Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | Invictus AFRICA

Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response:

What Has Changed?



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BudgIT Foundation is a civic organization that uses creative technology to simplify public information, stimulating a community of active citizens and enabling their rights to demand accountability, institutional reforms, efficient service delivery, and equitable society. BudgIT Foundation's contributing team comprises Vahyala Kwaga, Oludamilola Onemano, Adejoke Akinbode, Oluwaseyi Adenuga, and Ibukun James.

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Definition of Terms

Terms	Definitions
Access to Legal Justice:	One of the five Womanity Index domains that assesses how easy, timely, and equitable it is for GBV survivors to access legal justice through effective reporting, prosecution, and enforcement processes that are free from discrimination and bureaucracy. It entails the existence of specialized GBV courts with trained officials, designated judges, accessible legal aid, effective witness protection, enforcement of court judgments, and the regular publication of a Sex Offenders' Register. The index also examines community-level informal justice systems, evaluating their overall effectiveness and alignment with justice principles.
Accessibility:	The ease with which survivors, especially those with disabilities or in remote areas, can reach GBV services, legal support, and justice mechanisms without physical, financial, or social barriers.
Advancing:	The highest performance category in the Womanity Index, represented by the color blue. States or indices in this category are making strong progress toward the aspirational target.
Budget Allocation:	The amount of money officially assigned or designated in a government budget for specific purposes, programs, or ministries. In the Womanity Index, this refers to funds earmarked for GBV prevention and response activities in annual state budgets.
Budget Performance:	The ratio of actual spending to budget allocation, expressed as a percentage. It measures how much of the allocated budget was actually released and spent during the fiscal year, indicating the government's effectiveness in translating financial commitments into action.
Budget and Spending:	One of the five Womanity Index domains that assesses specific budget lines and allocation to address GBV by the state's Ministry of Women Affairs, including actual release and spend as a percentage of the state's female population.
Conviction Rate:	The proportion of prosecuted GBV cases that result in convictions under a state's legal framework, demonstrating effective application of the law.
Customary Laws:	Traditional rules and practices that govern community behavior, often based on cultural norms and administered by traditional leaders. In the GBV context, these may include practices related to marriage, inheritance, and dispute resolution.
Domestication:	The process by which a federal law is adapted and adopted at the state level in Nigeria's federal system. States must pass their own versions of federal legislation for it to be enforceable within their jurisdiction.
Evolving:	A performance category in the Womanity Index, represented by the color amber. States or indices in this category are taking gradual steps toward improved performance in reaching the aspirational target.
Family Support Unit (FSU):	A specialized unit within police formations dedicated to handling cases involving domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, and other family-related offenses. FSUs provide survivor-centered support and coordinate with other agencies.
Gender-Based Violence (GBV):	ny harmful act directed against individuals based on their gender. This includes physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence, as well as threats, coercion, and deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.
GBV Courts:	Specialized courts or designated judges with specific training and jurisdiction to handle gender-based violence cases, aimed at expediting justice and providing trauma-informed approaches to survivors.
Informal Justice System:	Community-level mechanisms for resolving disputes and addressing grievances, typically administered by traditional, religious, or community leaders outside formal legal structures. These may include traditional councils, religious courts, and family mediation.
Informal Support Systems:	Non-institutional networks that provide assistance to GBV survivors, including family members, friends, neighbors, religious leaders, traditional leaders, and community groups. These systems operate outside formal service delivery structures.
Information and Awareness:	One of the five Womanity Index domains that assesses the regular provision and wide dissemination of clear, user-friendly, and equally accessible information, education, and communication (IEC) materials about GBV. It also assesses the availability and usage of a comprehensive sex education curriculum in schools in the state.
Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) Materials:	Educational resources designed to raise awareness and provide information about GBV, including flyers, posters, radio programs, social media content, and other communication tools aimed at diverse audiences.

Terms	Definitions
International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA):	A non-governmental organization that provides free legal services, advocacy, and support to women and children, particularly in cases of gender-based violence, discrimination, and human rights violations.
Laws and Policies:	One of the five Womanity Index domains that assesses the existence and quality of state laws and policies that criminalizes GBV, with regular reviews to remove provisions that inadvertently perpetuate GBV, while addressing harmful customary norms and socio-cultural practices that enable GBV.
Legal Aid:	Free or subsidized legal services provided to individuals who cannot afford legal representation, including consultation, court representation, and assistance with legal documentation. In Nigeria, legal aid is provided by government agencies, NGOs, and organizations like FIDA.
Per Capita Spending:	Total expenditure divided by the female population of a state, measuring investment per woman or girl. The Womanity Index uses this indicator to assess the adequacy of GBV-related spending relative to the population served.
Performing:	A performance category in the Womanity Index, represented by the color green. States or indices in this category are performing reasonably well, but gaps remain that hinder full achievement of the aspirational target.
Persons with Disabilities (PWDs):	Individuals with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments that may hinder their full and effective participation in society. The Womanity Index assesses whether GBV information and services are accessible to this population.
Referral Pathway:	A coordinated system that guides GBV survivors through various services and institutions, ensuring they receive comprehensive support including medical care, legal assistance, psychosocial support, and shelter. Effective pathways involve clear protocols and communication between service providers.
Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC):	A specialized facility that provides comprehensive, coordinated services to survivors of sexual violence, including medical examination, forensic evidence collection, psychosocial support, legal assistance, and referrals to additional services.
Shelter:	A safe accommodation facility for GBV survivors and their children, providing temporary housing, security, counseling, legal support, and assistance with economic empowerment and reintegration.
Struggling:	The lowest performance category in the Womanity Index, represented by the color red. States or indices in this category are facing major challenges that prevent progress toward the aspirational target.
Support Services:	One of the five Womanity Index domains that assesses the availability of comprehensive support services—medical, mental health, legal, and economic—for all GBV survivors, provided through state-run SARCs and/or shelters that are governed by Standard Operating Procedures, including being accessible across the state and proportionate to the state's population. The index also assesses the presence of user-friendly, subnational-level reporting and referral pathways, including strengthening informal support networks.
Survivor:	A person who has experienced gender-based violence. The term "survivor" rather than "victim" is used to emphasize agency, resilience, and the ongoing journey toward recovery, while avoiding language that may be disempowering.
Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act:	Federal legislation enacted in 2015 that criminalizes various forms of violence including domestic violence, sexual assault, harmful traditional practices, and other forms of violence against persons. States are expected to domesticate (adapt and adopt) this law at the subnational level.
Witness Protection:	Legal and practical measures to ensure the safety of individuals who testify in GBV cases, protecting them from intimidation, harassment, or harm. Weak witness protection mechanisms reduce survivors' willingness to engage with formal justice systems.
Womanity Index:	An annual assessment tool produced by Invictus Africa that measures how well state governments across Nigeria are preventing and responding to gender-based violence, using 18 indicators organized under five domains: Laws and Policies, Access to Legal Justice, Support Services, Information and Awareness, and Budget and Spending.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AGILE	Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment
CCT	Central Coordinating Team
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CSA	Child Sexual Abuse
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FIDA	International Federation of Women Lawyers
FSU	Family Support Unit
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
IEC	Information, Education, and Communication
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
JONAPWD	Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGA	Local Government Area
MDA	Ministries, Departments, and Agencies
MoWA	Ministry of Women Affairs
NAPTIP	National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons
NBA	Nigeria Bar Association
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NPF	Nigerian Police Force
PADVL	Protection Against Domestic Violence Law
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SRC	State Research Consultant
URPRP	Unified Response Protocol and Referral Pathway
VAPP	Violence Against Persons Prohibition



