



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



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Ford Foundation





Oyo State

Pace Setter State

AdoAway Mountains and Suspended Lakes

Oyo State

Population: 10,291,816

50.0% Female 49.6% Male

Overall Grade 50.0%

Respondents Demography (n = 1,386)

GENDER

Female Male



AREA

Rural Urban



AGE

<20 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69

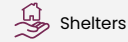


DISABILITY STATUS

Yes No



1



0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

N1.61bn

(This accounts for 0.3% of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

N429.91m

(This accounts for 26.7% of total allocation to the ministry)



Capital Personnel Overhead



Per Capita Spending

N82.88

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP ₁	LP ₂	LP ₃	—	41.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ ₁	ALJ ₂	ALJ ₃	ALJ ₄	50.0%
Support Services	SS ₁	SS ₂	SS ₃	SS ₄	43.8%
Information and Awareness	IA ₁	IA ₂	IA ₃	IA ₄	62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS ₁	BS ₂	BS ₃	—	50.0%

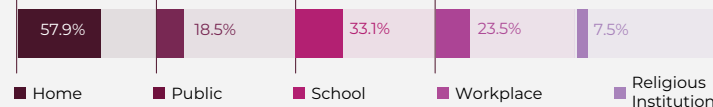
GBV Context 2025

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

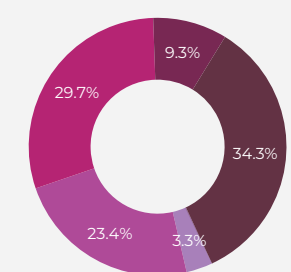
No Yes



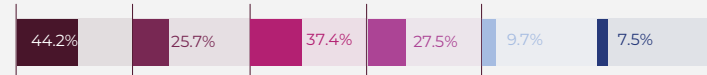
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



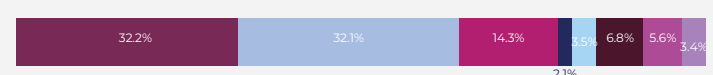
Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



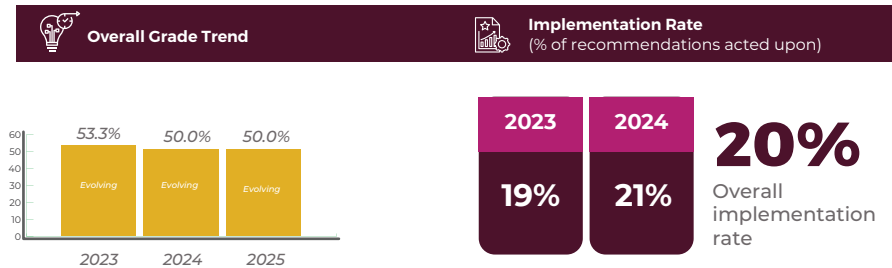
Where did you or the person first seek help?



Domestic Physical Sexual Mental Economic Cultural practices

Family/relatives Police/law enforcement authority Friends/neighbors Traditional/community leader or group Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) Employer/Work colleague/Labour group I did not seek help Lawyer

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



Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	-1 ▼ LP 50.0%	LP 41.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 43.8%	+1 ▲ ALJ 56.3%	ALJ 50.0%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	SS 56.3%	-1 ▼ SS 43.8%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3%	-1 ▼ IA 43.8%	+1 ▲ IA 62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 41.7%	BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Domestication and implementation of the VAPP Law (2023) expanded legal protection against GBV.
- 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.

Areas of Concern

- 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.
- Persistent stigma, family pressure, and cultural norms discouraging formal reporting.
- Heavy dependence on donor-funded awareness programs and inadequate state funding.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The state adopted the VAPP Law in 2020, adapting it to the state's context to strengthen the legal foundation for GBV prevention and response.
- Stakeholders from Justice and Women Affairs continued to advocate for an annual implementation review framework for GBV laws to improve accountability, though this remains under development.

