and Senior Secondary School, respectively, though it is not comprehensive. Over 40 schools in the state have anti-GBV clubs, where they educate and sensitize students on GBV. The IEC materials are not PWD-friendly, as not all forms of disability are taken into consideration when designing the materials.

Budget and Spending

In 2023, the Edo State Government allocated N207.81 million to the Ministry of Social Development and Gender Issues. While the budget was 90% utilized, with N186.52 million spent on personnel and overhead costs, no funds were allocated to capital projects. With a population of 4.90 million, this translates to a mere N38 per person, highlighting the limited resources available for addressing critical issues like gender-based violence (GBV). A concerning issue is the absence of specific GBV budget lines in the 2023 approved budget. To improve the implementation of GBV laws and enhance support services, the state government should prioritize allocating dedicated funds for GBV initiatives.

Human Angle Story



In early 2024, a young girl in Benin City was raped and reported the incident to a local civil society organization that specializes in gender-based violence. The case was subsequently reported to the police and the Vivian Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), where a medical examination was conducted. The matter was then brought before the court. However, the Investigating Police Officer (IPO) from the State Police Headquarters in Benin City failed to appear in court to provide testimony and submit the investigation report. This refusal has significantly delayed the legal process and underscores the challenges associated with prolonged litigation in the state.

Edo State

Indexes	Key Findings	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Inadequate implementation of the VAPP law has resulted in only one SARC in Edo State, despite the mandate for centres in all LGAs.	SARCs should be replicated in all the Headquarters of the LGAs
	The lack of clear definitions for emotional, verbal, and psychological abuse makes them difficult to measure.	Review and update the current VAPP law to provide a clear definition that enables accurate assessment and meets current realities.
	Police officers sometimes compromise investigations, while influential perpetrators use intimidation to frustrate justice process.	Reorient police officers and security personnel to prioritize GBV cases and provide incentives to promote professional conduct and accountability.
Access to Legal Justice	Manpower challenge: the state legal counsels are overwhelmed with cases.	More counsels should be employed across all LGAs in the state and trained to reduce the workload on existing manpower.
	Interference of Informal justice and support system; advising and persuading the victim not to seek justice through the formal justice system.	More community engagement and advocacy are needed to create synergy between Traditional rulers and relevant stakeholders, understand victims, and support them in seeking formal justice.
	Fear of stigmatization backlash to victims hinders and slows victims' will to seek justice in time.	Ensure effective and robust witness protection for adults and children who are witnesses or seeking justice.
Support Services	Inadequate SARCs and shelters, which are not sufficient for the population.	Improving funding allocation for the construction and equipping of more SARCs and shelters across the state's LGAs.
	Low awareness of the available GBV support system in the state.	More collaboration with GBV actors to increase sensitization campaigns to inform the public of the available support system in the state.
	Understaffing of SARC and Shelter home.	Increase staff strength and train staff of the SARC and shelters.
	Insufficient funds to run the available privately owned shelter.	Provision of monetary support or incentives to support the efforts of NGOs and privately-owned shelters
Information and Awareness	Low awareness of the existence of GBV response and prevention, especially among semi-urban and rural dwellers.	Increased awareness campaigns were created for semi-urban and rural dwellers to ensure the grassroots are properly sensitized.
	GBV initiatives neglect intersectional needs of persons with disabilities, lacking accessible programs and materials.	Produce IEC materials in accessible formats, accommodating various disabilities.
	Cultural and religious beliefs mitigate against the effective inclusion of comprehensive education in schools.	Integrate comprehensive sex education into school curricula to empower children with life skills and survival strategies.
Budget and Spending	The capital expenditure component of the budget of the Ministry of Social Development and Gender Issues received no funding in 2023.	The government should prioritize the disbursement of funds for the capital expenditure component of the budget.

WOMANITY INDEX IMPLEMENTATION TRACKER
2023 Policy Recommendations
Edo State

S/No.	Recommendations	Implementation Status	Remarks
Laws and Policies			
1	There is need for continuous update and review of the VAPP law and all GBV-related laws.	Not Implemented	The last review was done in 2021 that lead to the enactment of the 2021 VAPP Law
2	Ensure continuous sensitization, awareness, and outreaches in both urban, semi-urban, and rural communities on the existing GBV laws.	Partially Implemented	This is done in collaboration with some CSOs across the 3 senatorial districts
Access to Legal Justice			
3	There should be Family Court in the three Senatorial Districts to prevent long-distance travel to the state capital.	Not Implemented	The only functional Family Support Unit is still at the State Police Command
4	The government should adequately recruit lawyers to cater to the population of GBV victims/survivors in the state.	Partially Implemented	More lawyers were recruited though might not be enough for the population
5	There should be an effective witness protection for adults.	Not Implemented	still very poor
6	There should be a collaboration between the informal justice and the formal justice system.	Partially Implemented	Ministry conducting trainings and creating awareness and sensations for community people, religious institutions etc
Support Services			
7	There should be more shelters and SARCs in the state sufficient for the at-risk population in the state.	Partially Implemented	plans ongoing to set up SARCs across the 3 senatorial districts. population size identified, nearness to police station and areas to set them up identified across the 3 senatorial districts.
8	GBV Centres should be located in different state-owned hospitals in the 18 LGAs in Edo State.	Not Implemented	only one Centre exist at the moment in Benin City but currently plans ongoing to partner the centres within the PHCs
9	Government should increase sensitisation and awareness on reporting and referral pathways in the state.	Partially Implemented	Improved sensitization and awareness on reporting and referral pathways but more needed to be done
10	For sustainability purposes, the government should take the lead on providing support services to GBV victims and survivors.	Partially Implemented	This is currently being done as support services is being provided to victims and survivors but no sufficient after care assistance
Information and Awareness			
11	There should be collaboration with necessary bodies for more sensitization and awareness programs and mediums.	Partially Implemented	There was discordance between CSOs government but this year effort was made to resolve it and this created room for robust collaboration in terms of awareness and sensitization
12	The state should continue to use such mediums and other creative ways to constantly create awareness on GBV.	Fully Implemented	There was the market stom, 16 days of activism with government working in collaboration with CSOs and other creative ways for raising awareness
13	Comprehensive sex education should be inclusive in the school curriculum at all levels.	Not Implemented	comprehensive sex education is still being hindered by cultural and religious beliefs
14	All IEC materials should be disability friendly and accessible to persons with all forms of disability.	Not Implemented	Poor social inclusion program and materials still not accessible to all forms of disabilities. Government not also sensitive to intersectionalities



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