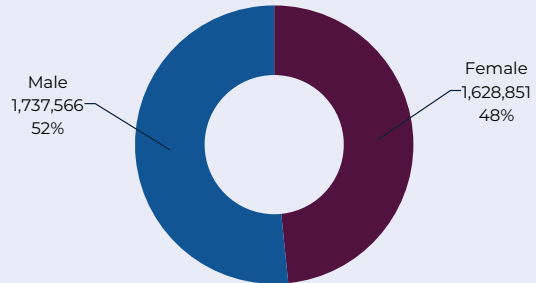


Federal Capital Territory

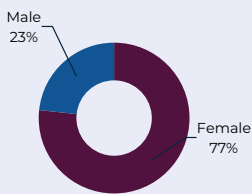




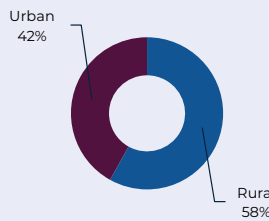
Total Population
3,366,417



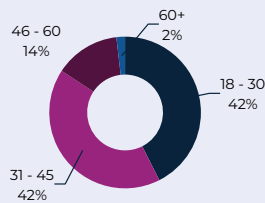
Respondents: 489



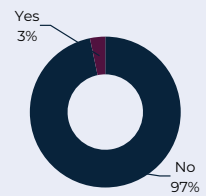
Location



Age Group



Disability Status



GBV Context



No. of GBV cases **N/A**



No. of active Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) **2**



No. of active shelters **5**



No. of Family Support Units (FSUs) **N/A**

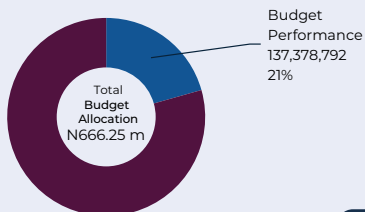


Index Grades

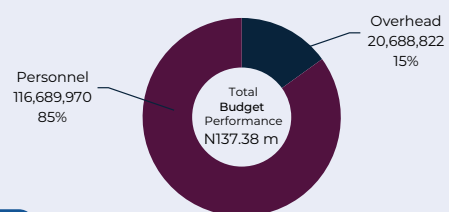
Laws and Policies	●
Access to Legal Justice	●
Support Services	●
Information and Awareness	●
Budget and Spending	●

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

Budget Performance (2023)

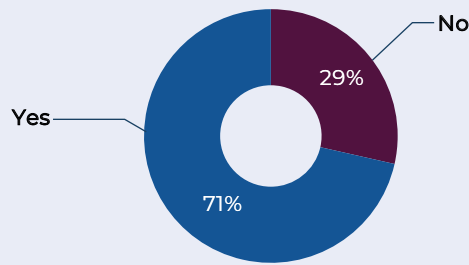


Budget Expenditure (2023)



Per Capita Spending **N33.6**

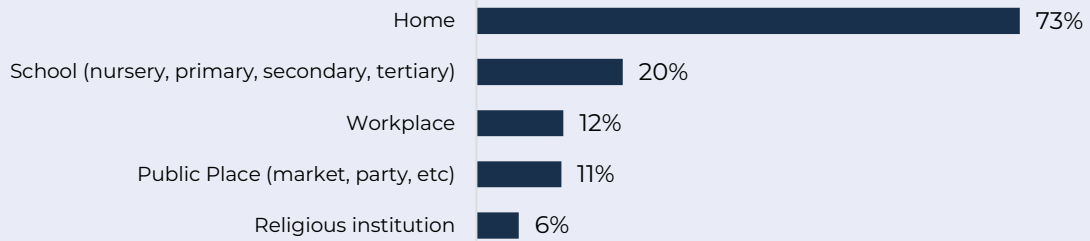
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence (GBV) in the last five years?



