

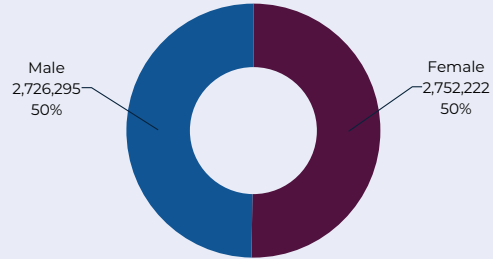


# Ondo State

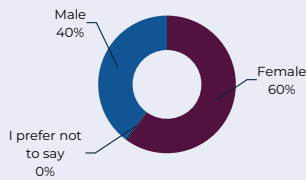




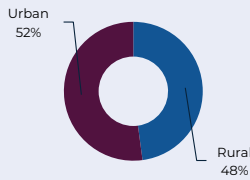
**Total Population**  
**5,478,517**



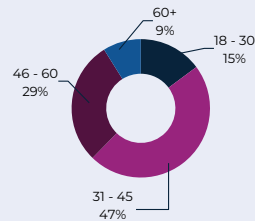
**Respondents: 472**



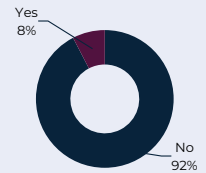
**Location**



**Age Group**



**Disability Status**



## GBV Context



No. of GBV cases **100+**



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



No. of active shelters **4**



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



## Index Grades

Laws and Policies ●

Access to Legal Justice ●

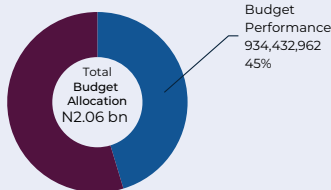
Support Services ●

Information and Awareness ●

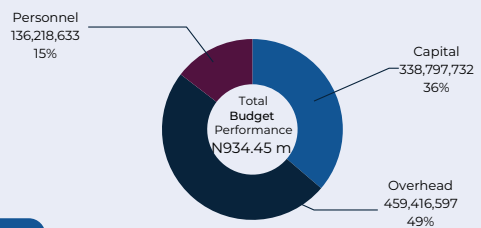
Budget and Spending ●

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

## Budget Performance (2023)

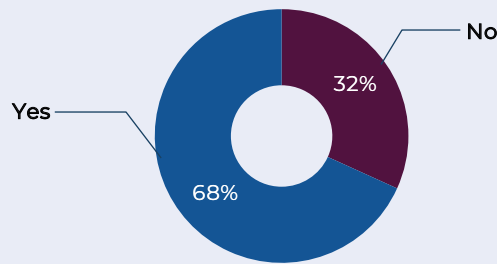


## Budget Expenditure (2023)

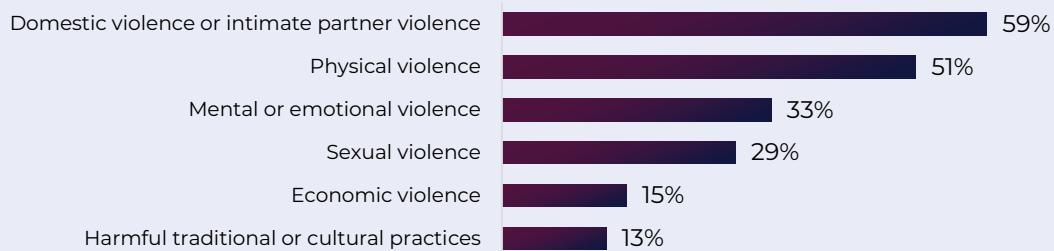


Per Capita Spending **NT170.6**