Access to Legal Justice

- GBV-related cases were heard within existing family court divisions.
- The Oyo State Police Command maintained functional gender desks in key urban divisions, offering first-line GBV reporting and referral services, though rural coverage remained poor.

Support Services

- The Abiyamo Sexual Assault Referral Centre remained the central hub for medical, psychosocial, and legal referrals, jointly supported by the Ministries of Health, Justice, and Women Affairs.
- UNFPA and NGO partners facilitated limited training for social workers and health personnel.

Information and Awareness

- The Ministry of Women Affairs, in collaboration with radio stations and CSOs, conducted periodic GBV awareness campaigns, especially during the 16 Days of Activism across Oyo, Ibadan, and Ogbomoso zones.

Change Spotlight

Oyo State achieved a notable milestone in its GBV response through the strengthening and visibility of the Abiyamo Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Ibadan. Originally established in 2021, the 2023–2025 assessment period marked its transition from a little-known facility to a widely recognized hub for survivor-centered services. Evidently, in 2023, awareness of active shelters and SARCs in the state was critically low as 74.9% of respondents reported being unaware, and only 36.2% rated them effective. By 2024–2025, awareness and utilization of the Abiyamo SARC had grown, with 25.1% of respondents confirming they had visited shelters or SARCs, and 45.1% of those visitors affirming the facilities were functional, adequately equipped, and sustainable. This represents a measurable shift in public perception and trust compared to the baseline in 2023.

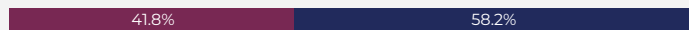
Oyo State GBV Assessment Survey

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 ■



Do you think customary or religious laws and/or practices are sufficient in preventing and responding to GBV in the state? Yes ■ No ■



Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses? Yes ■ No ■



SUPPORT SERVICES



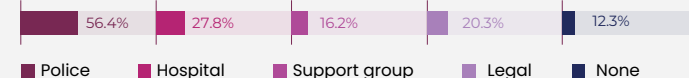
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state? Yes ■ No ■



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? Yes ■ No ■



ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE



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



■ 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, 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



INFORMATION AND AWARENESS



Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state? Yes ■ No ■



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



■ 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?



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

Oyo State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade **50.0%**

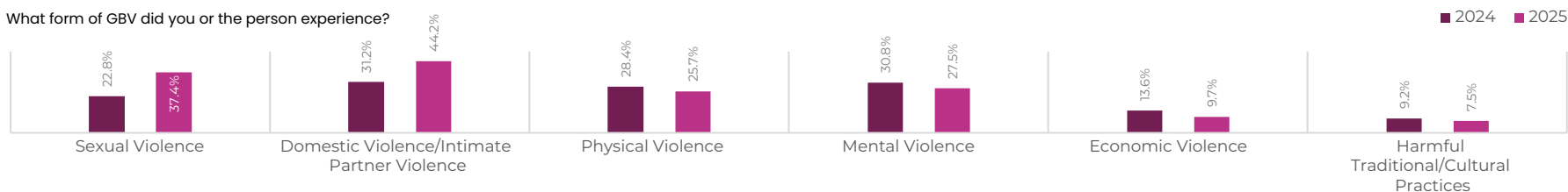
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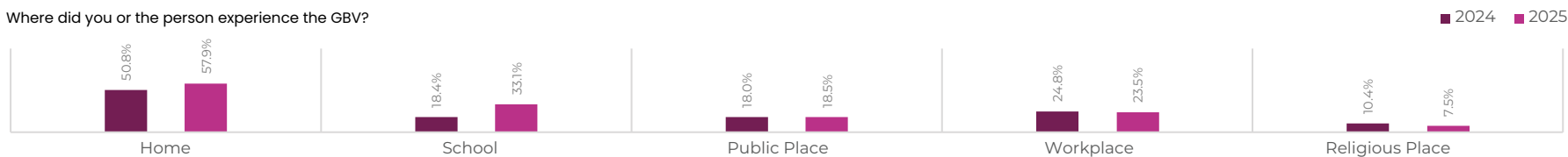
48.8%

