



Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response: **What Has Changed?**



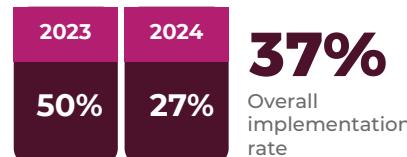
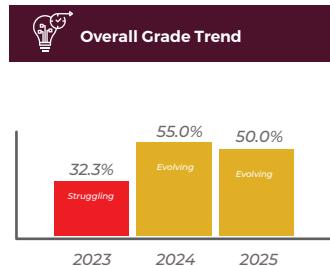
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Katsina State

Home of Hospitality

Katsina Emir Palace



Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 25.0%	+1 ▲ LP 58.3%	+2 ▲ LP 66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 25.0%	+1 ▲ ALJ 50.0%	ALJ 62.5%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	-1 ▼ SS 43.8%	SS 43.8%
Information and Awareness	IA 25.0%	+1 ▲ IA 56.3%	IA 56.3%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+2 ▲ BS 66.7%	-2 ▼ BS 25.0%



What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Establishment of three special GBV courts (2025) improved prosecution speed and coordination. Creation of two SARCs and a Women's Centre providing integrated medical, psychosocial, and legal support.
- Improved interagency collaboration among the Police, Ministry of Justice, FIDA, and CSOs.
- Increased production of disability-inclusive materials (audio, visual, and sign interpretation formats).
- Strong public support (59.9%) for introducing GBV and child protection education in schools.

Areas of Concern

- Sharp decline in awareness of GBV laws (83.3% → 32.7%) and education programs (80% → 31.6%).
- Weak law enforcement and low conviction visibility, with 61% unaware of any GBV convictions.
- Limited access to legal aid and SARCs, especially for survivors in rural LGAs.
- Heavy dependence on donor-funded awareness programs and inadequate state funding.

Key Actions



Laws and Policies

- Passage of state-level GBV legislation in alignment with the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act.
- Establishment of special GBV courts in 2025

Access to Legal Justice

- Strengthened coordination between police, magistrates' courts, and the Ministry of Justice in 2024

Support Services

- Expansion of SARCs, including the Nasiha Centre, providing integrated medical, psychosocial, and legal support in 2024.
- Referral pathways were developed linking police, SARCs, and CSOs in 2025.

Information and Awareness

- Community sensitization campaigns led by traditional rulers and religious leaders in 2025.
- The Ministry of Education introduced gender desks and awareness programs in schools through the AGILE Project in 2024.

Change Spotlight

The key achievement in Katsina State is the operationalization of special GBV courts, which began functioning in 2025. Within a few months, over 30 cases were filed, representing a significant shift toward prioritizing survivor-centered justice. This intervention demonstrates both political will and institutional readiness, sending a strong signal to perpetrators that GBV crimes will no longer be tolerated. Survivor testimonies and civil society actors confirm that this development has increased confidence in the justice system, even though delays and underfunding remain obstacles.



Katsina State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 50.0%

LAWS AND POLICIES



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

Yes ■ No ■

32.7% 67.3%



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

Yes ■ No ■

41.3% 58.7%



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

Yes ■ No ■

39.0% 61.0%

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?

Yes ■ No ■

35.6% 64.4%



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

Yes ■ No ■

51.1% 34.8% 13.9% 0.3%

■ Agree ■ Strongly agree ■ Indifferent ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree



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

Yes ■ No ■

49.7% 41.1% 4.6% 1.6% 27.2%

■ Police ■ Hospital ■ Support group ■ Legal ■ None



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

Yes ■ No ■

37.8% 62.2%

ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE



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

Yes ■ No ■

49.2% 42.0% 8.7%

■ Formal justice: e.g., police, courts, etc.
■ Informal justice: e.g., traditional or religious heads, community groups, etc.
■ I will not seek justice



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

Yes ■ No ■

46.2% 36.5% 17.3%

■ Yes, I would
■ It depends on the robustness and effectiveness of the witness protection program
■ No, I would not



