



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



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# Kogi State

Confluence State

*Lord Lugard's Rest House*

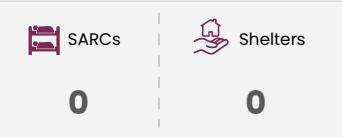
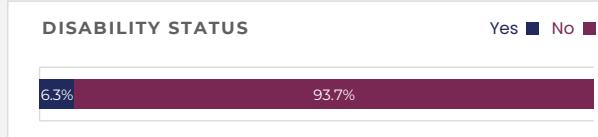
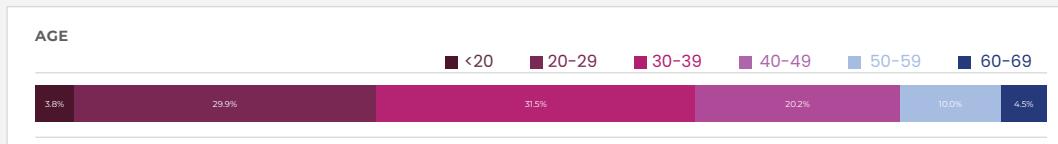
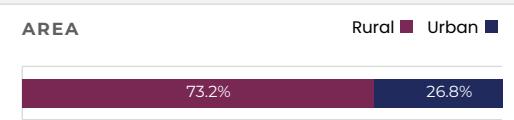
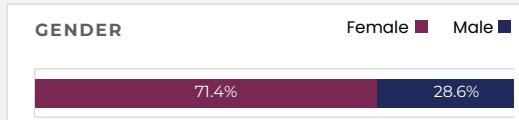
# Kogi State

Population: 5,686,921

50.3% Female 49.7% Male

Overall Grade 54.6%

## Respondents Demography (n = 1,068)



## Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

### BUDGET ALLOCATION

**₦1.88bn**

(This accounts for 0.5% of the total state budget)

### BUDGET PERFORMANCE

**₦1.20bn**

(This accounts for 64.1% of total allocation to the ministry)

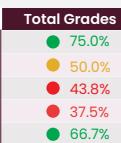


Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ (Actual Spend)



**Per Capita Spending**

**₦421.01**

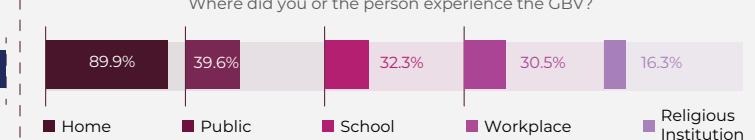


## GBV Context 2025

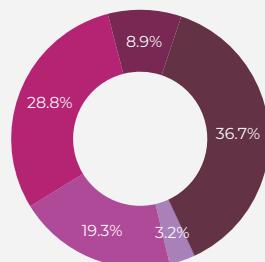
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



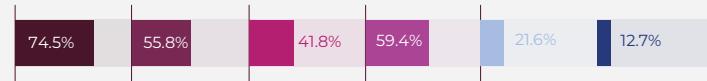
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



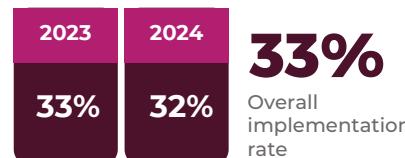
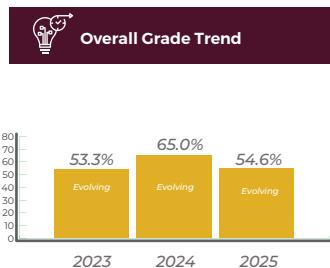
Where did you or the person first seek help?



