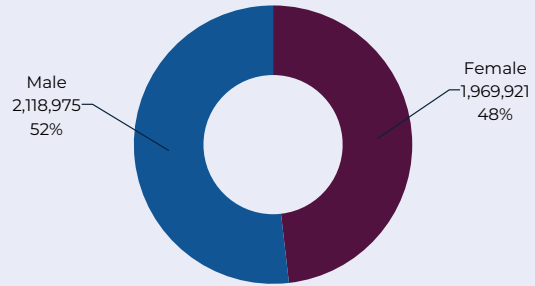


# Gombe State

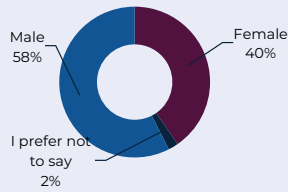




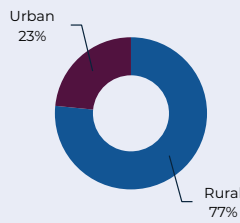
**Total Population**  
**4,088,896**



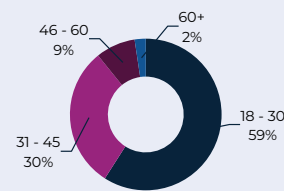
**Respondents: 417**



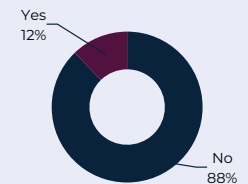
**Location**



**Age Group**



**Disability Status**



**GBV Context**



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



No. of active Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) **N/A**



No. of active shelters **1**



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

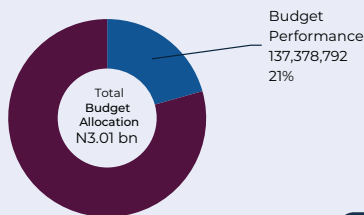


**Index Grades**

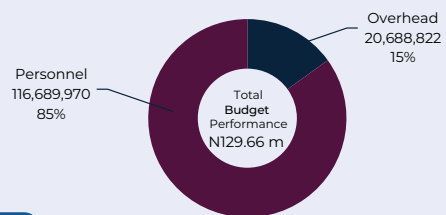
- Laws and Policies ●
- Access to Legal Justice ●
- Support Services ●
- Information and Awareness ●
- Budget and Spending ●

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

**Budget Performance (2023)**

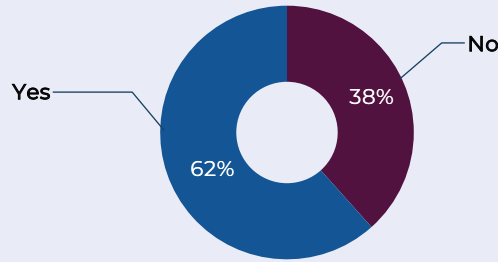


**Budget Expenditure (2023)**



Per Capita Spending **N33.6**

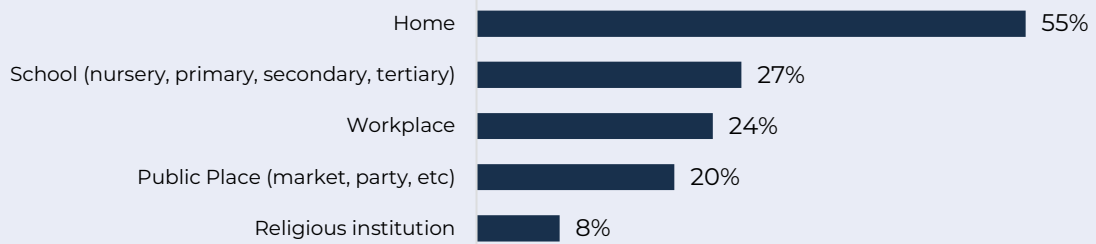
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence (GBV) in the last five years?



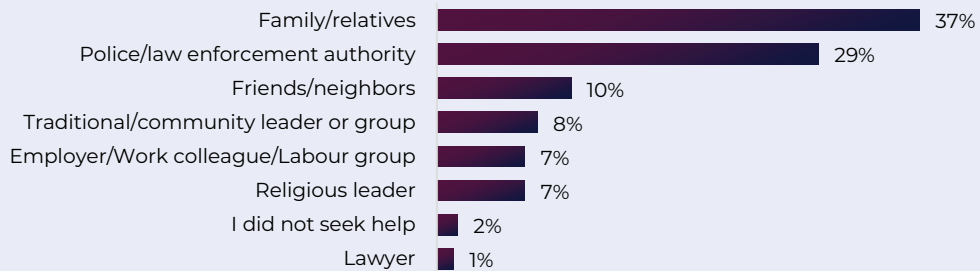
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