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

Yes ■ No ■

29.9% 70.1%

INFORMATION AND AWARENESS



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

Yes ■ No ■

31.6% 68.4%



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

Yes ■ No ■

58.4% 7.5% 28.6% 5.4%

■ Mostly useful ■ Completely useful ■ A little bit useful ■ Not useful at all



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

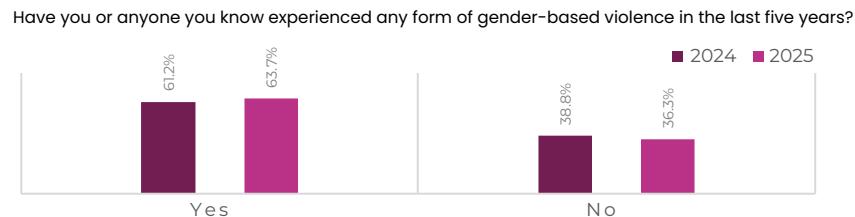
Yes ■ No ■

48.3% 42.2% 32.6% 35.0% 34.9% 30.9% 29.4% 16.4%

■ Audio ■ Visual ■ Sign ■ Picture ■ Simplified ■ Subtitle ■ Braille ■ None

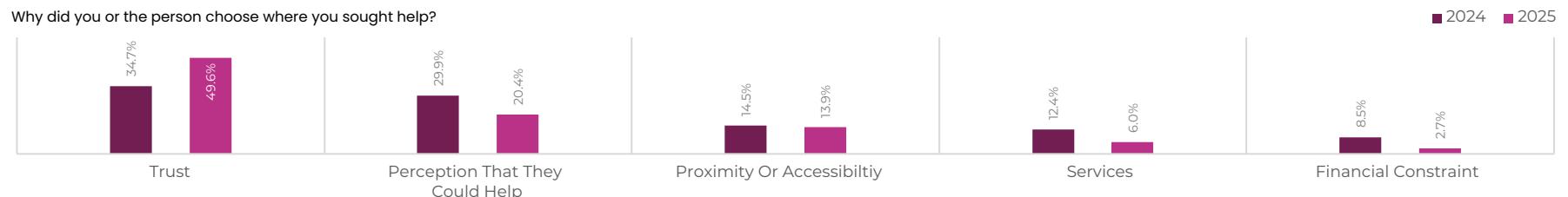
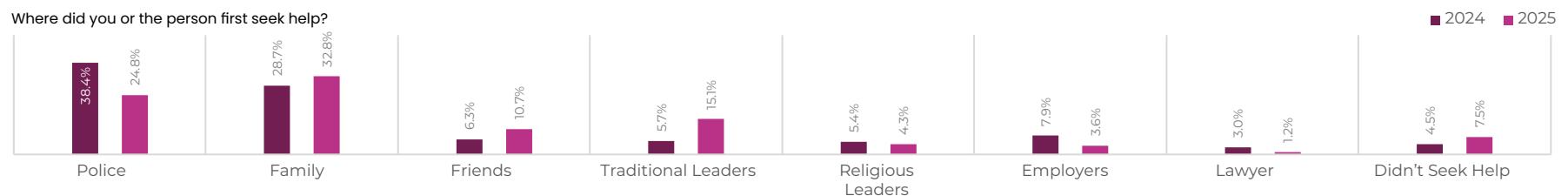
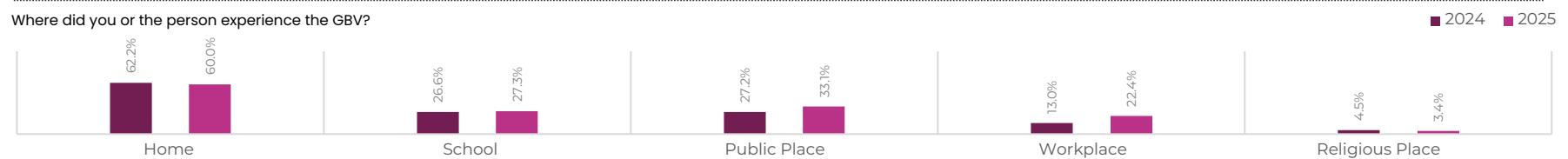
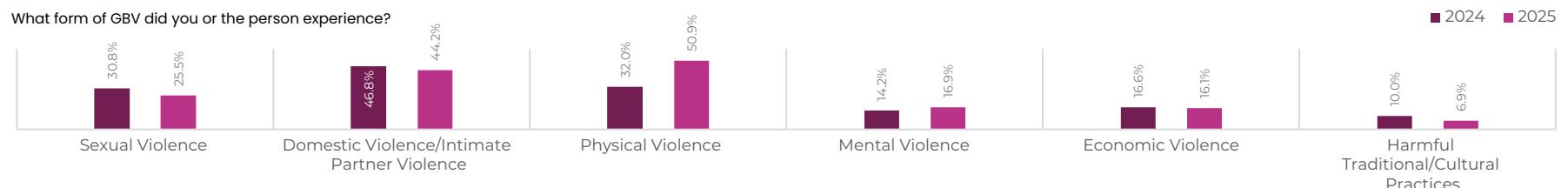
Katsina State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 50.0%