■ Domestic ■ Physical ■ Sexual ■ Mental ■ Economic ■ Cultural practices

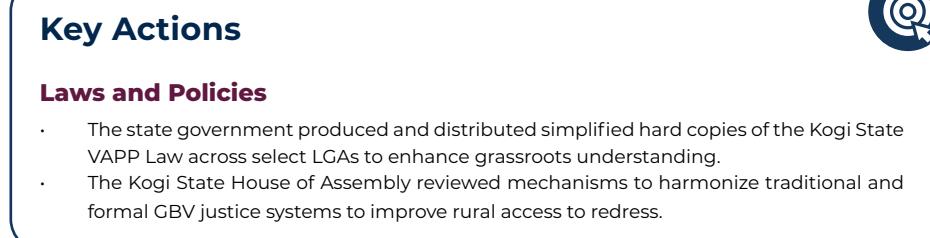
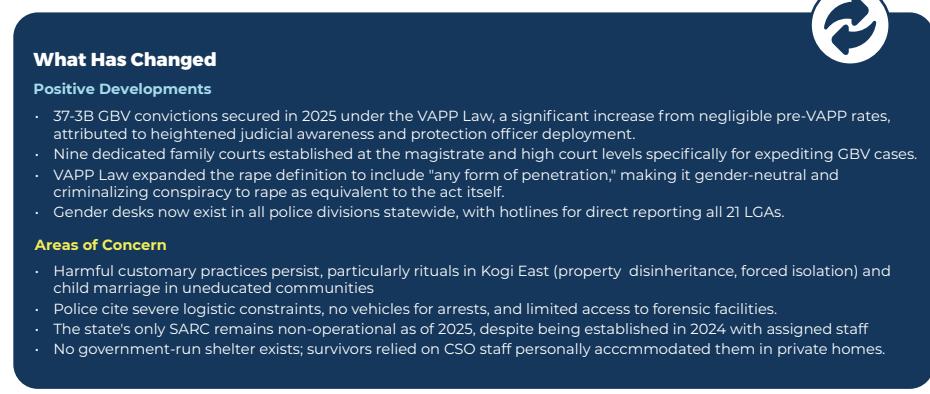
■ Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Lawyer

■ Trust ■ Perception that they could help ■ Services ■ Financial constraint ■ Proximity or accessibility



 Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	LP 66.7%	LP 75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3	+1 ▲ ALJ 75.0%	-1 ▼ ALJ 50.0%
Support Services	SS 43.8%	SS 50.0%	-1 ▼ SS 43.8%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3%	IA 50.0	-1 ▼ IA 37.5%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+2 ▲ BS 83.3%	BS 66.7%



## Access to Legal Justice

- The state deployed Protection Officers across several local government areas to serve as grassroots focal points for GBV case reporting and referral.
- The state inaugurated a multi-sector Case Management Committee in 2025 to strengthen coordination between justice institutions and improve survivor referral pathways.

## Support Services

- The state established a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in 2024.
- The Ministry of Women Affairs provided one-off emergency economic assistance, such as food items or small grants, to survivors.

## Information and Awareness

- The state government produced and distributed simplified hard copies of the Kogi State VAPP Law across select LGAs to enhance grassroots understanding.
- Sensitization engagements with traditional and religious institutions on GBV awareness were conducted periodically.

## Change Spotlight

In just one year, Kogi State achieved 37 GBV convictions under its VAPP Law, a significant increase from previous years. This success resulted from multiple coordinated actions, including the establishment of nine family courts for GBV cases and targeted police training from the Public Defender and Citizens Rights Commission (PDCRC). Protection Officers were deployed across all 21 local governments, creating new grassroots reporting channels.

Inaugurated in 2025, a multi-sector Case Management Committee coordinates justice efforts and survivor referrals. FIDA's weekly "FIDA Focus" program on Radio Kogi 94.1 FM, along with government broadcasts, informs communities statewide. This unified approach has led to systematic justice for survivors, such as a 17-year-old rescued from forced marriage, providing access to legal support and ensuring consistent prosecution of perpetrators.



## Kogi State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 54.6%

### LAWS AND POLICIES



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

Yes ■ No ■

54.3% 45.7%



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

Yes ■ No ■

63.6% 36.4%



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

Yes ■ No ■

28.9% 71.1%

### 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 ■

8.3% 91.7%



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

3.4%

49.4% 38.2% 6.7% 2.2%

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



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

13.6%

69.7% 35.1% 21.5% 20.2% 13.6%

■ 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 ■

49.3% 50.7%

### ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE



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

68.3% 29.4% 2.3%

■ 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?

51.5% 15.4% 33.1%

■ 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?

35.1% 64.9%

### INFORMATION AND AWARENESS



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

Yes ■ No ■

43.6% 56.4%



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

32.6% 49.6% 15.9% 1.9%

■ 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?