Executive

Summary

About the Womanity Index

The Womanity Index is an annual assessment tool that measures how well state governments across Nigeria are preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV). The Index evaluates all 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) using 18 indicators organized under five key indices: Laws and Policies, Access to Legal Justice, Support Services, Information and Awareness, and Budget and Spending. Each state receives a score that places it into one of four colour-coded performance categories: Advancing (blue), Performing (green), Evolving (amber), or Struggling (red). This scoring system allows for clear comparison across states and helps identify where improvements are most needed.

The 2025 Womanity Index is based on data from 40,111 survey respondents across 399 (51.6%) out of the 774 Local Government Area (LGAs), and 321 interviews with government officials, service providers, and GBV stakeholders, complemented by reviews of policy documents and budget data. The Womanity Index 2025 is the third edition, enabling tracking progress and setbacks over time. By providing evidence-based insights into state-level GBV systems, the Womanity Index serves as both an accountability tool for government actions and a resource for advocacy, policy reform, and targeted interventions.

What Happened in 2025

The Scale of GBV in Nigeria

The 2025 assessment reveals that GBV remains a pervasive reality across Nigeria. Three in five Nigerians (59%) have either experienced GBV themselves or know someone who has. GBV rates vary significantly across states. Eight states report rates above 70%: Lagos (99%), Kwara (96%), Plateau (89%), Enugu (85%), Zamfara (83%), Nasarawa (76%), Ogun (74%), and Sokoto (73%). Regional patterns show northern states averaging 64% compared to 54% in southern regions, with the North Central zone leading at 71%, followed by North West (61%) and North East (60%).

Domestic or intimate partner violence remain the most common form of GBV in Nigeria, affecting 51% of those who report GBV experiences. This is followed closely by physical violence (44%), sexual violence (36%), and psychological or mental violence (36%). Physical, emotional, and sexual violence often occur together, creating compounded trauma that requires comprehensive, multi-faceted support.

The home remains the primary site of violence in Nigeria: three out of every four (76%) GBV incidents occur in domestic settings. Beyond the home, violence follows Nigerians into every aspect of daily life: 29% experience it in public places such as markets, parties, and streets; 25% in schools; and 20.3% in workplaces.

When seeking help, survivors face difficult choices about whom to trust. They are approximately twice as likely to turn to informal sources such as family (34%), friends or neighbours (10%), employers or colleagues (3%), and religious or traditional leaders (9%), with a combined total of 61%, compared to formal institutions like the police (34%). Notably, only 3% of survivors reported not seeking help at all. Trust emerges as the primary factor influencing these decisions: 40% of survivors choose where to seek help first based on trust in the person or institution. Other considerations include perceived effectiveness (24%), proximity or accessibility (16%), the range of services available (14%), and financial constraints (3%).

These patterns reveal both the scale of the challenge and the critical importance of building accessible and effective GBV response systems. Equally vital is sustained investment in prevention. The findings that follow assess how well Nigerian states are meeting this dual responsibility.

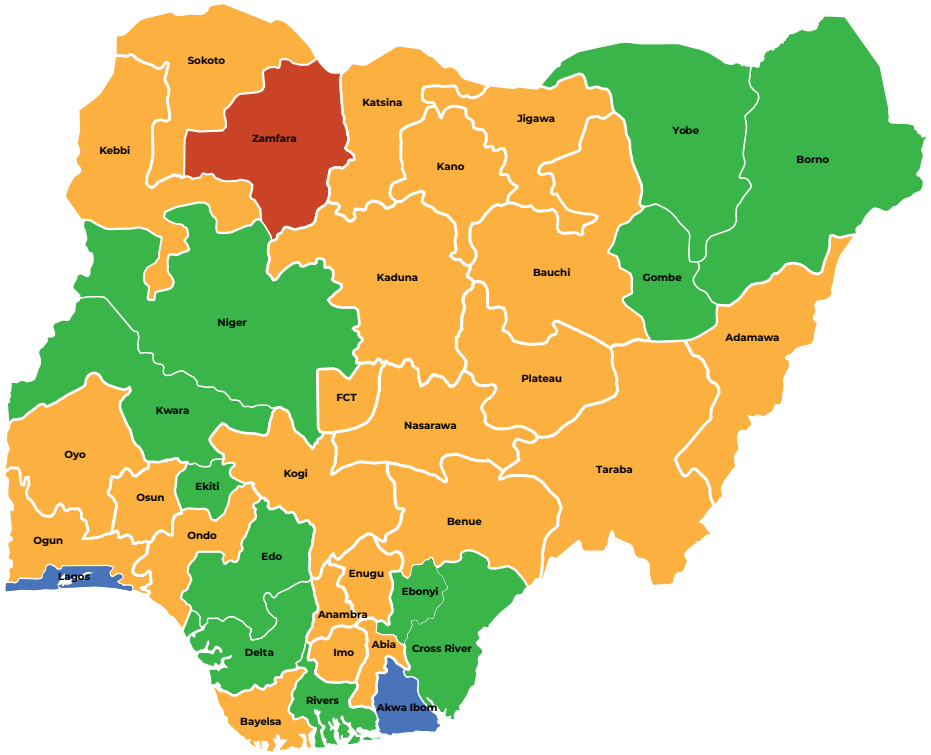
State Grades and Rankings

The 2025 Womanity Index reveals significant variation in how Nigerian states are addressing GBV. Of the 36 states and FCT assessed, only two states achieved the advancing category (blue): Lagos and Akwa Ibom, ranking first and second on the index, scoring a cumulative score of 91.2% and 80.0%, respectively. Despite gaps in these two states, when compared with others, they demonstrated comprehensive and effective GBV prevention and response systems.

Thirteen states attained performing (green) status, indicating strong but improvable frameworks. These states include Kwara, ranked 4th (69.6%); Cross River, 5th (68.8%); Borno and Yobe, both 6th (67.5%); Niger, 7th (67.1%); Edo and Delta, tied at 8th (66.3%); Ebonyi and Bayelsa, sharing 9th place (65.8%); and Gombe, Ogun, and Rivers, all ranked 10th (65.0%).