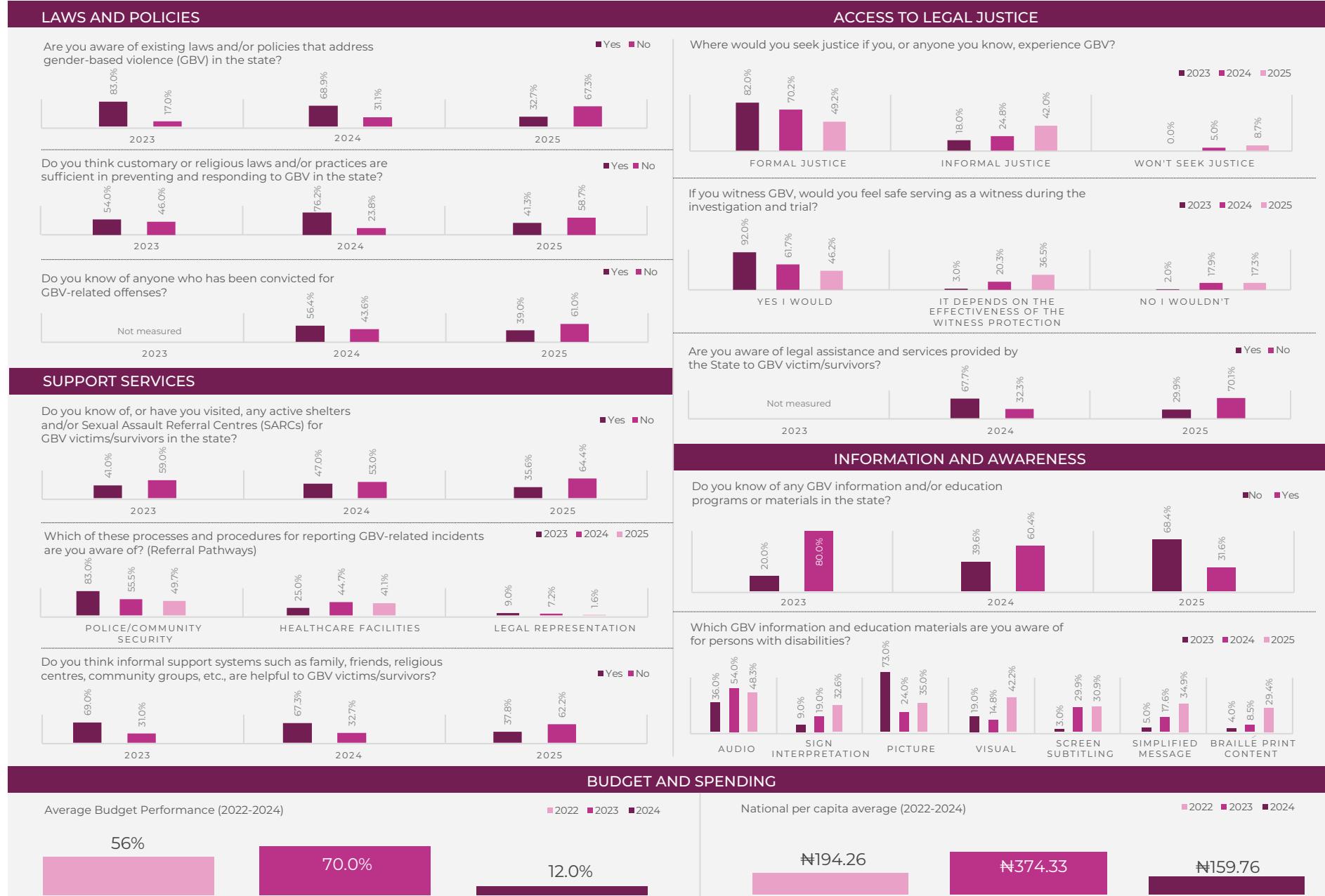
63.7%

of Katsina State population have either experienced GBV or knows someone who have experienced GBV



Katsina State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

Overall Grade 50.0%





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Katsina State has strengthened its legal framework through the domestication of the VAPP Law in 2023, which addresses critical gaps left by the Penal Code by criminalizing a wider range of offences including forced marriage, abandonment by spouse, and emotional abuse. The law was adapted to local context, modifying provisions on marriage age and consent to align with Sharia principles while retaining protective elements like protection orders for victims.

However, implementation remains weak. Stakeholders consistently reported that while laws exist, enforcement is severely hampered by a slow justice system, with cases often dying at police stations or courts due to delayed proceedings and missing witnesses. The Ministry of Justice noted charging over 25 GBV cases under the VAPP Law in early 2025, yet secured only limited convictions, with one high court registrar estimating less than 50% success rate.

Public awareness of GBV laws remains critically low, with only 32.7% of respondents reporting knowledge of such policies, while 61% did not know anyone convicted of GBV-related offences, pointing to weak enforcement visibility. Stakeholders identified inadequate sensitization as a major gap, with the SARC manager emphasizing that "people are not aware" and noting that even community and religious leaders lack basic understanding of what constitutes GBV. A majority (57.5%) of respondents believed that formal laws and policies are insufficient in addressing GBV, reflecting the disconnect between legal frameworks and effective implementation. While the state has established some infrastructure, including the NASIHA SARC, a GBV court with a designated judge, and community development committees in all 34 local government areas, these remain underutilized due to poor awareness and accessibility challenges.