22.3% 17.7% 36.0% 31.4% 14.4% 17.2% 11.0% 43.4%

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

## Kogi State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade

54.6%

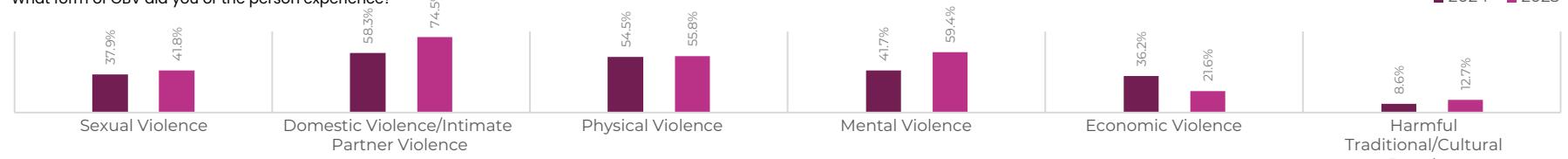
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



# 65.0%

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

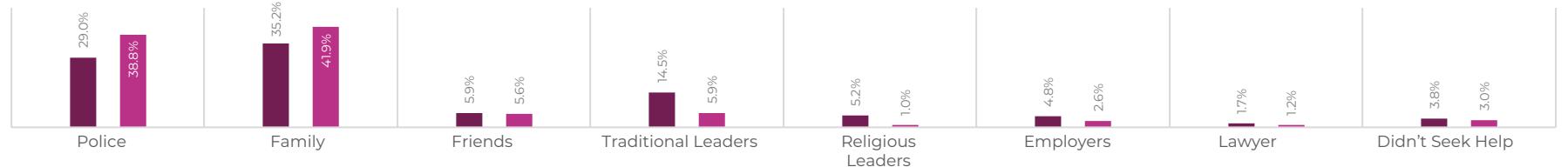
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



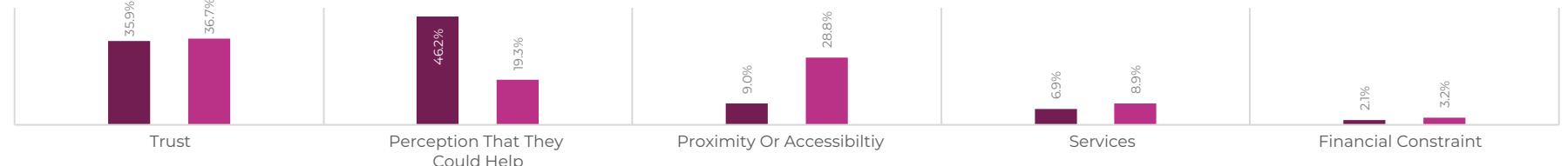
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?