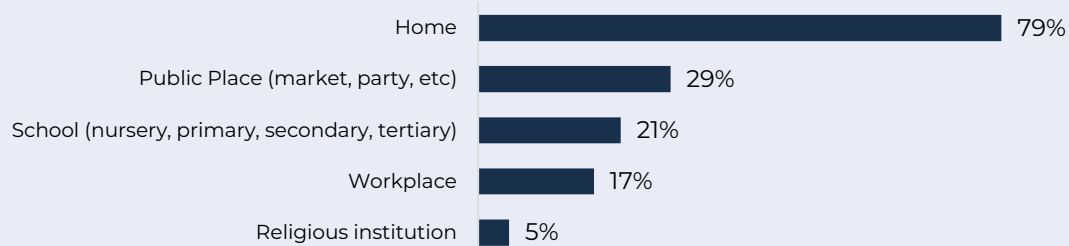
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence (GBV) in the last five years?



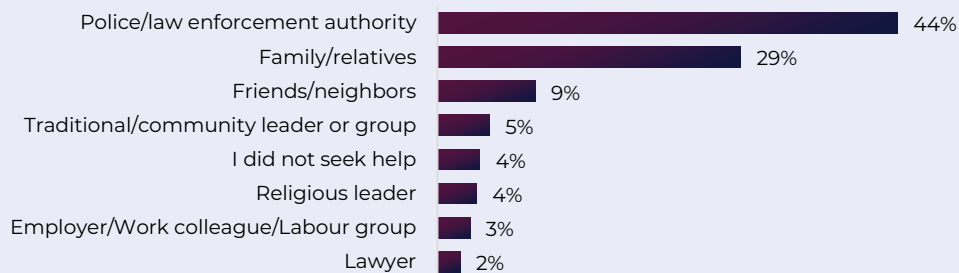
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



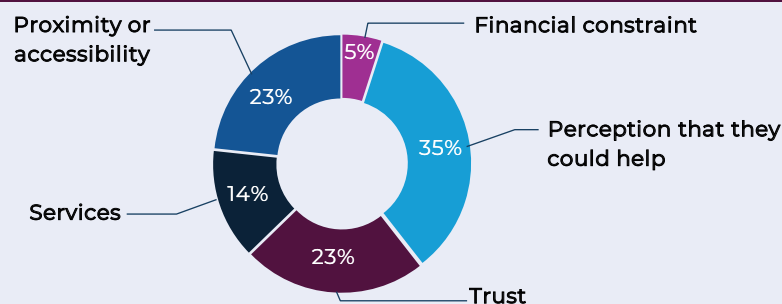
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?

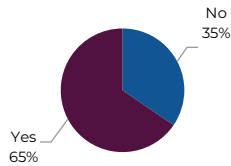


Why did you or the person choose where to seek help?

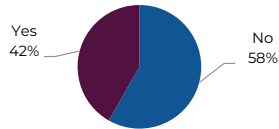


## Laws and Policies

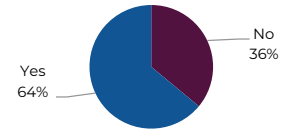
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

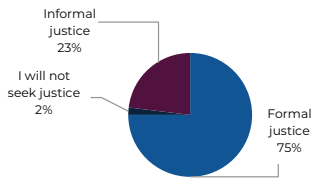


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

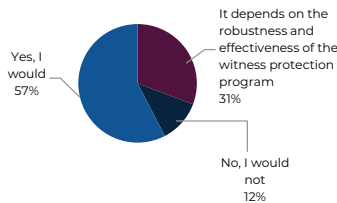


## Access to Legal Justice

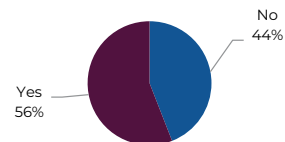
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

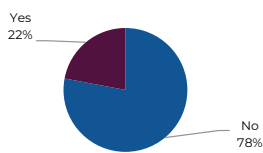


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victims/survivors?