Cultural practices continue to undermine formal justice systems: the FIDA magistrate described cases where traditional leaders advised rape victims to marry their rapists, resulting in further violence and even death. Despite these challenges, there are positive developments as more victims report cases and seek formal justice, and the government has shown commitment through budget allocations, establishment of specialized courts, and ongoing efforts to translate the VAPP Law into Hausa for wider accessibility.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Katsina State's progress in addressing GBV has shown a troubling reversal between 2023 and 2025, despite the landmark domestication of the VAPP Law in 2023. Public awareness of GBV-related laws and policies declined sharply from 83.0% in 2023 to 68.9% in 2024, and further to just 32.7% in 2025. This dramatic drop occurred even as the legal framework strengthened, revealing a critical disconnect between policy development and public engagement. Correspondingly, confidence in customary laws to address GBV also declined from 54.0% in 2023 to 41.3% in 2025, suggesting growing recognition that traditional systems alone cannot adequately respond to GBV.

The Protection Manager at Danuwa Foundation explained that "when our outreach programs were active, communities understood GBV better, and survivors started coming forward. But once the funding ended, awareness dropped again." This highlights the state's heavy reliance on donor-funded initiatives rather than sustained government-led sensitization efforts.

The visibility of justice outcomes has similarly deteriorated over the three-year period. In 2024, 76% of respondents knew someone convicted of a GBV-related offense, by 2025, this figure reversed dramatically, with 39% reporting they know anyone convicted for GBV offenses. This shift reflects weakening enforcement rather than reduced offending, as stakeholders consistently reported that cases continue to die at police stations or courts due to survivor withdrawal, family pressure, and slow judicial processes.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Access to legal justice for GBV survivors in Katsina State remains constrained by fragmented systems and low public confidence, despite recent institutional improvements. Awareness of state-provided legal assistance remains critically low at 29.9%, though legal aid services exist through FIDA, the Legal Aid Council, and the Ministry of Justice. However, these services face severe capacity constraints as the Legal Aid Council operates with only one staff member statewide covering just four accessible LGAs (Katsina, Daura, Malumfashi, and Funtua), while insecurity renders areas like Faskari, Sabuwa, and Dandume largely unreachable.