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

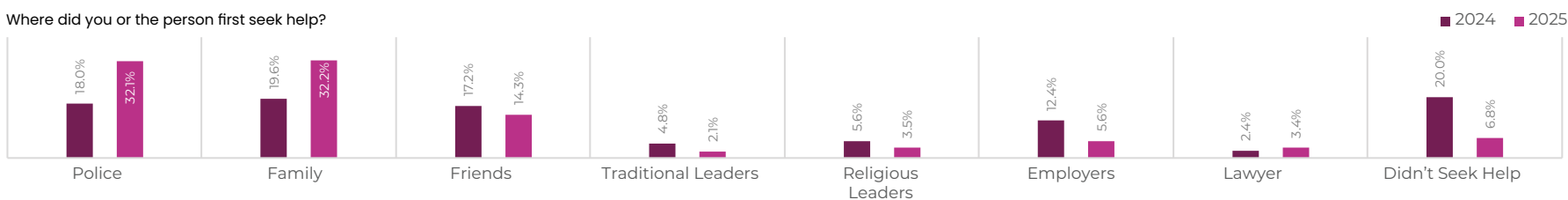
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



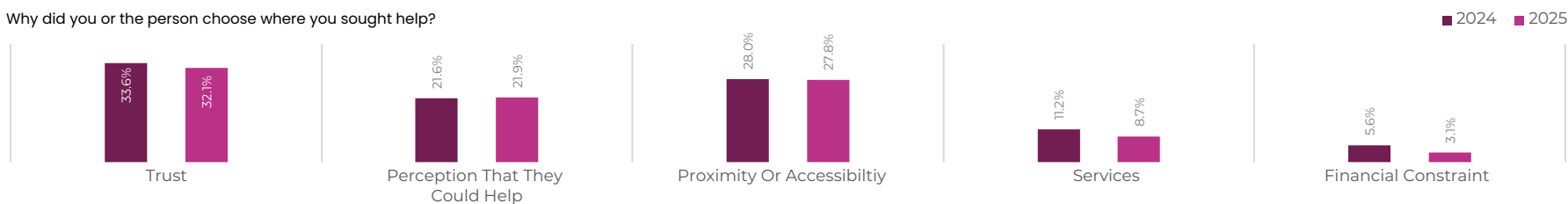
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?

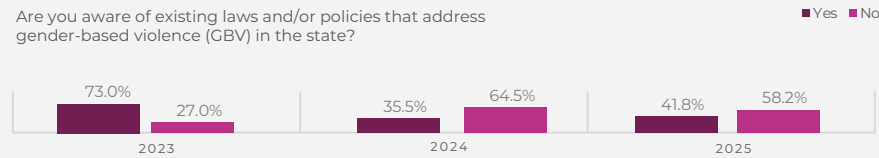


Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?

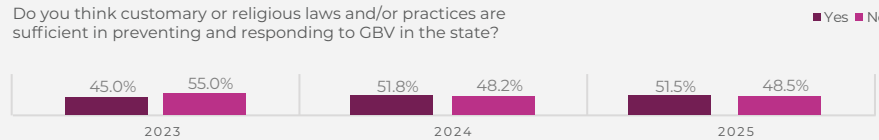


LAWS AND POLICIES

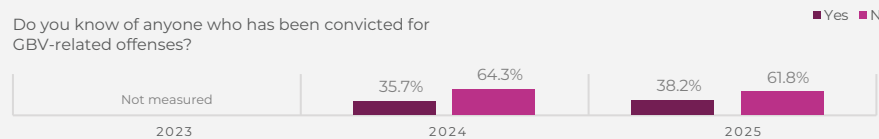
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