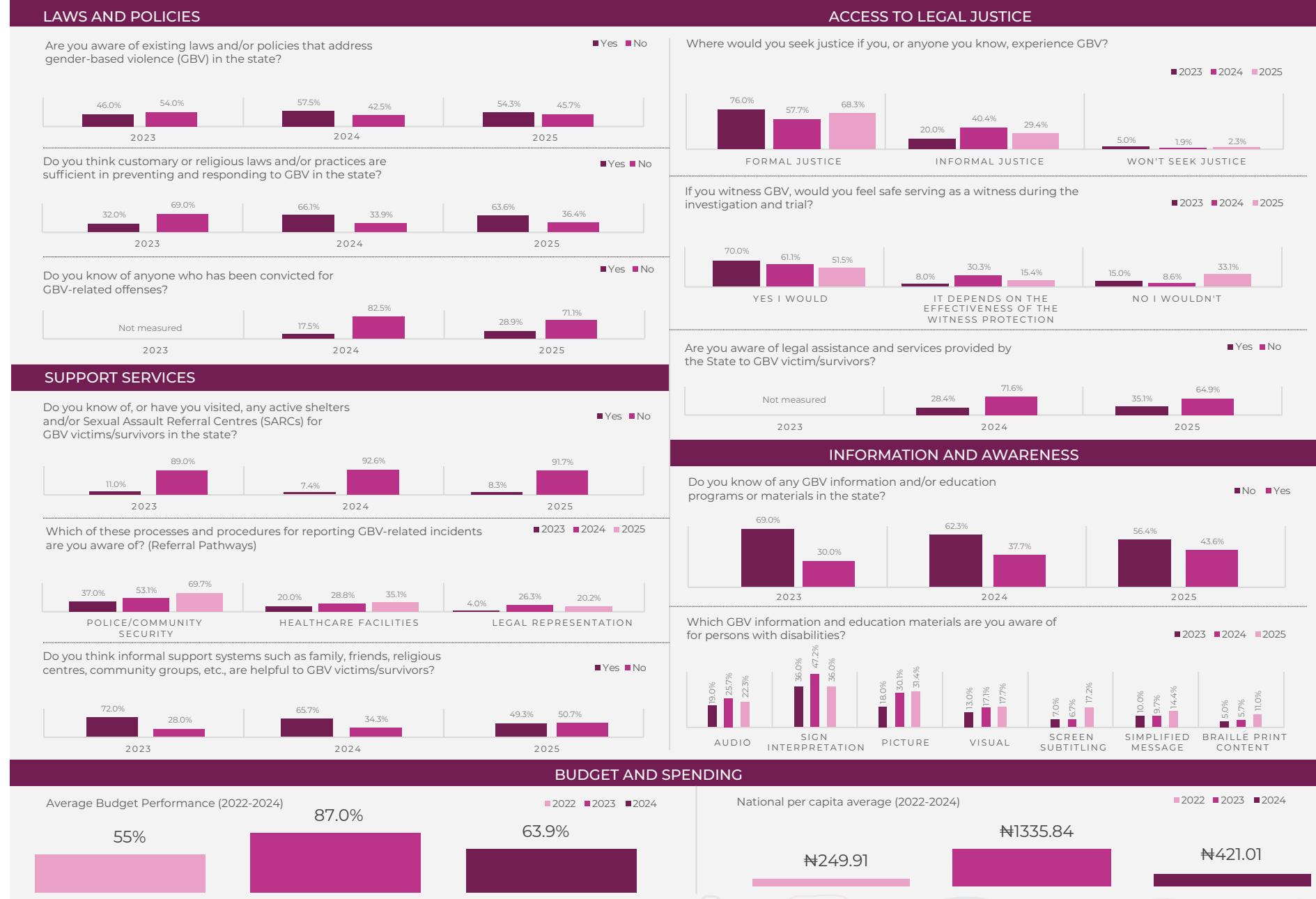


Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?



## Kogi State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

Overall Grade 54.6%





## KEY INSIGHTS

### Laws and Policies

#### Current State in 2025

Kogi State's GBV legal framework centres on the domesticated VAPP Law (2022), Child Rights Law (2007), and Disability Law (2019), with awareness at 54.3% among respondents. The VAPP Law expanded rape definitions beyond gender-specific terms to include "any form of penetration," criminalizing conspiracy to rape as equivalent to the act itself. FIDA reported approximately 37-38 convictions in the past 12 months, significantly higher than pre-VAPP rates, attributed to judicial awareness, protection officer deployment, and reduced stigma enabling survivors to report. However, only 28.9% of respondents know about convicted perpetrators, suggesting limited conviction visibility. Radio (48.3%) and social media (49%) drive awareness, yet enforcement remains inconsistent in rural areas where 66.8% lack knowledge of legal aid services.

Harmful customary practices persist, particularly widowhood rituals in Kogi East involving property disinheritance and forced isolation, alongside child marriage in uneducated communities. Traditional rulers and religious leaders often pressure families to withdraw cases, with one magistrate noting a convicted rapist released within months through undisclosed interventions. The Ministry of Women Affairs intervened in specific widowhood abuse cases, and the State House of Assembly reviews mechanisms to harmonize traditional and formal systems, though implementation lags behind rhetoric.

#### Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV laws in Kogi State fluctuated modestly between 2023 (46.0%) and 2025 (54.3%), peaking at 57% in 2024, indicating incremental but inconsistent progress in public legal literacy despite the VAPP Law's 2022 enactment. A shift occurred in perceptions of customary and religious laws: confidence in their sufficiency for GBV prevention more than doubled from 32% (2023) to 66.1% (2024) before dropping slightly to 63.6% (2025). Stakeholders attribute this reversal to increased sensitization of traditional and religious leaders by OPDCRC and CSOs, though qualitative data reveal these systems continue obstructing formal justice through case compounding and victim-blaming.