When asked where they would seek justice, about half (49.2%) of respondents preferred the formal justice system while 42% favored informal systems, reflecting the parallel justice structures operating in the state. Stakeholders noted that informal justice systems continue to obstruct formal processes,

with the FIDA magistrate describing a case where traditional leaders advised a rape victim to marry her rapist, resulting in domestic violence, premature childbirth, and the death of the baby. Nearly half of respondents (46.2%) expressed willingness to serve as witnesses in GBV cases, though 36.5% conditioned this on the existence of strong witness protection mechanisms — a safeguard that stakeholders confirm is currently absent or inadequate.

The establishment of three special GBV courts in January 2025 marks significant progress in strengthening justice delivery, with these courts immediately assigned 30 cases and mandated to prioritize GBV matters to reduce delays. Out of 75 officially reported GBV cases in 2025 (all involving sexual violence), 18 resulted in convictions, with 17 cases filed under the VAPP Law. The FIDA magistrate noted that conviction rates are now "higher" than previous years, attributing this to appointment of more female judges (7 out of 14 magistrates), and improved victim confidence in the system. Despite specialized structures including GBV desks at police stations, Family Support Units, and coordination mechanisms through Community Development Committees in all 34 local governments, these remain underutilized due to limited awareness, inadequate funding, and the persistent influence of cultural norms that prioritize family reputation over survivor justice. .

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, access to legal justice in Katsina State showed a steady decline in formal justice engagement, with respondents seeking redress through police, courts, or SARCs dropping from 83.0% in 2023 to 55.5% in 2024, and further to 49.7% in 2025. Similarly, willingness to serve as witnesses fell sharply from 92.0% in 2023 to 46.2% in 2025, driven by fear of retaliation and social stigma. The FIDA Secretary attributed this to community-level discrimination that isolates rape survivors. Nonetheless, institutional coordination improved in 2025 with the establishment of three GBV courts and stronger referral mechanisms that link medical, legal, and psychosocial support through SARCs. The SARC Manager emphasized that this integrated response helped survivors remain committed to prosecution, contributing to 18 convictions out of 75 GBV cases reported - a significant improvement from 150 reported GBV cases, only 60 were prosecuted and none resulted in conviction in 2023. As of November 2025, the Katsina SARC reported recording about 110 sexual assault cases since it was established in December 2023, out of which 60 have been uploaded into the Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS).

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Katsina State made measurable progress in strengthening survivor-centered support services, marked by the establishment of two SARCs and a Women's Centre. According to a SARC Manager, these centres now provide "medical, psychosocial, and legal support in one place," a structure that has improved survivor experience, while also serving as hubs for case documentation and court evidence preparation. However, accessibility remains a challenge — only 35.6% of respondents were aware of the SARCs, and 29.9% knew about available support services. Stakeholders reveal that rural survivors face significant barriers due to distance and costs. As the Ministry of Health official observed, "The SARCs are very useful, but they are both in the capital. Survivors in remote communities may not even know these facilities exist, and even if they do, reaching them is costly." This highlights the need for expanded coverage, decentralized facilities, and strengthened coordination across formal

and informal networks to ensure equitable access to holistic survivor care.