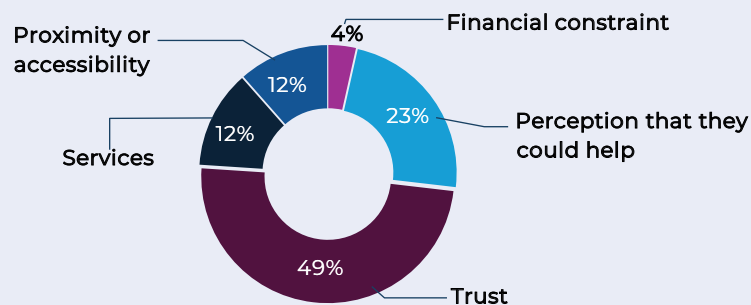
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?

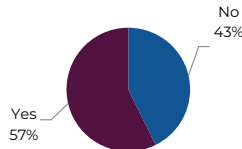


Why did you or the person choose where to seek help?

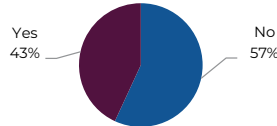


## Laws and Policies

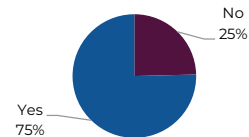
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

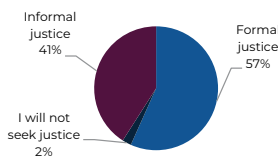


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

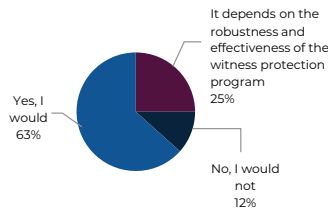


## Access to Legal Justice

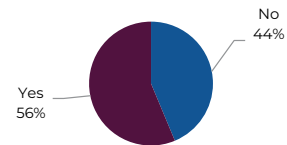
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

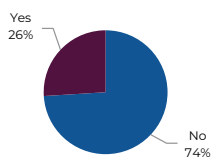


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victims/survivors?

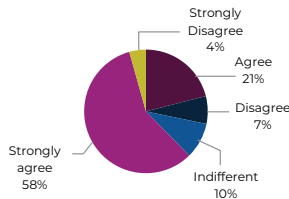


## Support Services

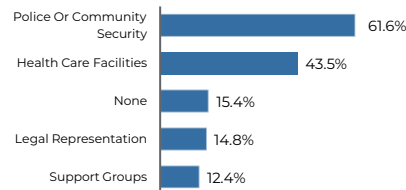
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



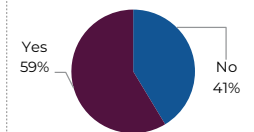
Do you believe that these shelters and/or SARCs are effectively functional, adequately equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable over time?



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

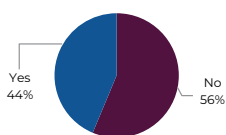


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

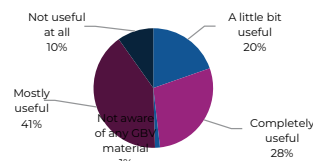


## Information and Awareness

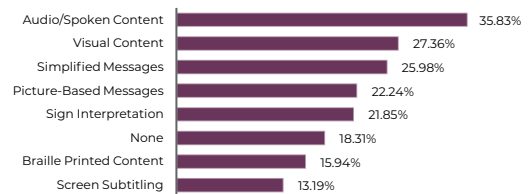
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?



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**

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a significant issue in Gombe State, particularly affecting women and girls. Factors such as the influx of refugees, cultural norms, and economic hardship contribute to its prevalence. Victims, often facing stigma and fear, may hesitate to report abuse. Additionally, practices like early marriage and the exploitation of out-of-school girls increase their vulnerability. Domestic violence and child abuse are common, with boys also being victims of sexual and physical abuse. Addressing these issues requires a multi-faceted approach, including legal reforms, increased awareness, and social support systems.

The state's legal framework addressing gender-based violence (GBV) includes the Child's Right Law and the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Law. While 42.7% of respondents are aware of existing laws and policies addressing gender-based violence in the state, a significant 57.3% are unaware. The VAPP Law needs significant review to address its shortcomings. It should explicitly include offences such as coercion, female genital mutilation (FGM), harmful widowhood practices, forced isolation, violence by state actors, and trafficking. The definition of rape should be expanded to include spousal rape. The law should also clarify the definition of "puberty" and reconsider the severity of the prescribed punishments for rape offenders. Survey results reveal a significant lack of confidence in customary and religious laws to address GBV. Only 23.7% of respondents believe these informal systems are effective, while the majority (67.8%) disagree. As of May 2023, 60 GBV cases were reported, resulting in only eight convictions. Despite the justice system's stated commitment to reviewing laws, no such review has been conducted to date.