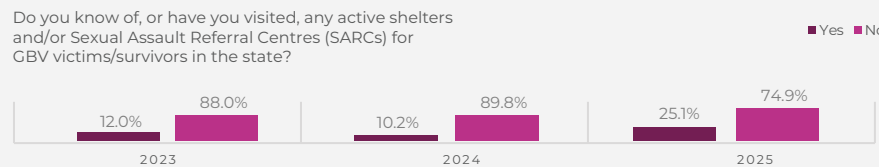


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

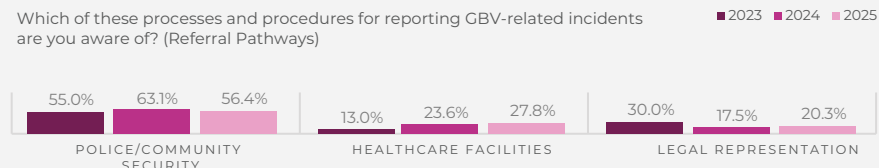


SUPPORT SERVICES

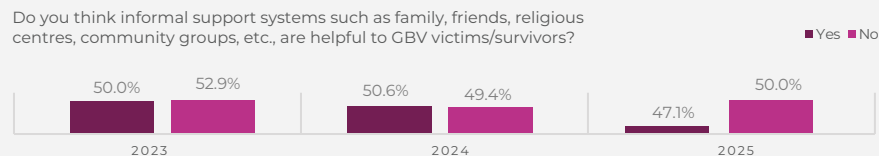
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

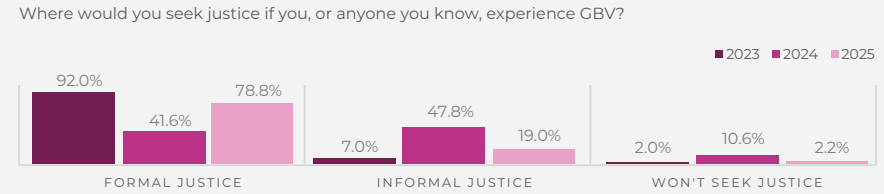


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

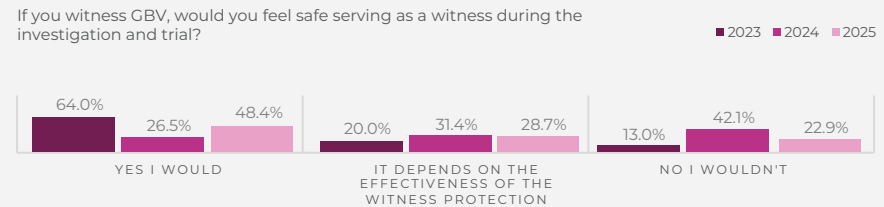


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

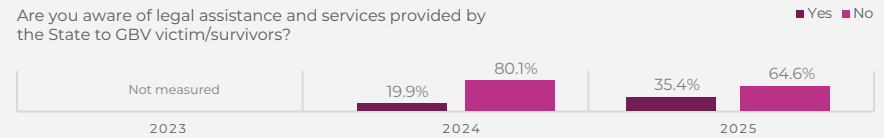
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