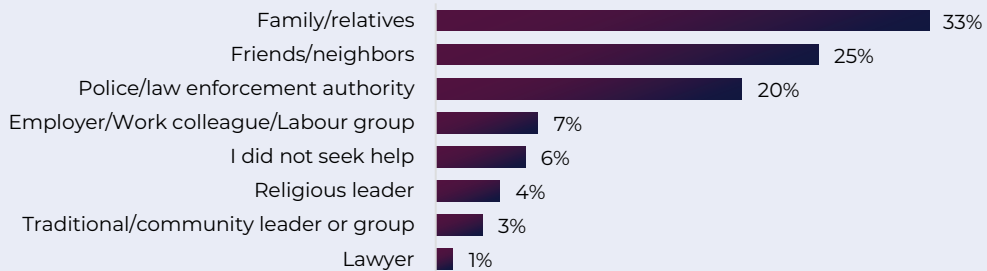
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



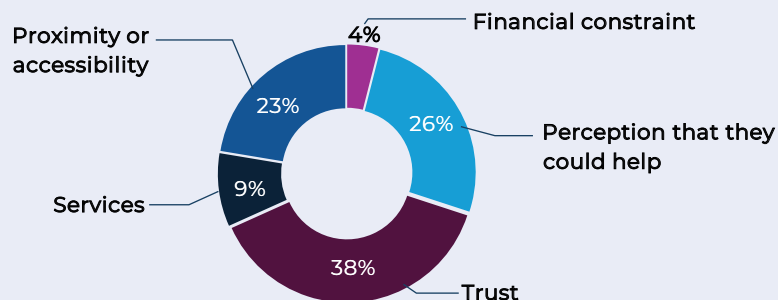
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?

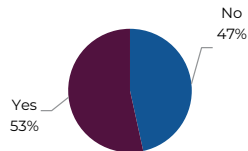


Why did you or the person choose where to seek help?

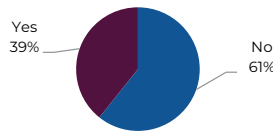


Laws and Policies

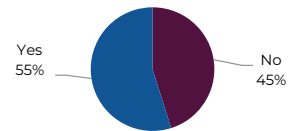
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

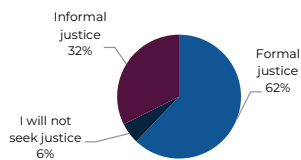


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

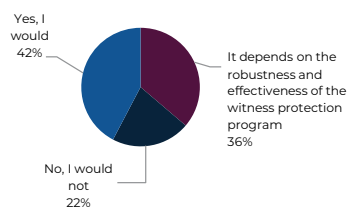


Access to Legal Justice

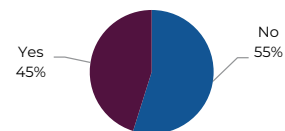
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

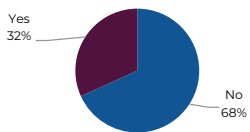


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victims/survivors?

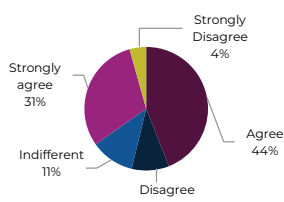


Support Services

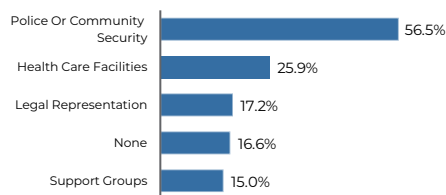
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



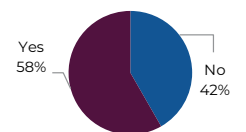
Do you believe that these shelters and/or SARCs are effectively functional, adequately equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable over time?



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

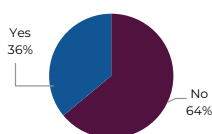


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

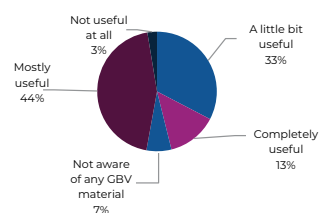


Information and Awareness

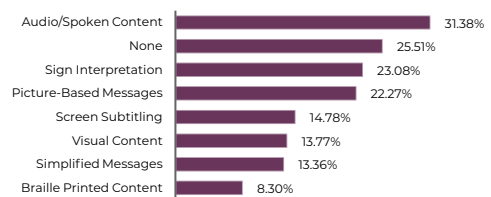
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?



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

According to data from the Association of Wives of Traditional Rulers and the Board Sustainable Women Economic Empowerment and Peace Initiative, nearly 1,200 GBV cases were reported in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) in 2022. Gwagwalada Area Council recorded the highest number of cases (900), followed by Kwali (121), Abuja Municipal (22), Abaji (12), and Bwari (5). However, the FCT Women Affairs Secretariat reported an even higher number of over 3,000 GBV cases in 2023. This significant increase indicates a concerning trend of rising GBV incidents in Abuja. Despite the existence of a range of GBV-related laws including the VAPP Act (2015), Child's Right Act (2003), and Section 383 of the Criminal Code Act. Furthermore, 55% of respondents believe these laws are insufficient in preventing GBV, and 60% are unaware of any GBV convictions, indicating gaps in enforcement and public awareness.