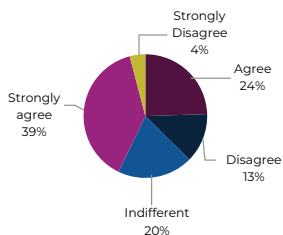


## Support Services

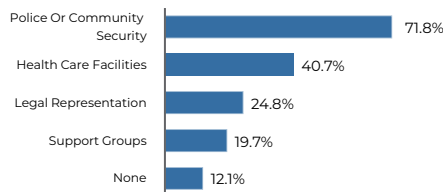
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



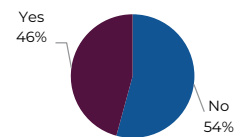
Do you believe that these shelters and/or SARCs are effectively functional, adequately equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable over time?



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

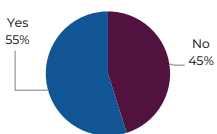


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

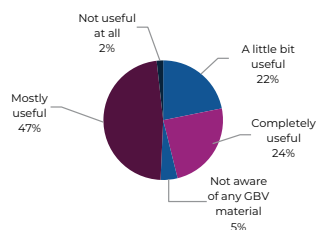


## Information and Awareness

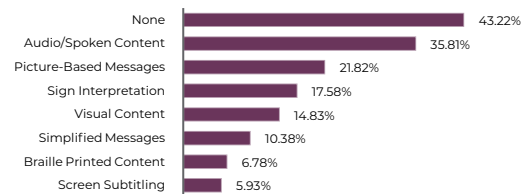
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?



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**

Sixty-five per cent (65%) of the surveyed population know the Laws that address issues of GBV in Ondo state which include Child Rights Laws 2007, Criminal Code, Ondo State Gender Policy, VAPP Law 2021, and Harmful Traditional Practices Law 2001. Some of the gaps that exist in the laws that impede their effectiveness are: The GBV Law 2021 in Ondo State is just three years, and there has been little to no implementation of the law done, VAPP Law 2021 fails to address the gap between the passage and implementation of the law about the digital world such as sextortion. Despite the existing gap, In the last twelve months, 100 cases were reported and prosecuted, and 20 got judgment. Ondo state needs to establish mechanisms for regular evaluations to measure the impact of these laws in addressing customary practices like FGM and widowhood rites. Efforts are also required for the state government to amend the VAPP Law to explicitly cover cyber GBV, provide for an annual report on the implementation of the law, as well as address the evolving GBV-related challenges in Ondo State.

### **Access to Legal Justice**

Ondo State has established GBV reporting systems through the Police, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), and the Human Rights Commission. Additionally, a GBV dashboard at the Ministry of Women Affairs collates case data. OSAA-GBV plays a vital role in ensuring the coordinated handling of cases. However, prosecution processes face delays due to funding shortages, lack of human resources, and frequent court adjournments. While courts within the state, such as Family Courts, handle GBV cases, they are not exclusively dedicated to these matters, which hampers swift justice. Despite this 75% of the survey's population trust in the formal justice system in the state. Ondo state needs to appoint dedicated GBV judges to expedite the litigation process and discourage victims from abandoning cases. Also, the state needs to collaborate with the judiciary to establish specialized courts for GBV cases, ensuring swift and effective justice.

Legal aid services in the state are accessible through the Legal Aid Council, the Office of Public Defender, FIDA, and NGOs, providing free medical and legal assistance. Despite this, a formal witness protection program is lacking, with 10% of respondents reporting limited collaboration with the NSCDC and 90% stating a lack of witness protection. Specialized GBV desks exist in police divisions, but only partially address victims' needs due to inadequate training and resources for personnel. Informal justice systems, including Customary Courts, Sharia Courts, and Kings' Palaces, are prominent in rural areas. Despite 23% of respondents opting for informal systems due to their recognized accessibility, cultural norms often perpetuate GBV, discouraging formal reporting. Specialized GBV desks exist in police divisions, but only partially address survivors' needs due to inadequate training and resources for personnel.