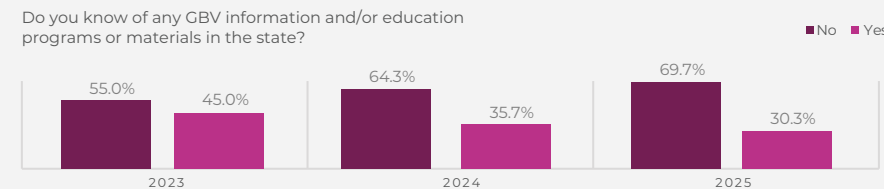


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

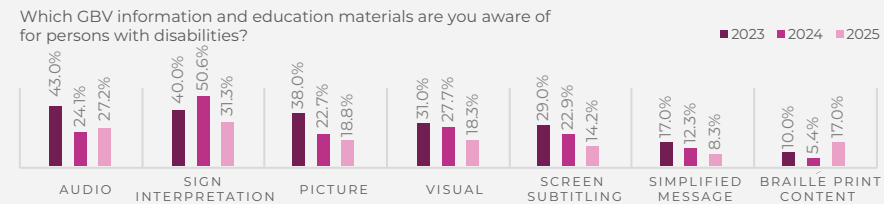


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

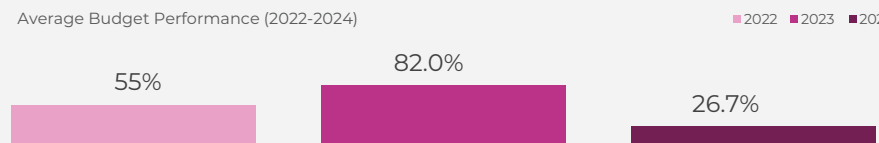


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

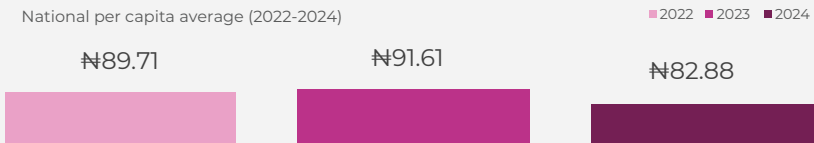


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Oyo State has established a foundational legal framework to combat gender-based violence (GBV), anchored by the VAPP Law (2020), which was adapted to reflect the state's socio-cultural realities. Officials from the state confirmed there has been no structured annual review since enactment, neither has there been any law that fully covers all human rights violations, aside the VAPP law. Stakeholders could not provide specific conviction data for the past 12 months. Also, harmful customary and religious practices, such as female mutilation and harmful widowhood practices, continue to undermine formal legal frameworks despite being outlawed, as confirmed by the FIDA representative.

Awareness of existing GBV laws and policies remains low. In 2025, only 41.8% of respondents reported being aware of such laws, while 58.2% were not. Half of respondents (51.5%) considered formal laws and policies effective in preventing or responding to GBV, while only 38.2% reported knowing anyone convicted for GBV-related offenses, pointing to a lack of visible justice outcomes. Awareness of customary and religious laws addressing GBV stood at 43.4%, with 51.5% of respondents believing these informal mechanisms help prevent or respond to GBV. While a Women Affairs officer observed that "traditional rulers often discourage formal reporting to protect family honour", a FIDA representative added that "most LGAs still rely on traditional reconciliation rather than prosecution," and that public knowledge of convictions is low due to poor information sharing between justice institutions and citizens.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV laws declined dramatically from 73.0% in 2023 to 41.8% in 2025. According to the Ministry of Justice, there is no annual public reporting on VAPP implementation, and advocacy for such a system has not been institutionalized. Another official further admitted that most awareness activities are driven by NGOs rather than government-led efforts. This limited government visibility partly explains the observed decline in citizen awareness and trust, even as the legal framework itself remains intact.

Belief in formal law effectiveness also dropped sharply from 92% in 2023 to 49.5% in 2025. Knowledge of convictions decreased from 63.6% in 2023 to 38% in 2025. Conversely, belief in customary and

religious laws increased from 45.5% in 2023 to 51.5% in 2025, suggesting a growing reliance on traditional justice mechanisms

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Access to legal justice in Oyo State presents a mixed picture of progress and persistent implementation gaps. Oyo State's family courts handle GBV-related cases, but the absence of dedicated GBV courts and judges, coupled with poor coordination between police and prosecutors, leads to significant delays. Additionally, stakeholders in the police note that inadequate training for personnel handling GBV cases exacerbates delays and survivor frustration. The FIDA Branch Secretary highlighted significant flaws in Oyo State's investigation process, noting that security agencies often make premature arrests without thorough investigations. This leads to weak evidence and poor litigation outcomes.