Knowledge of GBV convictions increased from 17.5% (2024) to 28.9% (2025), suggesting convictions occur beyond respondents' immediate networks, a positive indicator that prosecution extends

across communities rather than remaining anecdotal, corroborated by FIDA's report of 37-38 convictions in 2025 compared to negligible pre-VAPP rates.

### Access to Legal Justice

#### Current State in 2025

Kogi State's justice delivery for GBV survivors operates through fragmented formal and informal systems with uneven reach. Nine dedicated family courts at the magistrate and high court levels now expedite GBV cases under the VAPP Law, supported by the Office of the Public Defender and Citizens' Rights Commission (OPDCRC), which handled 68 cases, 19 pending, and two concluded with convictions. Protection Officers deployed across all 21 LGAs serve as grassroots reporting focal points, while the 2025 Case Management Committee coordinates referrals between OPDCRC, the Ministry of Justice's GBV Directorate, police gender desks, and NSCDC family units. However, the Legal Aid Council operates solely from Lokoja with four lawyers, leaving rural areas underserved despite FIDA and OPDCRC maintaining zonal presence in Okene, Kabba, Idah, and Ankpa. Only 35.1% of respondents know state-provided legal assistance exists, with 68.3% preferring formal justice over informal systems (29.4%).

Prosecution effectiveness remains compromised by systemic barriers. Police cite logistic constraints, vehicles for arrests, and forensic facility access, while families withdraw cases mid-trial due to financial burdens, stigma, and pressure from alleged perpetrators. A magistrate reported that convicted rapists were released prematurely through undisclosed judicial manipulation. Informal systems obstruct justice further; traditional rulers compound cases rather than refer them, with one police officer recounting that the traditional ruler came saying, "We have settled everything."

#### Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Preference for formal justice systems rebounded from 58% (2024) to 68.3% (2025), nearing 2023 levels (76%), while reliance on informal mechanisms showed inconsistency, it increased from 20% in 2023 to 40% (2024) and later decreased to 29.4% (2025). This shift reflects growing institutional trust following the establishment of nine family courts and the 2025 Case Management Committee coordinating OPDCRC, Ministry of Justice's GBV Directorate, and police gender desks.

However, witness willingness declined progressively, from 70% (2023) to 61% (2024) to 51.5% (2025), with refusals decreasing from 15.0% (2023) to 9% (2024) and increased again then increasing again to 33.1% (2025) due to the absence of witness protection programs. Those conditioning participation on security guarantees rose from 8.0% (2023) to 30% (2024) before settling at 15.4% (2025). Awareness

of state-provided legal assistance improved marginally from 28% (2024) to 35.1% (2025), yet two-thirds (64.9%) remain uninformed about OPDCRC, Legal Aid Council, or FIDA services despite zonal presence in Okene, Kabba, Idah, and Ankpa.

## Support Services

### Current State in 2025

Kogi State lacks a functional, holistic support infrastructure for GBV survivors, with services concentrated in Lokoja and absent standardized referral pathways. The state established one Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in 2024 behind the Isolation Centre at Kogi State Specialist Hospital, Lokoja. Still, it remains non-operational as of 2025 despite having a medical doctor and supporting staff assigned. No government-run shelter exists; survivors requiring temporary housing relied on CSO staff personally accommodating them. FIDA's Assistant Secretary housed a 17-year-old forced marriage escapee for six months, while the Ministry of Women Affairs staff sheltered a 23-year-old drug-dependent survivor. The Commissioner for Women Affairs plans to convert the hospital's isolation centre into a shelter, with the Secretary to the State Government constructing a private facility as an interim solution.

Referral pathways remain informal and fragmented despite the 2025 Case Management Committee's coordination mandate. Survivors access multiple entry points, police (69.7% awareness), healthcare facilities (35.1%), support groups (21.5%), and legal representation (20.2%), with no standardized protocols. Medical examinations require police authorization, delaying forensic evidence collection. Ministry of Women Affairs provides ad-hoc emergency economic assistance (food items, small grants, etc) without sustainable empowerment programs, while psychosocial counselling depends on untrained personnel using "emotional intelligence" rather than certified trauma therapy. Religious and traditional leaders offer inconsistent temporary housing and mediation, but substitute rather than complement formal medical, legal, or psychosocial support. Informal systems retain influence, as 49.3% rely on family/community, often obstructing formal justice through stigmatization and case withdrawal pressure. .

### Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of active shelters/SARCs in Kogi State dropped from 11% in 2023 to 7% in 2024 and increased slightly to 8.3% in 2025, but 91.3% of people remain unaware. Despite a SARC being established at Kogi State Specialist Hospital in 2024, it was non-operational as of 2025. Among those aware, perceived functionality increased from 19% (2024) to 49.4% (2025). However, this perception may be misleading. This is because survivors relied on temporary housing provided by CSO staff, not the SARC. The Ministry of Women Affairs also confirmed that the SARC is non-functional, suggesting respondents confused CSO support with SARC services.

Knowledge of reporting pathways improved substantially: police awareness rose from 37% (2023) to 53.1% (2024) and to 69.7% (2025), healthcare from 20% (2023) to 28.8% (2024) and to 35.1% (2025), though legal pathway awareness was 4.0% (2023) but rose and stagnated at 20.2% (2025) versus 26.3% (2024). Confidence in informal support systems declined sharply from 72% (2023) to 66% (2024) and to 49.3% (2025), reflecting survivors' growing recognition that family, religious leaders, and traditional councils often pressure case withdrawals rather than facilitate justice, as documented

by police and NSCDC officers who noted families "settling" mid-trial under community pressure.

## Information and Awareness

### Current State in 2025

Kogi State's GBV awareness efforts rely primarily on mass media without systematic community-level penetration or disability inclusion. The Ministry of Justice operates a weekly radio program on Radio Kogi 94.1 FM discussing VAPP Law provisions and reporting channels, complemented by FIDA's "FIDA Focus" program every Wednesday at 12 noon, both provided free airtime by the Ministry of Information. The Office of the Public Defender and Citizens Rights Commission distributed simplified hard copies of the VAPP Law across select LGAs, while IEC materials (posters, pamphlets) circulate in urban centres with limited rural reach due to funding constraints. Radio (62.7%), social media (56.2%), and television (48.7%) dominate awareness channels, yet 56.4% of respondents remain unaware of any GBV information programs. Notably, 82.2% who accessed materials found them useful, and 91.9% support integrating GBV education into school curricula, currently absent except through sporadic CSO-led extracurricular clubs in select schools.

Accessibility for marginalized groups remains critically inadequate. Awareness campaigns inadequately reach persons with disabilities and remote populations, with no systematic use of braille, sign interpretation, or digital accessibility tools documented. Religious centres (23.6%), traditional leaders (21.2%), and schools (24%) show low engagement as information channels. The Ministry of Information acknowledged that while budgetary provisions for GBV advocacy now exist, releases lag behind allocations, restricting flyer production, grassroots town halls, and LGA-level focal person deployment. The OPDCRC conducts periodic community sensitization with traditional rulers, yet efforts remain donor-driven rather than institutionalized. One magistrate emphasized: "We need to catch them young, primary and secondary students must know the VAPP Law exists before they get into university where harassment may occur.".

### Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV information programs grew steadily from 30% (2023) to 38% (2024) and to 43.6% (2025), driven by FIDA's weekly "FIDA Focus" radio program and Ministry of Justice broadcasts on Radio Kogi 94.1 FM, alongside OPDCRC's distribution of simplified VAPP Law copies across select LGAs. Perceived usefulness of materials more than doubled from 23% (2024) to 49.6% (2025), indicating improved content quality despite limited rural reach due to funding constraints.

However, awareness of disability-inclusive materials declined slightly – audio content dropped from 25.7% (2024) to 22.3% (2025), sign language remained at 36% in 2023 and 2025, braille slightly increased from 5.7% in 2024 to 11% in 2025, and picture based materials increased from 18% in 2023 to 31.4% in 2025. A magistrate emphasized the need to "catch them young," integrating GBV education into school curricula, yet no formal curriculum exists beyond sporadic CSO-led extracurricular clubs. The Ministry of Information acknowledged that budgetary provisions for GBV advocacy now exist, but releases lag, restricting flyer production, grassroots town halls, and LGA-level focal person deployment which are critical for reaching the 56.4% still unaware of any GBV programs.