The majority of states, 21 in total, were classified as evolving (amber). These states have established basic GBV systems but face substantial gaps in implementation, accessibility, and effectiveness. At the bottom of the rankings, Zamfara was the only state in the struggling (red) category, ranked 27th with a score of 47.5%. This low score points to major gaps in GBV prevention and response, and highlights the urgent need for stronger policies, better services, and more support for survivors.

2025 Womanity Index Overall Grade



Performance Across the Five Indices

State performance in the Laws and Policies domain was relatively strong compared to other indices. Lagos was the only state classified as advancing (blue), with a score of 91.7%. Twenty-two states were classified as performing (green), led by Akwa Ibom, Edo, Ekiti, and Kebbi, each scoring 83.3%. The remaining fourteen states fell into the evolving category (amber), and no state was classified as struggling (red).

Access to legal justice remains one of the most challenging areas, with no state reaching advancing (blue) status. Only seven states (Lagos, Ekiti, Cross River, Ebonyi, Edo, Kwara, and Plateau) performed well (green), scoring above 75%. Twenty-eight states fell into the evolving (amber) category, with scores between 50% and 75%. Zamfara and Anambra were the only states classified as struggling (red), both scoring 43.8%.

Support Services showed the weakest performance across all domains. No state reached the advancing category, but four states, Lagos (93.8%), Akwa Ibom, Cross River, and Gombe (all 75.0%), achieved the performing (green) status. Most states (25) were classified as evolving (amber), with scores ranging between 50% and 74.9%, while eight states: Abia, Anambra, Bayelsa, Imo, Katsina, Kebbi, Kogi, and Oyo, scored 43.8% and were classified as struggling (red).

Information and Awareness showed relatively better performance, with eight states achieving performing status: Lagos (93.8%), Kwara (93.8%), Adamawa (87.5%), Akwa Ibom and Ebonyi (81.3% each), and Gombe, FCT, and Ekiti (75.0% each). The majority, 25 states in total, were classified as evolving (amber), while four states were classified as struggling (red): Nasarawa and Zamfara scored 43.8%, while Jigawa and Kogi recorded the lowest at 37.5%.

The budget and spending domain for each edition of Womanity Index is based on the preceding fiscal year's budget. Accordingly, the 2025 assessment relies on the 2024 budget documents for each state. The analysis shows two states (Akwa Ibom and Bayelsa) as advancing (blue), and eleven states as performing (green). With twenty states falling within the evolving (amber) category, four states are struggling (red). For the third consecutive year, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) could not be assessed because its disaggregated budget documents were unavailable.

2025 Womanity Index Grades



Rank	State	Overall Grade	Laws and Policies	Access to Legal Justice	Support Services	Information and Awareness	Budget and Spending
1st	Lagos	91.3%	91.7%	93.8%	93.8%	93.8%	83.3%
2nd	Akwa Ibom	80.0%	83.3%	68.8%	75.0%	81.3%	91.7%
3rd	Ekiti	72.1%	83.3%	81.3%	62.5%	75.0%	58.3%
4th	Kwara	69.6%	58.3%	75.0%	62.5%	93.8%	58.3%
5th	Cross River	68.8%	75.0%	81.3%	75.0%	62.5%	50.0%
6th	Borno	67.5%	75.0%	62.5%	68.8%	56.3%	75.0%
6th	Yobe	67.5%	75.0%	62.5%	68.8%	56.3%	75.0%
7th	Niger	67.1%	75.0%	62.5%	62.5%	68.8%	66.7%
8th	Edo	66.3%	83.3%	75.0%	62.5%	68.8%	41.7%
8th	Delta	66.3%	75.0%	56.3%	56.3%	68.7%	75.0%
9th	Ebonyi	65.8%	66.7%	81.3%	50.0%	81.3%	50.0%
9th	Bayelsa	65.8%	75.0%	62.5%	43.8%	56.3%	91.7%
10th	Rivers	65.0%	75.0%	68.8%	62.5%	68.8%	50.0%
10th	Gombe	65.0%	75.0%	68.8%	75.0%	75.0%	25.0%
10th	Ogun	65.0%	66.7%	56.3%	62.5%	56.3%	83.3%
11th	Sokoto	63.3%	58.3%	62.5%	68.8%	68.8%	58.3%
12th	Kaduna	62.1%	66.7%	62.5%	62.5%	68.8%	50.0%
12th	Ondo	62.1%	66.7%	68.8%	56.3%	68.8%	50.0%
13th	Jigawa	60.8%	75.0%	56.3%	68.8%	37.5%	66.7%
13th	Enugu	60.8%	50.0%	56.3%	62.5%	68.8%	66.7%
14th	Bauchi	58.8%	58.3%	50.0%	50.0%	68.8%	66.7%
14th	Adamawa	58.8%	50.0%	50.0%	56.3%	87.5%	50.0%
15th	Osun	58.3%	58.3%	56.3%	56.3%	62.5%	58.3%
16th	Kebbi	57.9%	83.3%	50.0%	43.8%	62.5%	50.0%
17th	Plateau	57.1%	58.3%	75.0%	56.3%	62.5%	33.3%
18th	Taraba	56.7%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	83.3%
19th	FCT	55.8%	66.7%	68.8%	68.8%	75.0%	
20th	Kano	55.0%	50.0%	62.5%	50.0%	62.5%	50.0%
21st	Kogi	54.6%	75.0%	50.0%	43.8%	37.5%	66.7%
22nd	Benue	54.2%	58.3%	62.5%	62.5%	62.5%	25.0%
23rd	Anambra	53.3%	66.7%	43.8%	43.8%	62.5%	50.0%
24th	Abia	52.9%	58.3%	56.3%	43.8%	56.3%	50.0%
25th	Nasarawa	52.1%	66.7%	50.0%	50.0%	43.8%	50.0%
26th	Katsina	50.0%	66.7%	56.3%	43.8%	56.3%	25.0%
26th	Oyo	50.0%	41.7%	50.0%	43.8%	62.5%	50.0%
26th	Imo	50.0%	41.7%	62.5%	43.8%	50.0%	50.0%
27th	Zamfara	47.5%	50.0%	43.8%	50.0%	43.8%	50.0%

Key Findings

Laws and Policies

The VAPP Act remains the main legal framework for addressing GBV in Nigeria, often supported by the Child's Right Law. Most state-level VAPP laws closely follow the federal VAPP Act of 2015, with several states introducing context-specific additions. However, only a few states have translated the law into indigenous languages or developed simplified versions, leaving many citizens with limited knowledge of its provisions. According to the 2025 Womanity Index survey, 49% of Nigerians are unaware of existing GBV laws and policies in their state. This lack of awareness is widespread, ranging from 42% in the North East to 55% in the South East.