In 2025, 78.8% of respondents indicated they would seek justice through formal systems, suggesting growing trust in formal institutions. However, 19% of respondents preferred informal channels, and 2.2% said they would not seek justice at all, often citing fear of stigma, high costs, or lack of confidence in authorities, which are concerns echoed by FIDA officials who reported that "many survivors withdraw cases under family pressure or fear of community backlash."

Awareness of state-provided legal assistance services remains low, with only 35.4% of respondents aware of such support. Stakeholders confirm that legal aid services are largely centralized in Ibadan, leaving rural LGAs underserved, and that only a handful of lawyers cover the 33 LGAs of the state. This structural imbalance reinforces the low public awareness captured in the survey.

Furthermore, 48.4% of respondents said they would feel safe serving as witnesses, while 28.7% said their willingness depends on a reliable protection system. State officials consistently emphasized the lack of such structures, with one Ministry of Justice official admitting that "Oyo State currently has no formal witness protection program," a gap that discourages participation and undermines prosecution outcomes.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Access to justice for GBV survivors in Oyo State shows mixed progress between 2023 and 2025. The proportion of residents willing to pursue formal justice increased from 92.0% in 2023 to 78.8% in 2025, reflecting gradual improvements in institutional awareness and citizen confidence. Meanwhile, reliance on informal systems decreased from 47.8% in 2024 to 19 in 2025%, and the proportion

unwilling to seek justice remained low at 2.2%. Awareness of state-provided legal aid services increased slightly from 19.9% in 2024 to 35.4% in 2025, suggesting that the expansion of formal mechanisms is being matched by effective communication or coverage across LGAs. Willingness to serve as witnesses dropped from 64.0% in 2023 to 48.4% in 2025, indicating persistent concerns about security and witness protection.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Support services for GBV survivors in Oyo State remain limited and largely urban-centered. In 2025, only 25.1% of respondents knew of or had visited a SARC or shelter, while 74.9% had not. This low awareness aligns with stakeholder accounts. A SARC official confirmed, "this is the only SARC we have," referring to the Abiyamo Centre in Ibadan; the sole functional facility serving all 33 LGAs. A Women Affairs representative further explained that "the state has no government-run halfway home or safe shelter; existing ones are managed by NGOs," underscoring the scarcity of state-managed support infrastructure.

Nevertheless, among those aware of the SARC, 81.3% (45.1% agree, 36.2% strongly agree) believed the facilities were adequately functional and equipped. However, Ministry of Health officials cautioned that "referral mechanisms function better in urban LGAs but remain weak in rural communities," revealing uneven access across the state.

Awareness of other survivor support services such as medical, legal, psychosocial, or economic, stood at 30.3%, attributed to NGO-led awareness rather than structured government outreach, noting that information campaigns are concentrated around Ibadan and rarely extend to rural areas.

Regarding referral pathways, 56.4% of respondents were aware of police or community security routes, 27.8% of healthcare pathways, 20.3% of legal representation channels, and 16.2% of support group networks. The Ministry of Women Affairs and FIDA confirmed that while formal pathways exist, coordination remains weak, with many survivors relying on personal contacts within law enforcement or NGOs for referrals.

In addition, 47.1% of respondents felt that informal support systems were more effective than formal structures. Stakeholders echoed this perception, identifying the Child Protection Network and faith-based groups as key informal actors but noting that "coverage is inconsistent and depends on NGO partnerships." Both citizen and stakeholder evidence point to a narrow but functional service framework dominated by urban-based facilities, where limited funding, human resource shortages, and weak inter-agency coordination continue to constrain equitable access to survivor support services.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Oyo State recorded modest but uneven progress in strengthening GBV support services within this period. Awareness of active SARCs and shelters increased from 12.0% in 2023 to 25.1% in 2025, primarily due to radio and social media sensitization campaigns supported by NGOs. However, awareness of broader survivor support services declined from 45.5% to 30.3%, reflecting inconsistent

communication and limited coverage outside Ibadan.