## Budget and Spending

### Budget Analysis 2024

₦1.88 billion is allocated to GBV interventions, representing just 0.46% of its total budget. The state demonstrated relatively strong implementation, spending ₦1.20 billion—64% of what was budgeted. This 0.37% share of actual state spending translates to ₦421.01 per capita, suggesting reasonable resource deployment given the allocation.

However, the initial budget commitment remains low. With GBV representing less than half a percent of total planning priorities, Kogi's financial commitment to addressing gender-based violence appears inadequate for meaningful systemic change, despite decent execution rates.

### Changes Over Time (2022 to 2024)

Kogi State included a gender-based violence (GBV)-specific line item in its approved budgets for 2022, 2023, and 2024. In both 2023 and 2024, Kogi's budget featured a recurring GBV-specific line item titled "Kogi State Intervention on Sexual/Gender Violence Operation/Data Management Equipment," with an allocation of ₦40 million in each year. Despite these allocations, no actual spending was recorded. Budget performance declined significantly over the period. Actual spending dropped from ₦3.71 billion (87%) in 2023 to ₦1.20 billion (63.93%) in 2024. Allocations to the Ministry of Women Affairs also fluctuated, rising from ₦1.21 billion in 2022 to ₦4.28 billion in 2023, and then falling to ₦1.88 billion in 2024. This pattern indicates persistent challenges with low fund releases, which continue to undermine the state's capacity to implement approved projects. Per capita spending stood at ₦421.01 in 2024, ₦1,335.84 in 2023, and ₦249.91 in 2022. The exceptionally high figure recorded in 2023, followed by a sharp decline in 2024, reflects a highly irregular investment pattern that signals inconsistent prioritization of GBV-related interventions over the three-year period.

### Human Angle Stories

Rosemary, a 45-year-old civil servant, suffered domestic violence from her husband. Despite knowing from the radio that domestic violence is prohibited, Rosemary never pursued formal justice. Rural women like her face major barriers: few pro bono lawyers, hidden costs, and limited confidence in formal systems. "I don't have enough money to push the case," she explained.

Her experience reflects broader gaps in Kogi State's GBV response. Despite the VAPP Law, survivors in rural areas still lack access to legal aid, counselling, and shelters.

## KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	While 37-38 GBV convictions were secured in 2025 (compared to negligible pre-VAPP rates), only 28.9% of respondents know about the convictions, and enforcement remains inconsistent in rural areas where 45.7% lack awareness of legal aid services.	Publicize conviction outcomes through mass media and community town halls and deploy legal aid satellite offices to at least three LGAs per senatorial district to improve rural enforcement visibility.
	Despite 63.6% believing customary laws prevent GBV (up from 17% in 2024), stakeholders confirm these systems obstruct formal justice through case compounding.	Fast-track the State House of Assembly's review of traditional-formal justice harmonization mechanisms and prosecute traditional leaders who compound GBV cases, with mandatory quarterly training on VAPP Law provisions for all community leaders.
 Access to Legal Justice	Witness willingness declined from 70% (2023) to 61% (2024) and to 51.5% (2025), with refusals increasing from 9% (2024) to 33.1% (2025) due to absent witness protection programs. Police cite logistic constraints while families withdraw cases mid-trial under alleged perpetrators' pressure.	Establish a witness protection unit within OPDCRC with dedicated funding for secure housing, transport logistics, and financial support to witnesses, and streamline protection order issuance to reduce processing time from weeks to 48 hours.
	The Legal Aid Council operates solely from Lokoja with four lawyers for 21 LGAs, while OPDCRC handled 68 cases (19 pending, two convictions) without satellite offices, and only 35.1% of respondents know state-provided legal assistance exists despite zonal FIDA presence.	Deploy Legal Aid Council satellite offices to Okene, Kabba, and Idah with minimum of two lawyers per zone, and launch a statewide awareness campaign featuring hotline numbers, office locations, and free legal services on radio, social media, and community billboards.
 Support Services	The state's only SARC, established in 2024 at Kogi State Specialist Hospital, remains non-operational as of 2025 despite having assigned staff.	Operationalize the SARC within 90 days with functional medical examination rooms, forensic kits, counselling facilities, and 24-hour staffing, and fast-track the Commissioner for Women Affairs' shelter conversion plan with quarterly progress reports to the State Executive Council.
	No GBV education exists in school curricula despite 91.9% public support for it.	Develop and implement standardized referral pathway SoPs eliminating police authorization for medical examinations, train minimum 21 certified trauma counsellors (one per LGA), and establish a sustainable survivor empowerment fund providing six months skills training and startup capital to ensure survivors' economic independence.
 Information and Awareness	Inadequate GBV and consent education in schools, leaving children lacking skills to prevent or address violence.	Integrate age-appropriate GBV and consent education into primary (grades 4-6) and secondary (all levels) school curricula by 2026 academic session.
	Accessibility for persons with disabilities remains critically inadequate, awareness of audio content dropped from 25.7% (2024) to 22.3% (2025), with no systematic use of braille (11% awareness), sign interpretation (36%), or digital accessibility tools.	Mandate that all GBV IEC materials be produced in braille, audio, and sign-interpreted video formats, release 100% of budgeted GBV advocacy funds by Q2 annually, and establish disability-inclusive communication checkpoints requiring disability commission approval before mass dissemination.
 Budget and Spending	Despite maintaining a specific GBV budget line item ("Sexual/Gender Violence Operation/Data Management Equipment") worth ₦40 million annually since 2022, zero naira has been spent on this allocation for three consecutive years.	Utilize the dormant ₦40 million GBV equipment line item, and investigate why a recurring budget provision has recorded zero execution across multiple fiscal years.