Two states (Lagos and Kano) have yet to domesticate the VAPP Act. In Lagos, key GBV provisions are provided in related laws and policies, such as the Protection Against Domestic Violence Law (PADVL), 2007 (which preceded the VAPP Act) and the Unified Response Protocol and Referral Pathway (URPRP). In Kano, GBV cases are prosecuted under the Northern Nigerian Penal Code and Shari'a Law through Shari'a Courts. Advocacy for the domestication of the VAPP Act in Kano is ongoing.

Despite 59% of Nigerians reporting direct or indirect experiences with GBV, 63% have never heard of anyone being convicted for such offenses. This disconnect reflects both weak public communication around enforcement and low conviction rates. Only 14 states recorded at least 15 GBV-related convictions under the VAPP or similar laws in the past year. Nine states recorded between 10 and 15 convictions; five states had between five and ten, and nine states recorded fewer than five convictions. Many states were unable to provide exact figures, offering only estimates or conflicting data from different ministries. In several cases, data was fragmented, with different MDAs providing figures based only on the cases they were aware of. These gaps underscore the need to improve data collection, coordination, and transparency across all relevant institutions. Poor communication of enforcement outcomes can weaken public trust in the justice system.

Customary and religious laws continue to shape community responses to GBV in Nigeria. Public trust in informal systems remains high, as 61% of Nigerians believe customary and religious laws are sufficient for addressing GBV, up from 39% in 2024. Preference for these informal laws and practices is highest in the Northeast (70%), followed by North Central and Northwest (66% each), and lowest in the Southwest, particularly Lagos (38%) and Osun (26%). Key informant interviews revealed ongoing negative GBV-related informal practices such as early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation, monetary settlements for sexual assault, and pressure on survivors to marry perpetrators. However, many states are actively working to address these practices through sensitization and engagement with religious and traditional leaders.

Access to Legal Justice

Nearly all states demonstrated functional reporting and prosecution systems, with Lagos and Kwara standing out for strong enforcement practices. Survivors typically undergo a structured process that includes submitting petitions, receiving medical assessments, and engaging with police through the Family Support Unit (FSU), which ultimately leads to prosecution. However, enforcement faces several obstacles: slow bureaucratic procedures, inadequate funding, external pressures on survivors to withdraw cases, police bureaucracy and corruption, insufficient personnel to manage the growing caseload, and weak witness protection mechanisms.

The 2025 assessment found legal aid services available in all states and the FCT through multiple channels, including legal aid offices, human rights offices, FIDA, offices of the public defender, and various NGOs. However, coverage and geographic accessibility remain significant challenges. In many states, services are concentrated in capital cities and urban areas, leaving rural communities underserved. Only seven states demonstrated extensive coverage across LGAs: Akwa Ibom, Ebonyi, Cross River, Kwara, Lagos, Niger, and Ondo. States with severely limited geographic spread include Adamawa, Anambra, Bauchi, Kebbi, Kogi, and Oyo. This accessibility gap is reflected in survey findings showing that 59% of Nigerians are unaware of state-level legal support, with only 41% aware of available services.

Access to justice for GBV survivors remains constrained by inadequate specialized structures across the country. Only five states, Cross River, Ebonyi, Ekiti, Lagos, and Plateau, have FSUs or Human Rights Desks in all police commands or divisions, as well as designated GBV courts or judges. In 20 states, FSUs or Human Rights Desks exist in only some police formations. The remaining 12 states have yet to establish designated GBV courts or judges, with cases handled within general court systems. This often results in delayed justice and places additional strain on survivors.

Trust in the formal justice system is fragile. Only 55% of Nigerians feel safe engaging with formal justice mechanisms as witnesses in GBV cases. The remaining 45% are either unwilling to participate at all (20%) or would only do so if witness protection is available (25%). This limited confidence is further complicated by reliance on both formal and informal justice systems. While 68% of Nigerians prefer formal justice for GBV cases, 56% simultaneously believe traditional and religious institutions help survivors obtain justice. Informal systems are perceived as faster and more accessible in some areas, particularly where cultural norms discourage reporting to formal authorities. Stakeholders have expressed concern about the effectiveness of these community-based solutions. Without better coordination and oversight, informal systems may continue to operate in ways that reduce accountability and protection for survivors.

Support Services

The 2025 assessment revealed a severe shortage of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) and shelters across Nigeria's 36 states and the FCT. No state recorded at least one active SARC or shelter in all LGAs. In many states, these critical facilities are either concentrated in single locations, primarily at state capitals, available but non-functional, or completely absent (as in Abia and Kogi). This scarcity means many survivors cannot access medical care, psychosocial support, or economic support services. The situation is further compounded by poor public visibility, with only 27% of Nigerians aware of or having visited an active shelter or SARC.

Only 18 states have established relatively structured and coordinated GBV reporting and referral pathways involving multiple stakeholders, including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Nigerian Police Force, NGOs, and partner agencies. However, knowledge of these pathways remains uneven across the country, particularly in rural communities. While police or community security is the most familiar reporting pathway for GBV (65%), less than half of respondents are aware of hospital-based reporting (41%). Pathways involving support groups (18%) and legal options (17%) are poorly known. Meanwhile, 12% say they are not aware of any pathway, meaning they would not know where to go if they experienced GBV. In the remaining states, GBV reporting and referral pathways are mostly fragmented or lack formal documentation and coordination.

Qualitative findings show that informal support systems offer mixed outcomes for GBV survivors. While present in all states and the FCT, none were found to be holistic, and some are plagued by stigma and harmful cultural practices that hinder effective intervention. This is reflected in survey findings, with fewer Nigerians expressing preference for informal support systems in 2025 (45%) compared to formal ones, down from 52% in 2024 and 67% in 2023. This trend suggests that while informal practices remain widely accepted, many Nigerians are beginning to recognize that informal support systems such as help from family, friends, religious and traditional institutions often lack the structure, accountability, and comprehensiveness required for survivors' long-term recovery. This underscores the growing need to increase access to formal, professional, and structured care.

Information and Awareness

All Nigerian states and the FCT have undertaken efforts to address GBV through sensitization and awareness programs delivered via radio, flyers, social media, outreaches, and public campaigns. These initiatives reach diverse audiences through churches, mosques, markets, schools, community groups, and media platforms. In 29 states, these initiatives achieved over 85% coverage of LGAs.

Despite these efforts, a critical gap persists between program implementation and public impact. Survey data shows that 59% of Nigerians remain unaware of GBV education and awareness campaigns. Only three states have more than 70% of residents who have seen GBV information programs: Yobe (80%), Zamfara (80%), and Lagos (71%). This disconnect stems largely from the event-based nature of most programs: often one-off events tied to occasions such as the 16 Days of Activism, International Women's Day, or Children's Day, heavily concentrated in urban centers, and failing to reach rural communities where awareness is most needed.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and donor agencies play a pivotal role in driving GBV awareness, often filling critical gaps left by government-led efforts and serving as primary vehicles for developing and disseminating GBV information, education, and communication (IEC). While their contributions are invaluable, this has inadvertently fostered donor dependency, with many programs relying heavily on external funding and international partnerships. This concern materialized in 2025 when several major donor-funded GBV interventions concluded or were terminated. The withdrawal of key international support led to a marked decline in awareness activities across numerous states, threatening to reverse previous progress. This underscores the urgent need for a more decentralized, and government-owned approach that ensures continuity and deeper grassroots penetration.