Confidence in the effectiveness of existing SARCs and shelters remained strong among those aware (81.3%), yet overall access remains low, particularly in rural LGAs. Awareness of referral pathways improved moderately, with recognition of police/community security routes rising to 56.4%, healthcare pathways to 27.8%, and legal channels to 20.3%, though support group awareness remains low at 16.2%. These results are solely due to limited access to support services, funding delays and workforce shortages. Stakeholders accounted that funds allocated to SARC operations often face long release processes, staffing levels are inadequate, and social workers are overstretched.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Oyo State conducts periodic awareness activities in partnership with NGOs, especially during campaigns such as the 16 Days of Activism. A Ministry of Education official stated that "schools collaborate with CSOs to sensitize students on GBV," but acknowledged that "there is no structured or continuous curriculum." Awareness programs are irregular and mostly urban-focused, while media stakeholders emphasized that radio remains the most reliable tool for community sensitization.

Public awareness of GBV information and education programs in Oyo State remains relatively low. In 2025, only 30.3% of respondents were aware of GBV awareness campaigns or materials, while 69.7% were not. Among those informed, the main information sources included radio (48.3%), social media (31.2%), and television (20.5%), followed by newspapers (19%) and NGOs/CSOs (15.7%). Awareness through schools (8.1%), healthcare workers (5.2%), or religious centers (1%) was minimal, underscoring weak institutional engagement in GBV sensitization.

Of those exposed to GBV awareness materials, 42.1% found them mostly useful, 33.3% somewhat useful, and 21.7% completely useful, while only 2.9% found them not useful. A strong 86.3% of respondents supported integrating GBV and child sexual abuse education into school curricula, indicating high public demand for preventive education.

In terms of inclusivity, respondents reported using various disability-friendly formats to access GBV information. About 31.3% used sign interpretation, 27.2% relied on audio or spoken content, 18.8% engaged with picture-based messages, 17% accessed braille materials, and 14.2% used screen subtitling, while only 8.3% used simplified messages. Stakeholders explained that "accessible materials are mostly produced during major events and are not incorporated into regular awareness programs," underscoring that such channels are used primarily when available rather than as part of consistent outreach.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, Oyo State experienced a steady decline in public awareness of GBV information and education programs, despite improvements in content quality and public interest. Awareness dropped from 45.0% in 2023 to 30.3% in 2025, even though the proportion of respondents describing GBV information materials as "completely useful" increased from 7.4% to 21.7%, indicating that outreach has become more effective among smaller audiences. Support for integrating GBV

and child sexual abuse education in schools rose sharply to 86.3% in 2025, suggesting growing demand for preventive education despite limited government-led initiatives. Accessing disabilities-friendly materials also remained low, with sign interpretation (31.3%) and audio materials (27.2%) being the most accessible forms

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Oyo State's 2024 GBV budget performance highlights a disconnect between allocation and execution. Despite budgeting ₦1.61 billion for GBV initiatives (0.29% of total budget), the state spent only ₦429.90 million, achieving a 26.7% execution rate. This underperformance is particularly concerning for one of Nigeria's most populous states, as it resulted in a per capita spend of just ₦82.88, insufficient to provide comprehensive GBV services across the state's large population. The failure to utilize nearly three-quarters of allocated funds suggests structural impediments in the state's implementation framework, leaving significant resources untapped while GBV survivors likely faced limited access to essential support services.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Spending performance within Oyo State's Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Inclusion fluctuated across the three-year period. Actual spending amounted to ₦429.90 million in 2024 (₦199,950 CAPEX), ₦459.30 million in 2023 (₦18.50 million CAPEX), and ₦432.76 million in 2022 (₦329,869 CAPEX). These expenditures translated into budget performance rates of 26.7%, 82.0%, and 55.0% respectively. In 2024, Oyo State included one GBV-specific budget line: "Rehabilitation of Situation Room for Gender-Based Violence Data at Department of PR and MWA," with an allocation of ₦58.50 million. However, the project recorded 0% implementation. The state's persistently low capital budget implementation is reflected in its per capita spending, which stood at ₦82.88 in 2024, ₦91.61 in 2023, and ₦89.71 in 2022. Despite the slight fluctuation over the three years the values remain very low.