### **Support Services**

Ondo State has four shelters and no Sexual Assault Referral Centers (SARCs) to support survivors of gender-based violence (GBV). However, state shelters are still under construction, and interim measures like the use of orphanage homes and NGO-run shelters temporarily accommodate survivors. However, awareness of these services is rather low at 22% level of awareness amongst respondents, more campaigns and sensitization are required. The state has a structured reporting and referral system for GBV cases. Survivors can access support through toll-free hotlines, security agencies, NGOs, and the Ministry of Justice. These pathways ensure survivors have multiple options to report incidents and receive referrals to appropriate agencies. However, awareness of these systems needs to improve. 46% of the respondents showed a preference for informal support systems such as family, friends, religious institutions, and community groups that play a significant role in offering emotional support and guidance. These systems, however, are culturally sensitive, lacking professional training and resources, and requiring integration with formal services for maximum impact.

## Information and Awareness

Ondo State utilizes IEC materials, such as radio jingles, pamphlets, community meetings, and seminars, to raise public awareness of GBV. Radio jingles were aired three times weekly in the past, but their frequency has reduced significantly over the last year due to funding challenges. Approximately 20% of respondents acknowledged the use of IEC materials, though 80% suggested the need for a more comprehensive approach. Sex education has been introduced into secondary school curriculums as one hour to promote GBV prevention and response. However, tertiary institutions only incorporate limited aspects of sex education through other subjects or guest lectures. Efforts to make IEC materials inclusive for PWDs include Braille transcription of the VAPP Law by NGOs. Nonetheless, the lack of sustained PWD-specific programming and resources highlights the need for further improvements. To enhance inclusiveness, the VAPP Law of Ondo State, 2020 was transcribed into Braille copies and printed by the NGO Anglo-Nigerian Welfare Association for the Blind (ANWAB) but the major inclusiveness government is involved for now is the provision of an interpreter during sensitization and GBV training periodically.

## Budget and Spending

In 2023, Ondo State allocated N2.06bn to its Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, ranking third highest in the South-Western region of Nigeria. However, the ministry recorded a budget performance of just 45%, utilizing N934.43 million of the allocation. Overhead costs constituted the largest share of the expenditure at 49.2% (N459.52m), followed by capital expenditure at 36.3% (N338.8m), while personnel costs accounted for 14.6% (N136.22m). The state's per capita expenditure for the ministry was modest at N170.6. Among the notable expenditures was N333m spent on advocating against Gender-Based Violence (OSAA-GBV) across the state. Despite its substantial allocation, the ministry's low budget performance highlights challenges in effectively utilizing funds to address critical social development needs.

## Human Angle Story





During a visit to one of the Sexual Assault Referral Centers (SARCs), I spoke with a doctor who highlighted a significant challenge they face: the lack of budget provision for the treatment and consultancy services provided to GBV survivors. Despite this, the medical staff continues to treat survivors free of charge. This situation has created internal challenges between the government and medical personnel. If not addressed properly, it could jeopardize the entire support system.

There are plans for three shelters across the three senatorial districts of the state. However, only one is currently under construction, and it has been abandoned. This lack of fully operational shelters and SARCs has placed additional burdens on government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs), as well as law enforcement agencies. They are now responsible for providing shelter, medical tests, and feeding for survivors and witnesses, which has significantly reduced their capacity to perform their primary duties.