The 2025 survey revealed strong public support for integrating GBV and child sexual abuse education into formal school curriculum, with 88.4% approval. However, most states have yet to develop a standardized curriculum or incorporate GBV education as a standalone subject. Instead, GBV topics are taught through Social Studies and Civic Education, state-level training manuals, and school clubs like Lagos' "King and Queens Clubs." States like Kano, Kwara, and Sokoto have integrated GBV prevention into the World Bank-supported Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment (AGILE) program, transforming occasional awareness sessions into structured programs reaching thousands of students.

While states have made efforts to promote disability inclusion using audio content, picture-based messages, sign interpretation, and including disability association representatives, other accessible formats remain significantly underutilized. Survey data shows only 12% of Nigerians are aware of braille-printed content, 12% of screen subtitling, and 14% of simplified messages. Stronger efforts are needed to ensure consistent and accessible messaging across all formats.

Budget and Spending

The 2024 budget year reflects notable improvements, particularly in the number of states providing GBV-specific budget lines. Thirty-one states included GBV-related line items in the budgets of relevant MDAs – an increase from the twenty-five captured in both the 2023 and 2022 budget

cycles. Across Nigeria's 36 state budgets for 2024, the average allocation to the Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA) is 0.60%. Only six states – Adamawa (1.6%), Borno (2.3%), Katsina (1.3%), Kebbi (1.4%), Ondo (1.5%), Sokoto (1.6%) – allocated at least 1% of their total budgets to their respective MoWAs, with Borno recording the highest figure at 2.3%. Thirty states allocated between 0.1% and 0.9% to their MoWAs. However, average budget performance of state MoWAs stands at 39%, while average per capita spending is ₦361.39.

When GBV-specific allocations and spending by relevant state MDAs are combined with MoWAs' figures, the national average GBV allocation rose slightly to 0.66% - a total of ₦120.22bn across the 36 states. However, actual spending remained very low at only ₦42.8bn (37.9%). Only three states (Delta, Lagos, Yobe) met or exceeded the 85% threshold required to be classified as advancing (blue) under the budget performance indicator of the Womanity Index. Nine performing (green) states achieved budget performance above 50% while six evolving (amber) states achieved between 30% and 50%.

Nigeria spent only ₦365.60 on each woman or girl for GBV prevention and response in 2024, compared with ₦310.89 in 2023 and ₦213.27 in 2022. Notably, the highest per capita GBV spending was recorded in Akwa Ibom (₦1,872.18) followed by Bayelsa (₦1,716.00); while the lowest was in Rivers (₦34.41) followed by Anambra (₦46.42). Consequently, in the 2025 Womanity Index, only three states (Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Taraba) are categorized as advancing (blue); two (Borno, Ogun) as performing (green); two (Lagos, Sokoto) as evolving (amber); and twenty-nine as struggling (red).

What Has Changed?

State Performance Trends: 2023–2025

Examining ranking changes from 2023 to 2025 reveal significant shifts in state commitment and capacity to address GBV, with some states demonstrating consistent progress while others have experienced notable declines.

Consistent Top Performers

Lagos maintained its position at the top of the Index for the third consecutive year, recording no change in rank from either 2024 or 2023. This sustained leadership reflects the state's continued investment in comprehensive GBV systems across all five domains. However, maintaining the number one position does not indicate perfection or warrant complacency: Lagos continues to demonstrate room for improvement, particularly in Budget and Spending where its per capita spending remains below the benchmark.

Akwa Ibom and Ekiti have similarly demonstrated consistent top-tier performance. Ekiti has remained within the top three since 2023, ranking 2nd in both 2023 and 2024, and 3rd in 2025. Akwa Ibom has also sustained a position in the top four throughout the three-year period, steadily rising from 4th to 2nd place. Notably, Akwa Ibom achieved advancing status in the Budget and Spending domain, recording the highest per capita GBV expenditure at ₦1,872.18.

Remarkable Upward Climbs

Several states demonstrated exceptional progress over the three-year period. Cross River achieved the most dramatic improvement, climbing 15 positions from its 2023 ranking to reach 5th place in 2025. This remarkable ascent, which included a 12-position jump from 2024 alone, indicates substantial reforms and investments in GBV prevention and response systems. Similarly, Gombe rose 13 positions since 2023, with an impressive 18-position leap from 2024. This improvement was reflected in both the information and awareness, and laws and policies indices.

Ebonyi improved by 12 positions overall, rising from 21st in 2023 to 9th in 2025. Jigawa climbed 11 positions since 2023, while Borno advanced 7 positions. Kwara's performance is noteworthy, jumping 8 positions from 2023 and 4 positions from 2024 to reach 4th place nationally.

Other states showing consistent improvement include Niger (up 10 positions from 2023), Kebbi (up 10 positions from 2023), Bayelsa (up 10 positions from 2024), Sokoto (up 9 positions from 2024), Plateau (up 8 positions from 2024), and Bauchi (up 8 positions from 2024).