### **Access to Legal Justice**

In Gombe State, GBV cases can be reported through formal channels like the police GBV desk office and the Criminal Investigation Unit or informal channels like community leaders and religious figures. While the police are the primary point of contact for formal reporting, informal networks often play a crucial role in providing initial support and guidance. Once cases are reported, the police register them and refer them to the appropriate magistrate courts for prosecution. However, the lack of a robust witness protection program and the challenges victims face in navigating the legal system can hinder justice. Additionally, while informal justice systems, such as those led by religious and traditional leaders, may provide immediate support, cultural norms and a lack of specialised expertise limit their capacity to deliver justice. The absence of dedicated GBV courts and judges further exacerbates the issue. While GBV desks exist in all police divisions, concerns about police corruption and bribery remain prevalent.

### **Support Services**

Gombe State has limited resources for addressing gender-based violence (GBV). There is no SARC, but there is a privately-owned shelter in Kaltungo. While this is accessible to some, they are not widely known. The state's GBV reporting and referral pathways involve various actors, including the police, NSCDC, the Ministry of Women Affairs, and informal structures like religious and traditional leaders. However, the lack of clear guidelines and coordination often leads to delays and ineffective responses. While informal support networks, such as family, friends, and community groups, can provide initial support, they may lack the capacity to address complex GBV cases. 59.7% of the respondents believe in the effectiveness of informal systems, but it's crucial to recognize their limitations and strengthen formal support structures.

### **Information and Awareness**

More government-led initiatives are needed to raise awareness about GBV. While radio and television programs occasionally address GBV, NGOs often drive these efforts. GBV education needs to be formally integrated into school curricula, relying on sporadic NGO interventions. Additionally, the specific needs of people with disabilities, particularly the blind, are often overlooked in these awareness campaigns. 56.5% of the respondents reported needing to be made aware of GBV information and awareness materials. While some materials are available, their distribution and impact are limited. Key informant interviews

confirmed the infrequent nature of these awareness programs.

## Budget and Spending

Gombe State recorded the lowest budget performance rate in the northeastern region in 2023, with an implementation rate of just 21%. Of the N656.25 million allocated to its Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, only N137.38 million was utilized. The utilized funds were predominantly directed towards administrative expenses, with personnel costs accounting for N116.69 million (84.9%) and overhead costs at N20.29 million (14.8%). Notably, no funds were allocated for capital expenditure. The state also had the second-lowest per capita spending in the northeastern region, at N33.60, reflecting the limited financial commitment to addressing the state's GBV prevention and response needs.

## Human Angle Story



Aisha's harrowing experience of sexual abuse by at least 13 men before the age of 10 underscores the devastating long-term consequences of childhood trauma. The lack of support and the pervasive victim-blaming culture further exacerbated her suffering. Her current struggles with intimacy and her husband's behaviour may be rooted in unresolved trauma, making it difficult for her to distinguish between past abuse and present consensual relationships. Her mother's dismissive and blaming response likely contributed to feelings of shame and isolation. Without adequate emotional support or therapy, Aisha's trauma has continued to affect her mental well-being and relationships. Aisha and survivors like her must understand that their feelings are valid and that they are not to blame for the abuse they endured. Therapy can provide a safe space to process trauma, rebuild self-esteem, and reclaim autonomy. Breaking the silence and seeking professional help can be a significant step towards healing.