# Ondo State

Indicators	Key Findings	Recommendations
<p><b>Laws and Policies</b></p> 	<p>There is a significant challenge in the judiciary and among prosecutors in fully understanding and effectively implementing the VAPP Law. This gap hinders the law’s potential to protect and serve GBV survivors adequately.</p>	<p>Invest in the capacity building of law enforcement agencies and the judiciary. This includes regular training and workshops to enhance their understanding of GBV laws, improve their skills in handling GBV cases, and ensure they are equipped to provide sensitive and effective support to survivors.</p>
	<p>A considerable number of lawyers are unaware of the existence of the VAPP Law. Additionally, most of the public remains uninformed that harmful customs and practices have now been criminalized under this law. This lack of awareness severely limits the law’s effectiveness.</p>	<p>Implement comprehensive civic education programs to inform the general populace about the harmful customs and practices that have been criminalized under the VAPP Law of Ondo State. This education should be widespread and accessible, utilizing various platforms such as community meetings, schools, media campaigns, and social media to ensure broad reach and understanding.</p> <p>Ensure timely and adequate release of budgeted funds to the agency responsible for the implementation of GBV programs in the state. This will enable the agency to effectively carry out its mandate, including awareness campaigns, support services, and enforcement of GBV laws.</p>
	<p>The Child Rights Law (CRL) primarily focuses on issues related to children and does not address domestic violence involving adults. Furthermore, the Criminal Code’s provisions on rape are not explicit enough, whereas the VAPP Law provides comprehensive coverage of these issues.</p>	<p>Review the Child’s Rights Law, Criminal Code, VAPP Law, and other relevant GBV-related laws, bringing them in alignment with current realities and dynamics regarding GBV, including expanding its scope.</p>
	<p><b>Access to Legal Justice</b></p> 	<p>Cultural and religious beliefs often interfere with the pursuit of legal justice for GBV survivors. These influences can discourage survivors from seeking help or pressing charges, thereby perpetuating the cycle of violence.</p>
<p>There is a noticeable lack of coordination and cooperation among key stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies and various government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs). This disjointed approach hampers the effectiveness of legal interventions and support services for GBV survivors.</p>		<p>Demarcate which cases can be resolved through alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and which require criminal prosecution. This respects cultural and family dynamics while ensuring that criminal acts are appropriately addressed by the legal system</p>
<p>Sabotage by Security Agencies- Some security personnel undermine the prosecution process by advising survivors to withdraw their cases. They often encourage survivors to write letters and swear affidavits stating they are no longer interested in pursuing legal action, which obstructs justice.</p>		<p>Provide regular training and retraining for law enforcement officers, desk officers at every parastatal, magistrates, and judges who handle GBV cases. This will enhance their understanding of GBV laws and improve their ability to support survivors effectively.</p>
<p>Often, the survivor’s family must provide funds for logistics to arrest the offender. Poverty further impedes access to legal justice, as offenders sometimes settle cases with the survivor’s relatives for unreasonable amounts of money, undermining the legal process.</p>		<p>Provide adequate transportation and logistical support for gender rescue missions. This will enable rapid response to GBV incidents and ensure survivors receive timely assistance.</p>


Indicators	Key Findings	Recommendations
<p><b>Support Services</b></p> 	<p>The state currently does not have any government-run shelters for GBV survivors. While NGOs in the state operate four shelters, these are primarily intended for children. Although adults can be accommodated, this requires the government to provide additional security measures.</p>	<p>The state needs to establish well-equipped Sexual Assault Referral Centers (SARCs) and referral centers for medical first aid across communities, particularly at Primary Health Centers. These facilities should be capable of preserving forensic evidence, such as semen, within 24 hours to support legal proceedings.</p>
	<p>There are no Sexual Assault Referral Centers (SARCs) in the state.</p>	<p>It is crucial to ensure that all GBV survivors receive excellent treatment without discrimination. This can be achieved by providing well-equipped shelters and SARCs that offer comprehensive care and support to every survivor.</p>
<p><b>Information and Awareness</b></p> 	<p>There is a need for more comprehensive training programs, awareness campaigns, and workshops to educate both the public and professionals about GBV.</p>	<p>Implement comprehensive and aggressive campaigns on gender-based violence (GBV) across all communities in the state. These campaigns should utilize various platforms, including community meetings, social media, radio, and television, to ensure widespread reach and impact.</p>
	<p>One of the primary challenges is the insufficient funding allocated for GBV awareness programs. Without adequate financial resources, it is difficult to sustain effective campaigns and initiatives.</p>	<p>Ensure the timely release and proper implementation of budgets allocated for GBV awareness programs.</p> <p>Ensure the timely release and proper implementation of budgets allocated for GBV awareness programs. All stakeholders must be involved in the planning and execution to maximize the effectiveness of these initiatives</p>
	<p>There is a significant deficiency in the publicity of GBV laws and support services. Many people are unaware of the legal protections and resources available to them.</p>	<p>Partner with the National Orientation Agency (NOA) to extend GBV awareness campaigns to the most remote areas of the state. NOA's extensive network and experience in public education can significantly enhance the reach and effectiveness of these campaigns.</p>