As highlighted in the 2023 Womanity Index report, the VAPP Act requires several amendments to enhance its effectiveness. Firstly, it should explicitly define "harmful widowhood practices." Secondly, the age of minors should be aligned with the Child's Right Act of 2003, setting it at 18 years old. The amendment should also include provisions that mandate the establishment of Sexual Assault Referral Centers (SARCs) and a Victim Support Fund, specifying their funding sources. Additionally, adequate budgetary allocation and funding for the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) are essential for effective implementation of the VAPP Act and providing comprehensive support to survivors.

Other identified gaps include inadequate GBV case documentation in police stations, poor investigative protocols, lack of enforced protection orders, and weak coordination among service providers. Customary laws, predominantly informal, co-exist with formal laws. Customary and religious laws are partially effective; 56% of respondents acknowledge their role in addressing GBV, but they remain largely informal and inconsistent with state laws. Conversely, formal laws are infrequently revisited or reformed, leaving barriers unaddressed. Abolishing customary laws without alignment risks alienating communities, suggesting the need for inclusive assessment and harmonization with state policies.

Access to Legal Justice

The FCT's response to gender-based violence (GBV) primarily relies on formal systems like the Ministry of Women Affairs, the Nigeria Police Force, and human rights organizations. However, numerous challenges hinder access to justice for survivors. Delays in the judicial process often discourage victims from pursuing legal action. Additionally, limited awareness of reporting mechanisms prevents many from seeking help. The survey result revealed that while 60.7% preferred formal justice systems, 33.7% relied on informal structures like traditional or religious leaders. Factors influencing these choices include trust in informal systems (37.4%) and proximity (23.3%). While pro bono legal services are available from state lawyers and civil society organizations, their accessibility remains limited, leaving many survivors without adequate legal support.

While specialized units like Family Support Units (FSUs) and GBV desks within police divisions exist in the FCT, their effectiveness varies. Witness protection services remain limited, posing significant risks to survivors during legal proceedings. The slow pace of the justice system, often failing to adhere to VAPP Act timelines, further hinders access to justice. Informal justice systems, rooted in cultural norms, prioritise reconciliation over justice in many cases. While 59.6% of respondents find these systems helpful, their effectiveness in providing comprehensive justice is questionable. The FCT lacks dedicated GBV judges but has functional Human Rights Desks, Family Support Units (FSUs), and GBV desks in police divisions. The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) also operates a specialized Gender Unit to support survivors.

Support Services

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) boasts three operational Sexual Assault Referral Centers (SARCs): Awyetu SARC (Bwari General Hospital), Garki SARC (Social Development Secretariat, Area 10), and the privately-owned Cece Yara Child Advocacy Centre (Wuse II). While these centers offer vital services like medical care, forensic support, legal assistance, and psychosocial counselling, their accessibility remains

limited. A significant 67% of survey respondents are unaware of their existence. Government-operated SARCs, such as Awyetu and Garki, have benefited from support from the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption (RoLAC) program, enabling them to assist survivors in reporting cases and accessing treatment. While 35% of respondents strongly agree that these facilities are functional and sustainable, 51% believe they are well-equipped, underscoring their importance in addressing GBV.

Awareness of formal GBV reporting and referral pathways remains limited in the FCT. While police and security channels are the most recognized (45%), some respondents (13%) are unaware of any formal pathways. This highlights the need for targeted public awareness campaigns to improve access to critical services. Informal systems, such as family, friends, and religious centres, play a significant role in providing emotional and social support to survivors. However, these systems have limitations in addressing complex needs, emphasizing the importance of complementing them with formal support structures. While 61% of respondents perceive informal systems as effective, it's crucial to recognize their limitations and promote the integration of formal and informal support mechanisms to ensure comprehensive and effective responses to GBV.