Concerning Downward Slopes

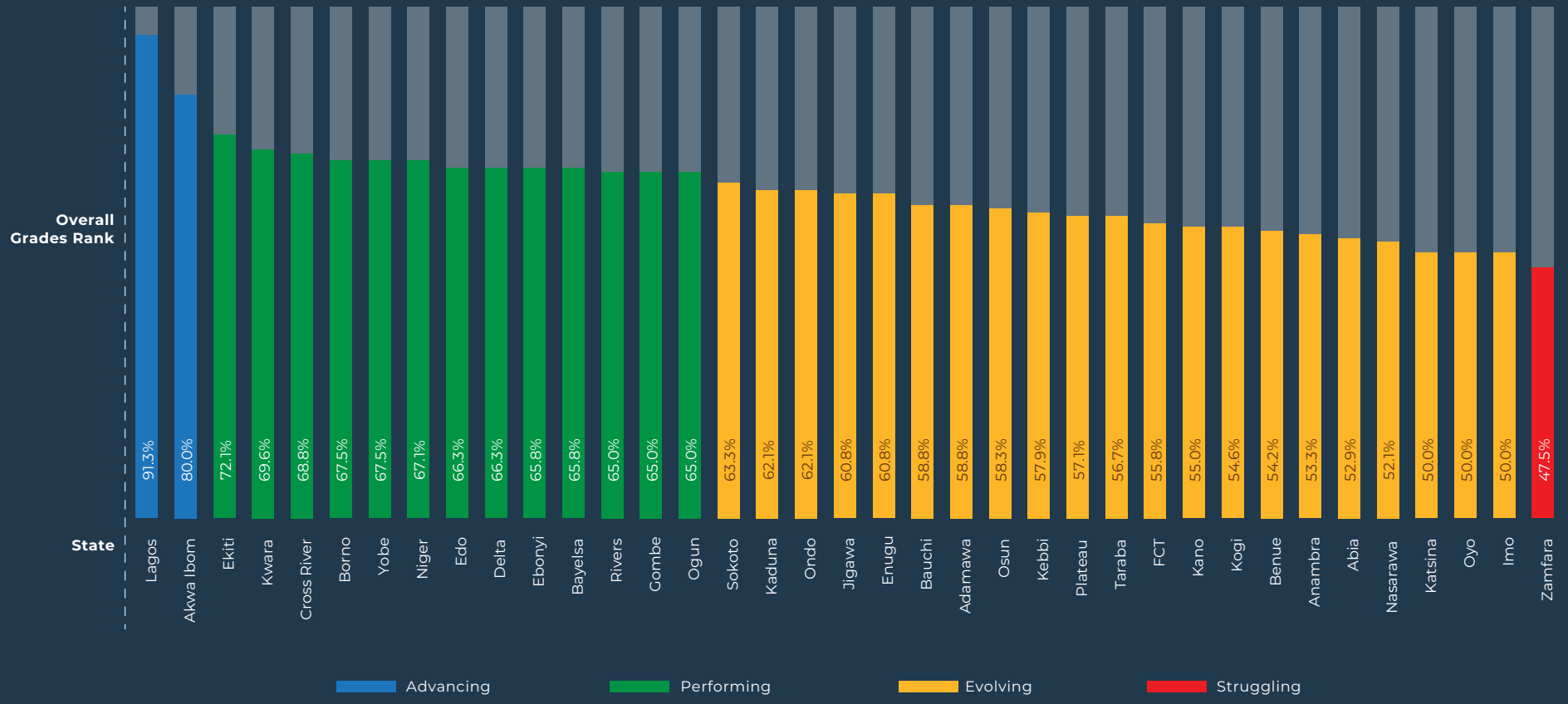
Anambra declined 14 positions from 2023, dropping from 9th to 23rd place. Abia similarly fell 14 positions, declining from 10th in 2023 to 24th in 2025. The FCT experienced a 12-position drop from 2023, falling from 7th to 19th place. Oyo dropped 10 positions from 2023, while Nasarawa fell 9 positions, and Imo declined 8 positions. Rivers fell 7 positions from 2024, moving from 3rd to 10th place despite maintaining a relatively strong overall score of 65.0%, indicating that while the state's absolute performance remained reasonable, other states advanced more rapidly. These downward trends indicate that progress is not automatic and require sustained political will and investment. States that deprioritize GBV or fail to maintain existing systems can quickly lose ground.

Changes in Overall State Rankings (2023-2025)

State	2025 Overall Score	2025 Rank	Change in rank from 2024	Change in rank from 2023
Lagos	91.2%	1	0	0
Akwa Ibom	80.0%	2	2	1
Ekiti	72.1%	3	-1	-1
Kwara	69.6%	4	4	8
Cross River	68.8%	5	12	15
Borno	67.5%	6	11	7
Yobe	67.5%	6	1	7
Niger	67.1%	7	-2	10
Edo	66.3%	8	-3	-4
Delta	66.3%	8	-2	-3
Ebonyi	65.8%	9	2	12
Bayelsa	65.8%	9	10	-1
Gombe	65.0%	10	18	13
Ogun	65.0%	10	-3	-6
Rivers	65.0%	10	-7	-4
Sokoto	63.3%	11	9	-5
Kaduna	62.1%	12	0	7
Ondo	62.1%	12	-2	0
Enugu	60.8%	13	17	-1
Jigawa	60.8%	13	2	11
Adamawa	58.8%	14	-5	-3
Bauchi	58.8%	14	8	0
Osun	58.3%	15	3	1
Kebbi	57.9%	16	-2	10
Plateau	57.1%	17	8	5
Taraba	56.7%	18	3	-3
FCT	55.8%	19	12	-12
Kano	55.0%	20	6	3
Kogi	54.6%	21	-8	-5
Benue	54.2%	22	5	2
Anambra	53.3%	23	4	-14
Abia	52.9%	24	-8	-14
Nasarawa	52.1%	25	-1	-9
Imo	50.0%	26	-1	-8
Katsina	50.0%	26	-3	-1
Oyo	50.0%	26	1	-10
Zamfara	47.5%	27	2	-2