Awareness and use of referral pathways remain uneven. While 49.7% of respondents knew to report GBV through the police or community security and 41.1% through healthcare facilities, awareness of legal representation (1.6%) and support groups (4.6%) was critically low. Survivor support services, particularly legal and psychosocial assistance, have improved through closer collaboration between the Ministry of Women Affairs, FIDA, and the Legal Aid Council, but coverage remains urban-centred. Informal support systems, including family, friends, and religious leaders, continue to play a visible role, with 37.8% of respondents preferring these networks to formal mechanisms. As a stakeholder explained, "many survivors first go to religious leaders or family elders before considering the police or court." This highlights the need to formalize linkages between informal and institutional actors, ensuring that survivors receive timely, holistic, and survivor-centred support regardless of where they first report.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, support services for GBV survivors in Katsina State showed institutional expansion but a worrying decline in public awareness and accessibility. In 2023, 59.2% of respondents were aware of or had visited active shelters or SARCs, but this dropped to 47% in 2024 and further to 35.6% in 2025. Despite this, perceptions of functionality remained high, with 77% of respondents in 2024 and 85.9% in 2025 agreeing that existing SARCs and shelters were adequately equipped and sustainable. The state now operates two SARCs (one government-owned, one NGO-run) and a Women's Centre offering psychosocial support and limited vocational training. According to a SARC Manager, "we started operations fully in 2024 with increased case referrals from the police and NGOs," showing clear institutional progress. Yet, the Ministry of Health official emphasized, "the SARCs are both in the capital; survivors in remote communities may not even know these facilities exist," highlighting a major accessibility gap.

Awareness of referral pathways also showed uneven progress. Knowledge of police/community security as a reporting channel declined from 83.3% in 2023 to 49.7% in 2025, and awareness of healthcare pathways fell from 25% to 41.1% indicating concentration around medical and security responses but little awareness of legal or psychosocial channels, which remained very low (4.6% and 7.8%, respectively, in 2025). Informal systems remained influential, with 69.2% in 2023 and about 67% in 2025 describing them as helpful.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Public awareness of GBV information and education programs in Katsina State remains low, with only 31.6% of respondents aware of such initiatives in 2025, while 68.4% reported no awareness. Among those informed, the main sources were social media (39.8%), healthcare workers (31%), and radio (21.4%), indicating that electronic and interpersonal communication remain key channels for outreach. Respondents generally viewed GBV awareness materials positively — 58.4% rated them as "mostly useful" and 7.5% as "completely useful." Encouragingly, 59.9% of residents supported integrating GBV and child sexual abuse education into school curricula, suggesting a growing recognition of preventive education's importance. However, the Protection Manager from Danuwa Foundation noted that while "radio remains our biggest tool," outreach to remote communities is

inconsistent, particularly where women's access to digital and health platforms is limited.

Use of disability-inclusive communication materials shows moderate progress, reflecting ongoing inclusive outreach by MDAs and NGOs. Respondents reported receiving GBV information through audio/spoken content (48.3%), visual materials (42.2%), and sign interpretation (32.6%), while fewer accessed braille (29.4%), screen subtitling (30.9%), and simplified messages (34.9%). Despite this diversity of formats, accessibility gaps persist, as the Gender Desk Officer at the Ministry of Women Affairs explained that "limited funding for sensitization has slowed the production and distribution of disability-friendly materials."

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Katsina State's GBV information and awareness landscape evolved from broad outreach to more structured but less extensive engagement. In 2023, 80% of respondents were aware of GBV education initiatives, supported mainly by the AGILE program, which extended outreach to students but lacked disability-inclusive materials such as braille and sign-supported content. Awareness dipped slightly to 60.4% in 2024, when awareness programs became more coordinated through government-NGO partnerships. During this period, 28% of respondents rated the materials as mostly useful and 26% as completely useful, reflecting growing satisfaction with the quality and structure of communication. Awareness channels expanded through health facility outreach, radio talk shows, and community sensitization using local storytelling and drama, which are efforts that helped normalize GBV conversations across diverse audiences.

By 2025, however, awareness declined sharply to 31.6%, mainly due to reduced funding and advocacy campaigns. Despite lower reach, content quality improved, 58.4% rated materials as mostly useful, and 7.5% as completely useful. Disability-inclusive communication saw progress, with 48.3% using audio content, 42.2% visual materials, and 32.6% sign interpretation, though braille (29.4%) and subtitled messages (30.9%) remained underutilized. Stakeholders, including the Ministry of Women Affairs and FIDA, linked the decline in awareness to funding cuts and limited production of accessible materials, noting that "when sensitization reduces, reporting also drops." Still, endorsement for school-based GBV education remained high (59.9%), highlighting strong public appetite for prevention through education.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Katsina State allocated ₦6.68 billion to GBV programs in 2024, representing 1.27% of its total state budget. Of the allocated amount, only ₦798.2 million was actually spent, achieving a 12% implementation rate. This means nearly nine-tenths of the budgeted resources remained unutilized by the end of the fiscal year. The actual GBV expenditure constituted 0.20% of the state's total spending, significantly lower than the budget allocation share. On a per capita basis, Katsina State spent approximately ₦159.76 on GBV-related programs