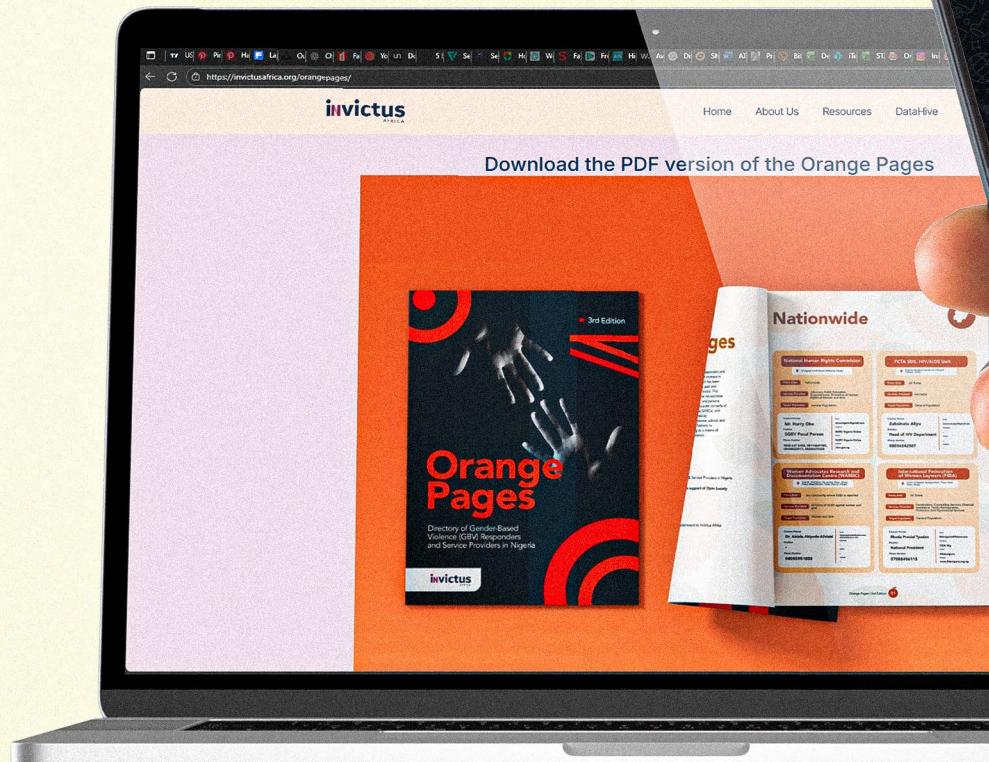


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