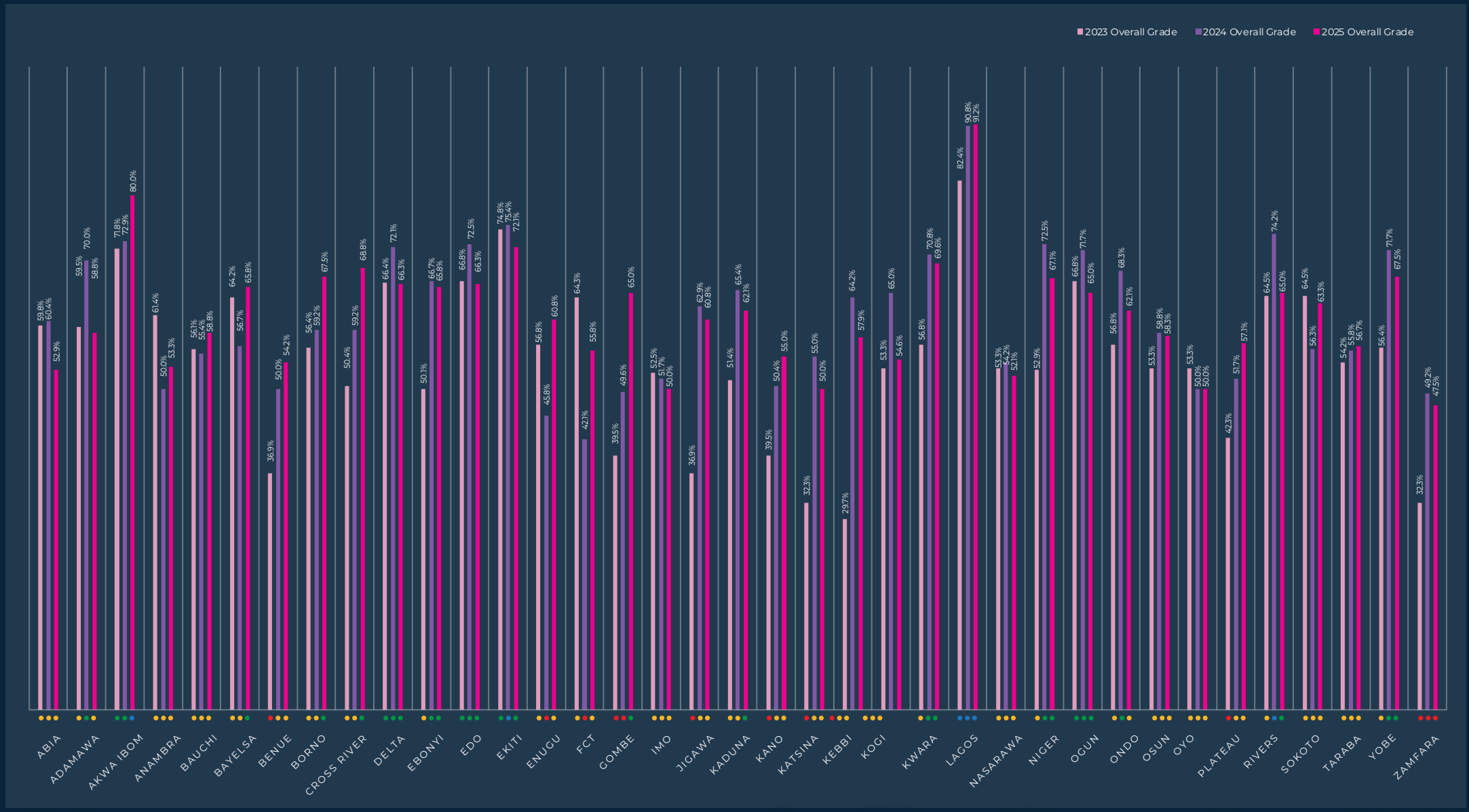
Womanity Index 2025

Overall Grades



Womanity Index 2025

Overall Grades Trend (2023 - 2025)



Key Data Trends: 2023–2025



GBV Context

GBV remains a persistent reality, with violence increasingly concentrated in the home.

3 in 5 Nigerians (59%) have either experienced GBV themselves or know someone who has – a figure consistent with 2024 (63%).

However, domestic violence has intensified: 76% of GBV incidents now occur in the home, up from 69% in 2024.



Laws and Policies

Efforts to educate Nigerians about GBV laws show promise but remain limited in reach, as trust in informal systems continues to rise.

Awareness of existing GBV laws and policies has dropped steadily: from 61% in 2023 to 58% in 2024 and just 51% in 2025.

This decline coincides with growing reliance on and preference for customary and religious laws, with 61% of Nigerians now believing these informal systems are sufficient for addressing GBV, up from 39% in 2024 and 48% in 2023.



Access to Legal Justice

Nigerians increasingly prefer formal justice, but fear for their safety remains a barrier.

The proportion of Nigerians unwilling to seek justice dropped from 5% in 2023 to just 2% in 2025, with formal systems like police and courts remaining the preferred channel (68% in 2025).

However, fear is growing: 25% would only testify in GBV cases if witness protection is available, up from 15% in 2023.



Support Services

Support service infrastructure remains plagued by severe shortages and poor visibility, despite growing public preference for formal support systems.

Awareness of SARCs and shelters has remained consistently low, with only slight fluctuations: 31% in 2023, 29% in 2024, and 26% in 2025.

Despite this, preference for informal support over structured professional care dropped sharply from 67% in 2023 to 45% in 2025, suggesting growing recognition of its limitations.



Information and Awareness

GBV awareness campaigns have suffered a decline following donor withdrawal.

In 2025, only 41% of Nigerians know of GBV information or education programs in their state, down from 52% in 2023 and 49% in 2024.

This decline coincides with the conclusion or termination of several major donor-funded interventions and highlights the fragility of awareness efforts built on external funding rather than sustained government commitment.



Budget and Spending

Budget allocations are increasing, but actual spending continues to lag far behind.

Nigeria's 36 states collectively allocated ₦120.22bn to GBV prevention and response in 2024, however, only 37.9% was actually spent, down from 51.5% in 2023 and 42.9% in 2022.

Average per capita spending for GBV prevention and response was ₦365.60 per woman or girl in 2024, a small rise from ₦310.89 in 2023 and ₦213.27 in 2022.

What Must Happen Next

While some states have demonstrated remarkable improvements, the majority continue to struggle with inadequate systems, limited resources, and weak implementation. Addressing these gaps requires coordinated action from multiple stakeholders. The following recommendations provide a roadmap for strengthening GBV prevention and response across all levels. While not exhaustive, they reflect the most critical priorities identified through the 2025 Womanity Index findings.

Government and Policymakers

1. The Kano State government should prioritize the domestication of the VAPP Act.
2. State governments should translate existing GBV laws into indigenous languages and develop simplified versions accessible to all citizens.
3. Establish unified data management systems that capture GBV cases across all relevant MDAs, ensuring consistency and accuracy. Mandate quarterly reporting on GBV statistics including cases reported, prosecuted, and convicted. Use this data to inform policy decisions and monitor progress.
4. Establish Family Support Units (FSUs) or Human Rights Desks in all police commands and divisions across the state. Create dedicated GBV courts and appoint specialized judges trained in trauma-informed approaches to handling GBV cases.
5. Expand legal aid services beyond state capitals to cover all LGAs, with a focus on rural and underserved communities.
6. Ensure at least one functional SARC or shelter exists in every LGA. Develop and implement coordinated GBV reporting and referral pathways involving the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education, Nigerian Police Force, and partner governmental and non-governmental institutions.
7. Implement multi-channel communication strategies using radio, television, social media, and community outreach to achieve consistent, widespread awareness across all LGAs. Move beyond event-based campaigns tied to commemorative occasions. Establish year-round, government-owned GBV education programs with dedicated budget lines and clear implementation plans.
8. Allocate at least 3% of total state budgets to Ministries of Women Affairs and ensure dedicated GBV budget lines exist across all relevant MDAs. Improve budget performance by ensuring timely release and utilization of funds and raise per capita GBV spending to a minimum of ₦1,000 per woman or girl.

Civil Society Organizations and Advocacy Groups

1. Use findings from the Womanity Index to engage state governments in targeted policy dialogue. Focus more advocacy efforts on evolving and struggling states, presenting specific, actionable recommendations tailored to their performance gaps.
2. Expand awareness campaigns and service delivery beyond state capital and urban areas. Develop community-based models that bring GBV support directly to rural areas where formal infrastructure is lacking.

Donors and Development Partners

1. Use the Womanity Index rankings to identify states requiring urgent support, particularly those in the struggling and evolving categories. Provide technical and financial assistance for establishing SARCs, training specialized personnel, and developing coordinated referral pathways. Focus resources on states demonstrating political will but lacking capacity.
2. Require rigorous impact assessments for all GBV programs, using data to inform future investments. Support the development of national and subnational GBV data systems that enable real-time tracking of interventions and outcomes. Fund research that identifies what works in the Nigerian context.