Changes Over Time (2022 to 2024)

Katsina State's GBV budget performance fell considerably in the three year review period. Actual

spending decreased from ₦1.81 billion (70%) in 2023 to ₦798.19 million (12%) in 2024. Although allocations to the Ministry of Women Affairs increased steadily – from ₦1.61 billion in 2022 to ₦2.58 billion in 2023 and further to ₦6.68 billion in 2024 – the state's recent performance indicates persistent challenges in fund releases, resulting in limited capacity to cash-back and execute approved projects. Per capita spending stood at ₦159.76 in 2024, ₦374.33 in 2023, and ₦194.26 in 2022. The significant rise in 2023 followed by a sharp decline in 2024 reflects unstable investment levels and inconsistent prioritization of GBV-related interventions across the three-year period.

Human Angle Stories

A 20-year-old young lady was sexually assaulted by her boyfriend in 2024. With support from an NGO, she was referred to the government-owned SARC where she received urgent medical care, counselling, and legal referrals. She recalls: "At first, I thought it was the end of everything for me. But the counsellor helped me to see that I still had a life ahead of me. Without the SARC, I don't think I could have spoken out or gone to court."

Her case was resolved through an understanding that she would marry her boyfriend, a decision she accepted. Her story underscores several systemic factors shaping survivor experiences and echoes the lived experiences of many women in Katsina State who, despite the existence of legal frameworks and services, continue to face barriers rooted in stigma, limited access, and weak enforcement.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