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

S/No.	Recommendations	Implementation Status	Remarks
<b>Laws and Policies</b>			
1	Conduct a comprehensive review and assessment of the effectiveness of existing GBV laws and policies within the state to identify gaps and areas for improvement.	Not Implemented	There is currently no review or assessment of its effectiveness.
2	Establish mechanisms for regular evaluations to measure the impact of these laws in addressing customary practices like FGM and widowhood rites.	Not Implemented	While agencies are enforcing the VAPP Law, there is currently no mechanism in place to evaluate its impact in addressing customary practices.
3	Amend the VAPP Law to explicitly cover cyber GBV, provide for an annual reporting on the implementation of the law, as well as address the evolving GBV-related challenges in Ondo State.	Not Implemented	Although the VAPP law was passed and assented to in July 2021, there is currently no review or assessment of its effectiveness. However, proposals for its evaluation are being considered in some quarters
<b>Access to Legal Justice</b>			
4	Appoint dedicated GBV judges to expedite the litigation process and discourage victims from abandoning cases.	Partially Implemented	There are family Court within the High Court and Magistrate Court which are saddled with GBV cases but they also attend to other criminal cases
5	Collaborate with the judiciary to establish specialised courts for GBV cases, ensuring swift and effective justice.	Not Implemented	Within the High Court and Magistrate Court, specialised family courts handle GBV cases, However, there is no specialized courts exclusively for GBV cases.
6	Establish dedicated GBV desks at police divisions and provide adequate resources for the FSU to enhance their capacity.	Partially Implemented	There are gender desk officers dedicated to GBV cases.
7	Prioritise training for law enforcement personnel on GBV issues and survivor-centred approaches to holistic support.	Not Implemented	Partial trainings from some development partners/NGOs
8	Work with relevant agencies to develop and implement witness protection measures for victims and their families, addressing the deterrent effect on case proceedings.	Not Implemented	
<b>Support Services</b>			
9	Collaborate with stakeholders to expedite the construction of the active shelters, ensuring victims have a safe haven.	Partially Implemented	State shelter is currently under construction.
10	Establish interim measures to accommodate victims/survivors during the construction phase.	Partially Implemented	The use of the Orphanage home in the state and shelters from some NGOs.

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

11		Implement community-based support programs to complement formal shelter services, reducing the likelihood of victims returning to abusive environments.	Partially Implemented	Informal support systems for GBV survivors exist and it include community networks, family and friends, peer support group and traditional healers.
12		Advocate for increased funding to expand the capacity of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) to adequately serve the population.	Not Implemented	
13		Ensure SARCs are fully equipped to provide comprehensive support, including medical aid and privacy facilities.	Partially Implemented	

**Information and Awareness**

14		Design and implement targeted awareness campaigns at the local government level to enhance the spread of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials on GBV.	Not Implemented		
15		Collaborate with community leaders and local influencers for effective grassroots outreach.	Partially Implemented		IEC materials are disseminated using platforms like community meetings.
16		Increased production of IEC materials that are accessible to Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and available in multiple formats to cater to diverse needs.	Partially Implemented		NGOs have been engaging the government to increase the production of IEC materials. For example, Violence Against Person (Prohibition) Law of Ondo State, 2020 transcribed into Braille copies and printed by NGO Anglo-Nigerian Welfare Association for the Blind (ANWAB).
17		Engage with government bodies, NGOs, and private sector partners to secure resources for sustained awareness initiatives.	Partially Implemented		Significant progress has been on in partnering with the private sector and international donors and engaging the government to release the budget for the implementation and sustainability of the program



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