Information and Awareness

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) employs various IEC materials, such as radio jingles, printed materials, toll-free lines, school-based curricula, and community outreach programs, to raise awareness about GBV. While these efforts are commendable, significant gaps remain in reaching the broader population. Survey results revealed that 65% of respondents are unaware of any GBV information and awareness campaign materials, highlighting the need for expanded outreach. Among those aware, 47% found the materials useful, and 91% supported integrating GBV and child sexual abuse education into all school levels. However, the deployment of comprehensive sex education in schools is currently limited, with existing content integrated into subjects like Biology and Home Economics. For persons with disabilities, inclusive IEC materials, such as audio, subtitled, and sign-interpreted content, exist but remain insufficient. Only 16% of respondents know about disability-sensitive GBV materials. Increased collaboration among stakeholders is crucial to expanding awareness and inclusivity.

Medical facilities and forensic laboratories play a crucial role in prosecuting GBV cases by providing essential evidence and expert analysis. These contributions strengthen legal outcomes and enhance justice delivery for survivors. However, inadequate funding for shelters and Sexual Assault Referral Centers (SARCs) limits their capacity to provide comprehensive support services. To optimize GBV support in the FCT, it is essential to prioritize increased funding and resource allocation for these facilities. Furthermore, efforts should be directed towards expanding access to services, raising public awareness, and strengthening formal and informal support pathways.

Human Angle Story



Esther, a young woman with a disability, has faced a lifetime of adversity. A childhood illness left her with paralysis in her left leg and hand. During her teenage years, she was betrayed by a man who promised love and marriage but ultimately abandoned her after impregnating her. Now a single mother, Esther struggles to provide for her child while working at a POS center. Her abuser has vanished, leaving her to shoulder the burden of raising their child alone. As her child nears school age, Esther yearns for justice and stability. Her story is a testament to human resilience, but it also highlights the challenges faced by survivors of abuse and neglect.

Federal Capital Territory

Index	Key Findings	Recommendations
Laws and Policies 	The law addressing GBV is operational but lacks adequate funding and awareness for its implementation.	<p>Conduct widespread sensitisation campaigns and allocate a budget for robust implementation of GBV policies, including enforcing restorative measures for survivors.</p> <p>Enhance law enforcement training on GBV case registration and investigation.</p>
	Gaps include poor case registration, lack of enforcement of protection orders, and weak coordination mechanisms.	Develop robust coordination mechanisms among institutions and service providers.
	GBV and Femicide Bills are yet to be passed into law, leaving gaps in addressing the most severe GBV cases (e.g., femicide).	Pass and implement the GBV and Femicide Bills to address legislative gaps and ensure accountability for femicide.
	The absence of a dedicated GBV Secretariat limits the coordination of GBV response and data management.	Allocate sufficient budgets for GBV interventions and establish GBV Secretariats in all Area Councils for data management and survivor support.
	Cultural and religious norms in communities impede gender equality and the enforcement of laws.	Engage traditional and religious leaders to advocate for gender equality and cultural shifts in rural communities.
Access to Legal Justice 	Many have experienced different forms of GBV, but there is low awareness of free legal justice services and lack of trust in the formal justice system due to delay.	Employ massive citizen sensitisation through electronic and print media with deployed tollfree lines escalation across the Area Councils of the Federal Capital Territory.
	There are insufficient dedicated GBV Judges in the Area Council, which leads to delays in handling GBV cases.	Appoint and train more dedicated GBV Judges in all Area Councils.
	Family Courts, which sometimes handle GBV cases, are overburdened with other legal matters.	Establish dedicated GBV Courts or empower existing courts (e.g., Family Courts) to prioritise GBV cases.
	Gender Units in the Ministry of Women Affairs and Ministry of Justice lack operational vehicles and funding.	Provide funding and logistics (e.g., vehicles) for Gender Units to ensure access to justice.
	Witness protection mechanisms are absent, discouraging survivor testimonies.	Develop witness protection frameworks to safeguard survivors and witnesses during litigation processes.
Support Services 	Though insufficient and underfunded, the FCT has two SARCs and five shelters which lacks permanent staff, trained counsellors, and medical personnel.	Build and equip more standard shelters and SARCs in all Area Councils. Employ and train permanent staff at SARCs.
	Accessibility to SARCs is limited as many individuals are unaware of their existence.	Conduct community sensitisation programs to improve awareness and accessibility to SARCs and their services.
	Awareness of formal reporting pathways, including police, healthcare facilities, and legal services, remains low.	Increase public awareness of formal reporting pathways through targeted campaigns in both urban and rural areas.
Information and Awareness 	Awareness campaigns on GBV have declined, with fewer media campaigns and jingles.	Increase frequency of media campaigns, including jingles and interactive radio programs, as well as design, produce, and disseminate information, awareness, and communication (IEC) materials.
	Comprehensive sex education is not widely taught in FCT schools; existing curricula include GBV-related topics in subjects like Biology and Home Economics but lack depth.	Develop comprehensive sex education curricula for primary, secondary, and tertiary schools. Collaborate with NGOs and CSOs to expand community-based campaigns in rural and urban areas.
	GBV materials for persons with disabilities are inadequate, with low awareness among survey respondents.	