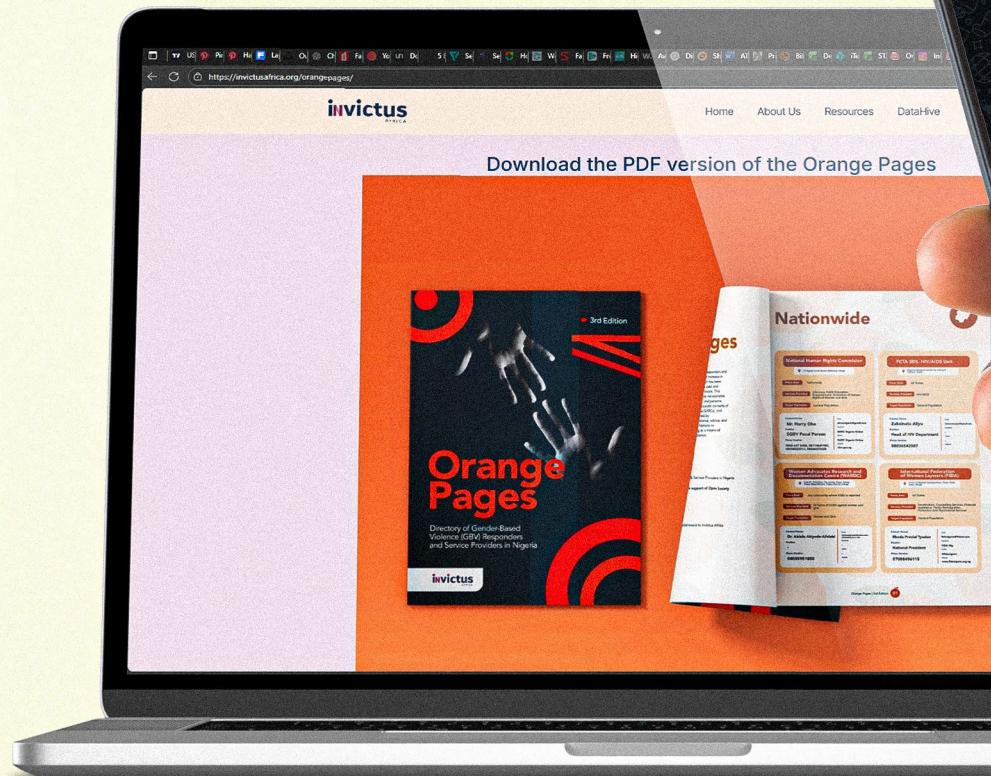
Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Although Katsina State domesticated the VAPP Law in 2023, enforcement remains inconsistent, with limited convictions and weak inter-agency follow-up.	Strengthen enforcement through an empowered State GBV Taskforce to coordinate cross-sectoral implementation and track prosecution outcomes.
	Awareness of GBV laws declined sharply from 83.0% in 2023 to 32.7% in 2025, showing insufficient public sensitization and low legal literacy.	Institutionalize continuous public education campaigns in Hausa and local dialects to raise awareness of GBV and legal remedies.
	Cultural and religious norms still obstruct full enforcement, especially regarding early marriage and domestic violence.	Conduct sustained engagement and sensitization sessions with traditional and religious leaders to align cultural norms with the VAPP Law.
	Coordination among MDAs, justice institutions, and CSOs remains weak, creating policy overlap and gaps in implementation.	Establish a central GBV coordination framework within the Ministry of Women Affairs to monitor and harmonize implementation across all MDAs.
Access to Legal Justice	While 3 GBV courts have been established, prosecutions remain delayed and survivor follow-through is low due to intimidation and stigma.	Provide dedicated resources and procedural support to GBV courts, including witness protection and survivor-friendly case management systems.
	Legal aid coverage is limited – available in only four LGAs, with staffing and security constraints undermining equitable access.	Expand the Legal Aid Council's presence by deploying mobile legal aid clinics and recruiting additional paralegals in underserved LGAs.
	Informal justice mechanisms often override formal processes, with traditional leaders promoting out-of-court settlements.	Implement sensitization programs for community and religious leaders on lawful GBV redress and reporting obligations under the VAPP Law.
	Willingness to serve as witnesses fell drastically from 92.0% in 2023 to 46.2% in 2025, reflecting deeper fear of retaliation and lack of protection mechanisms.	Introduce and operationalize a state witness protection protocol to safeguard survivors and witnesses throughout investigation and trial.
Support Services	Only one functional government SARC (Nasiha) and one NGO-run centre serve 34 LGAs, creating severe geographic inequity in access.	Establish zonal SARCs in Daura, Funtua, and other key senatorial districts to ensure equitable access to survivor services.
	Referral pathways exist but remain poorly understood, with weak linkages between healthcare, police, and legal services.	Standardize and publicize a unified GBV referral pathway across all LGAs, integrating emergency hotlines and clear referral protocols.
	Support services (medical, psychosocial, legal) exist but are concentrated in urban areas, leaving rural survivors underserved.	Strengthen coordination between SARCs, Women's Centres, and PHCs to decentralize service delivery, including mobile psychosocial outreach.
	Informal support systems remain influential but inconsistently effective, sometimes encouraging survivors to avoid formal reporting.	Train religious and traditional leaders as first responders and link them to formal referral systems to ensure survivors are guided correctly.
Information and Awareness	Awareness of GBV programs declined from 80% in 2023 to 31.6% in 2025, mainly due to discontinued funding for sensitization activities.	Institutionalize state-funded, year-round GBV awareness campaigns using radio, schools, social media, and religious platforms.
	Disability-inclusive GBV communication remains limited beyond audio and visual formats; braille and subtitled materials are largely unavailable.	Expand the production of disability-friendly IEC materials (braille, sign interpretation, subtitling) through dedicated budget lines.
	GBV education exists in schools through AGILE and NGO efforts but lacks a standardized curriculum or sustainability plan.	Develop and integrate a standardized GBV and child protection curriculum into basic and secondary education through the Ministry of Education.
	Most awareness campaigns remain donor-driven, with limited state ownership and monitoring of communication impact.	Establish a government-led monitoring and evaluation system to track campaign reach, behavioural change, and community feedback.
Budget and Spending	Katsina State's budget execution collapsed from 70% in 2023 to just 12% in 2024, leaving ₦5.88 billion unutilized due to severe fund release and cash-backing failures.	Establish quarterly mandatory fund release schedules with a dedicated monitoring unit to track disbursement and ensure allocated GBV resources are actually spent, not just budgeted.



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