# Gombe State

Indicators	Key Findings	Recommendations
<b>Laws and Policies</b> 	Although there are laws on GBV, these laws are new and only passed and assented to by the Governor in 2022.	The actors in charge of implementation should expedite implementation processes and identify gaps for onward review.
	Customary laws are mostly explored to address GBV cases; however, for fear of stigma and love for peace, these laws do not guarantee justice for most survivors.	Customary laws should be made to align with the formal laws.
	Although religious laws inflict strict penalties, such as death, for certain offences, the requirement for multiple witnesses often makes it difficult for cases to be pursued.	Robust awareness creation and witness protection mechanisms should be initiated to allow more witnesses to step up.
<b>Access to Legal Justice</b> 	While there are structures (police and legal) that address GBV cases, people's unwillingness to endure the long process of litigation discourages them from exploring the path of justice.	Dedicated judges on GBV should be made available to handle only GBV cases.
	Lack of awareness and fear of stigmatisation are some factors that account for low reporting of cases of GBV.	Members of the public should be sensitised. Traditional, religious, and community leadership should be leveraged to strengthen awareness creation.
	Strict punishments commensurate with the offence of GBV are not prominent.	The expedient process of litigation and penalties based on the provision of the law be made public to serve as deterrence.
<b>Support Services</b> 	Lack of functioning support services for survivors of GBV, in addition to low awareness, poses challenges to the application of the laws on GBV.	Robust awareness creation campaigns should be routinely carried out across LGAs and communities.
	Legal support made available by the state to support GBV survivors at the court is not fully explored by people because of a lack of awareness, and the few people who are aware consider it not worthy for fear of stigma associated with going to court on GBV cases.	Create awareness about legal services for GBV survivors, while encouraging them and their families. Trained professionals should handle the process of addressing GBV to reduce the fear of stigma and build confidence.
	Informal networks such as religious institutions are proactive. However, they can not deliver justice and often promote a culture of silence.	The collaboration capacity of religious institutions should be prioritized to have a robust system.
<b>Information and Awareness</b> 	There is limited availability of information and awareness activities, and the available ones have no consideration for the needs of persons with disabilities.	Prioritize activities to create awareness through different means, meeting the needs of all, including persons with disabilities.
	The state is reluctant to create GBV awareness in schools as NGOs take the lead.	The government should support NGOs in doing more by taking the lead on creating awareness about GBV.
<b>Budget and Spending</b> 	The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development recorded the lowest budget execution rate, 21%, in the northeast region in 2023.	Increase the budget allocation for the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and prioritize adequate disbursements to the Ministry.
	The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development's per capita spending of N33.6 was grossly inadequate.	

**WOMANITY INDEX IMPLEMENTATION TRACKER**  
**2023 Policy Recommendations**  
**Gombe State**

S/No.	Recommendations	Implementation Status	Remarks
<b>Laws and Policies</b>			
1	Frequently sensitize the public on GBV-related laws and policies, while ensuring wider coverage.	Partially Implemented	Aside from the 16 days of activism, we do not see such sensitization by the government. NGOs and corporers on the other hand do try on days of commemoration that relate to that
2	Discard customary and religious practices impeding the fight against GBV laws.	Not Implemented	Customary and religious practices are still strongly the first line of action in most communities. Unless the victim can seek justice for themselves and want to or when relatives of the victims really wants justice, that is when the authorities are involved. Otherwise, it is kept hush hush
<b>Access to Legal Justice</b>			
3	Educate the people, including and especially rural dwellers, on the available GBV reporting and referral channels.	Partially Implemented	There is no provision to educate rural dwellers on reporting and referral pathways despite legal mandate. awareness efforts rely on NGOs who invite stakeholders and occasionally organise events where the public are educated and enlightened. Radio remains the primary medium for outreach in rural areas but consistent government led initiatives are absent in this regard. its present but very often
4	Establish exclusive GBV Courts with dedicated GBV Judges.	Not Implemented	There are no dedicated GBV courts or Judges.
5	Develop robust witness protection programs to increase participation rate.	Not Implemented	There is no known witness protection program in the state although the law mandates.
<b>Support Services</b>			
6	More SARCs and Shelters should be established (at least one per LGA), equipped, staffed, and managed by the government with continuous support from donors, NGOs, and other development partners.	Not Implemented	Gombe State has only one government owned SARC and it is not functional.
7	Ensure frequent and wide publicity on the reporting and referral pathways in the state.	Not Implemented	Aside the occasional radio programs, this has not been ensured by the government
8	Raise awareness about the location and the functions of SARC.	Not Implemented	Both the government-owned SARC and private owned shelter in the state are not well known.
9	Prioritise and fund support services for GBV survivors and their relatives.	Not Implemented	There is no known occasion of such
<b>Information and Awareness</b>			
10	Multiple GBV-related sensitisation and awareness programs (radio jingles, educative pamphlets, seminars, and radio/tv shows) and PwD-friendly material should be used frequently.	Partially Implemented	There is a radio station called Amana FM which aired a jingle on GBV. There are no materials like posters or stickers or any television commercials related to GBV by the state-owned channels. The available materials are not sensitive to all people with disabilities.



WOMANITY INDEX IMPLEMENTATION TRACKER  
2023 Policy Recommendations  
Gombe State

11		IEC materials should be distributed in public places like markets and schools, especially in rural areas.	Partially Implemented	Posters are scantily seen around town in public spaces.
12		Comprehensive sex-related topics should be incorporated in the curriculum of secondary schools and tertiary institutions.	Not Implemented	In schools across our state, comprehensive discussions on these topics are lacking, and it's often only non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that step in to fill this gap.



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