WOMANITY INDEX IMPLEMENTATION TRACKER
2023 Policy Recommendations
Federal Capital Territory

S/No.	Recommendations	Implementation Status	Remarks
Laws and Policies			
1	Strong systems, structures and strategy should be adopted to ensure wider awareness about the GBV-related laws and policies in the FCT.	Partially Implemented	Responses from the indepth interview (IDI/KII) indicate that the FCT populace are partially aware of these laws and policies.
2	The laws and policies should be reviewed, and systems put in place for effective implementation.	Not Implemented	Empirical responses from the IDI/KII shows that in the past years the laws and policies have not been reviewed and implementation of the laws is an issue.
3	The laws should be simplified into local languages	Not Implemented	Responses from the field survey and KII/IDI show that the laws have not been simplified into local languages.
4	Inclusion of relevant clauses in the laws and policies to ensure recognition and provision for the peculiar needs of marginalized groups.	Not Implemented	Based on the available information from KII/IDI such clauses have not been included into the laws to safeguard the interest of the marginalized groups.
Access to Legal Justice			
5	Efforts should be made to remove bureaucratic bottlenecks and obstructs access to legal justice, as well as reduce the timeframe for court processes.	Not Implemented	Available information from KII/IDI shows bureaucratic bottlenecks are still much more in existence across the corridor of accessing justice.
6	Establish GBV mobile courts in all Area Councils and communities, as well as appoint and train GBV designated judges.	Not Implemented	Empirical evidence from the demand side (field survey) reported that no mobile courts have been provided by the governments
7	Collaboratively work with relevant stakeholders in gradually shifting or transforming negative cultural norms and patriarchal systems.	Not Implemented	Responses from the KII/IDI interviewees indicate that no such thing has taken place within FCT
8	Strengthen the witness protection program in the FCT, as well as regularly communicate it to build confidence in the populace.	Not Implemented	Participants of the field survey said no structure has been put in place to ensure such implementations.
Support Services			
9	Establish more Shelters and SARCs across the FCT, in all Area Councils and communities.	Partially Implemented	Information available from the participants of the field survey and KII/IDI reported a few existence shelters SARCs across communities in FCT.
10	Ensure easy accessibility of SARCs and Shelters by putting in place PwD-sensitive measures.	Not Implemented	Available information from field survey from the demand side and KII/IDI indicate that accessibility of SARCs and shelters is still much difficult.
11	Allocate budget for and increase spending on the provision of support services to GBV victims/survivors.	Not Implemented	Most of the participants of the field data collection on the demand side reported that little or no support services have been provided by the government at all levels in the FCT.

WOMANITY INDEX IMPLEMENTATION TRACKER 2023 Policy Recommendations Federal Capital Territory			
12	Ensure synergy and partnership between key formal and informal stakeholders to ensure justice systems is in alignment with the principle of legal justice.	Not Implemented	Available information from the demand side says most perpetrators of GBV still walk freely on the streets of FCT without justice being served to them.
Information and Awareness			
13	Strong awareness programs should be carried out by GBV experts and widely spread across all communities.	Partially Implemented	The KII/IDI interviewees as well as the demand side participants reported that there has been little awareness of GBV in FCT but not across rural communities.
15	Sensitize and educate parents, guardians, religious leaders, etc on the content of CSEs, and its benefits to young people.	Partially Implemented	The FCT Abuja area councils, departments, and law enforcement agencies use different awareness and information materials to educate society about GBV. These include radio campaigns, toll-free lines, printed materials, flyers and stickers, poster campaigns, school-based curricula, outreaches, and extracurricular clubs. Others are through school counselling, public engagements, market/street campaigns, and religious centres,
16	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.	Partially Implemented	The Ministry of Women's Affairs in partnership with NGOs and some individuals in FCT produces some materials for the PWDs about the dangers of involving in GBV and how to protect themselves. The GBV information, education materials, and awareness programs sensitive to persons with disabilities in FCT state are radio jingles, programs, and sign interpretation.





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