Human Angle Stories

Ajike Adeniji experienced sexual abuse between the ages of 10 and 12, when an evangelist named Isaac penetrated her. When church leaders discovered the abuse, they punished Ajike instead, further deepening her trauma and leading to depression and suicidal thoughts.

Years later, her uncle made an unwanted advance, but Ajike confronted him, showing her growth and awareness. For years, she remained silent, unaware that what happened to her was a crime and that she could seek justice. It wasn't until she shared her story in a support group that she began to heal.

Now an advocate, Ajike emphasizes the importance of laws and support for survivors. In Oyo State, there remains a critical lack of awareness about GBV laws, with many citizens uninformed about the issue.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	Public awareness of GBV laws and policies remains low (41.8%), with limited dissemination beyond urban centres.	Scale up community-based sensitization through radio, religious, and traditional structures, especially in rural LGAs.
	Implementation of the VAPP Law (2020) is partial — absence of annual reporting and enforcement gaps noted.	Institute an annual GBV law implementation report coordinated by the Ministry of Justice and Women Affairs.
	Weak public visibility of convictions (38.2%) reduces deterrence and trust in the justice system.	Improve communication of court outcomes via periodic media briefings, social media, public dashboards on GBV convictions, while adding them in sex offenders' register.
 Access to Legal Justice	Despite 79% preferring formal justice systems, low awareness of legal aid (35.4%) and weak witness protection deter reporting.	Expand the Legal Aid Council's outreach through LGA-level offices and fast-track a state witness protection framework.
	Case delays and lack of follow-up by invited parties weaken confidence in justice outcomes.	Strengthen follow-up mechanisms and introduce case tracking systems within GBV units to ensure accountability.
	Informal justice mechanisms remain influential (50.2%), often undermining survivor rights.	Establish structured partnerships with traditional/religious leaders for referral instead of settlement of GBV cases.
 Support Services	Only one SARC exists statewide (Abiyamo Centre in Ibadan), limiting access for rural survivors.	Decentralize GBV support services by creating satellite SARCs and shelters, such as within PHCs, and safe spaces in major senatorial zones.
	Awareness of the SARC and support services remains poor (25% and 30.3% respectively).	Increase visibility through coordinated public information drives and integration with community health campaigns.
	Staffing and funding for the SARC remain inadequate.	Prioritize budgetary allocation for SARC operations and recruitment of trained social workers and counsellors.
 Information and Awareness	Only 30.3% of respondents are aware of GBV information programs; outreach remains largely urban-focused.	Implement regular statewide GBV awareness campaigns targeting schools, markets, and workplaces, using local languages.
	Disability-inclusive communication remains low (e.g., only 17% aware of braille materials).	Develop inclusive GBV IEC materials in audio, pictorial, and braille formats to reach persons with disabilities.
	Inadequate coordination between ministries and CSOs leads to fragmented awareness efforts.	Create a GBV coordination team to align campaigns, information, and actions across MDAs and relevant partner organizations.
 Budget and Spending	Oyo State allocated ₦1.61 billion for GBV in 2024 but spent only 26.7%, resulting in ₦41.77 per capita. The GBV Situation Room rehabilitation project (₦58.50 million), and per capita spending remained below ₦100 for three consecutive years, far below the ₦1,000 minimum threshold.	Address chronic capital expenditure bottlenecks preventing fund utilization and prioritize completion of the GBV Situation Room for data management. Increase budget execution from 26.7% to at least 70% and raise per capita spending closer to the ₦1,000 benchmark to match population needs.



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