Leaders of Faith and Culture

1. Use your platforms in mosques, churches, community gatherings, and traditional councils to educate communities about GBV laws, and available support services. Ensure women and girls are aware of where to seek help.
2. Publicly denounce practices that normalize violence against women and girls such as forced marriages, female genital mutilation, etc. Reject pressure on survivors to withdraw cases, accept monetary settlements, or marry their abusers. Prioritize survivor safety and justice over family reputation or community harmony.

Media and Journalists

1. Move beyond incident reporting to educating the public by providing context about GBV laws, survivor rights, and available support services. Publish explainers on how to access legal aid, SARCs, and referral pathways. Use your platforms to challenge myths and misconceptions about GBV.
2. Use findings from the Womanity Index and similar assessments to hold governments accountable for their GBV commitments. Investigate and report on budget allocations versus actual spending, gaps between policy and implementation. Highlight both successes and failures to create healthy competition among states.

PART 1

Introduction



Understanding Womanity Index

Invictus Africa produces the annual Womanity Index, which uses a structured set of indices and indicators to assess how subnational governments perform in preventing and responding effectively to gender-based violence. Each state's performance is evaluated using 18 indicators, organized under five indices: Laws and Policies, Access to Legal Justice, Support Services, Information and Awareness, and Budget and Spending.

Each indicator is scored on a scale of 0 to 1. The score for each index is calculated by averaging the scores of its indicators, while the overall score is derived from the average of all five index scores. Both index and overall scores are converted to percentages, and performance bands are assigned based on these percentages:

Performance band	Color code	3-Indicator Indices	4-Indicator Indices	Overall Grade
Advancing	Blue	≥ 85%	≥ 95%	≥ 75%
Performing	Green	65% to < 85%	75% to < 95%	65% to < 75%
Evolving	Amber	35% to < 65%	50% to < 75%	50% to < 65%
Struggling	Red	< 35%	< 50%	< 50%

The five indices and 18 indicators for the Womanity Index are:

Index 1 – Laws and Policies

The Laws and Policies domain assesses how **robust and effective** state-level legal frameworks are in preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV). It examines whether states have robust laws and policies that criminalize GBV, whether these frameworks are periodically reviewed to reflect evolving GBV trends, and whether they address harmful customary or socio-cultural practices that enable violence.

This index is evaluated through three indicators:

LP_1 – ***Existence and comprehensiveness of GBV laws and policies:*** The state has laws that criminalize various forms of GBV and retain, strengthen, or improve the core components of the parent VAPP Act.

LP_2 – ***Conviction rate under GBV laws*:** The proportion of prosecuted cases that result in convictions under the state's core GBV legal framework, demonstrating effective application of the law.

LP_3 – ***Absence of harmful customary or religious laws or practices*:** No local provisions or practices exist that perpetuate GBV or undermine statutory protections.

The overall score for the Laws and Policies domain is calculated as:

$$\text{Laws and Policies Score} = \frac{LPS_1 + LPS_2 + LPS_3}{3}$$

Where:

- LPS_1 = Score for the existence and comprehensiveness of GBV laws and policies (0–1)
- LPS_2 = Score based on conviction rate under GBV laws (0–1)
- LPS_3 = Score for the non-existence of harmful customary and religious laws or practices (0–1)

Index 2 – Access to Legal Justice

The Access to Legal Justice domain assesses how **easy, timely, and equitable** it is for GBV survivors to access legal justice. It examines the effectiveness of state systems for reporting, prosecuting, and enforcing GBV-related cases, ensuring these processes are free from discrimination, undue bureaucracy, and barriers to access. The index also evaluates the functioning of community-level informal justice systems, ensuring they align with justice principles and do not perpetuate or exacerbate GBV.

This index is evaluated through four indicators:

- ALJ_1 **– Reporting, Prosecution, and Enforcement**: Effectiveness of the GBV reporting system, the prosecution process, and the enforcement of court judgments in the state.
- ALJ_2 **– Legal Aid Services**: Availability, accessibility, and functioning of legal aid services in all Local Government Areas (LGAs).
- ALJ_3 **– Dedicated GBV Units, Courts, and Judges**: Existence and functioning of specialized Family Support Units (FSUs), Gender Desks, or Human Rights Desks in all Police Commands or Divisions, as well as designated GBV courts and judges.
- ALJ_4 **– Informal Justice Practices**: Existence and impact of community-level informal justice mechanisms, ensuring they do not perpetuate or advance GBV or impede survivors' access to justice.

The overall score for the Access to Legal Justice domain is calculated as:

$$\text{Access to Legal Justice Score} = \frac{ALJ_1 + ALJ_2 + ALJ_3 + ALJ_4}{4}$$

Where:

- ALJ_1 = Score for Reporting, Prosecution, and Enforcement (0–1)
- ALJ_2 = Score for Legal Aid Services (0–1)
- ALJ_3 = Score for Dedicated GBV Units, Courts, and Judges (0–1)
- ALJ_4 = Score for Informal Justice Practices (0–1)

Index 3 – Support Services

The Support Services domain assesses how **available, accessible, and comprehensive** support systems are for GBV survivors. It examines state-run interventions, including medical, mental health, legal, and economic services, delivered through Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) and shelters, as well as subnational reporting and referral pathways and informal support networks. The domain evaluates whether these services adhere to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), are geographically accessible across the state, and are inclusive of all populations, including persons with disabilities.

This index is evaluated through four indicators:

- SS_1 – **Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) and Shelters:** Availability and functioning of government-run SARCs and/or shelters, ideally with at least one facility in every LGA.
- SS_2 – **GBV Reporting and Referral Pathways:** Existence and accessibility of user-friendly and inclusive reporting and referral pathways for GBV survivors.
- SS_3 – **Holistic Support Systems:** Existence and accessibility of holistic support services, including medical, psychosocial, legal, and economic assistance, for all GBV survivors.
- SS_4 – **Informal Support Practices:** Existence and functioning of informal support networks and mechanisms, ensuring they operate effectively and holistically, without perpetuating GBV or obstructing survivors' access to justice.

The overall score for the Support Services domain is calculated as:

$$\text{Support Services Score} = \frac{SS_1 + SS_2 + SS_3 + SS_4}{4}$$

Where:

- SS_1 = Score for SARCs and Shelters (0–1)
- SS_2 = Score for GBV Reporting and Referral Pathways (0–1)
- SS_3= Score for Survivor Support Services (0–1)
- SS_4= Score for Informal Support Services (0–1)

Index 4 – Information and Awareness

The Information and Awareness domain assesses how **consistent, accessible, and effective** state-level efforts are in providing and disseminating information, education, and communication (IEC) materials on gender-based violence. It examines how clearly, frequently, and inclusively states communicate GBV-related information to all populations, including pupils and students, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups. The domain also evaluates the integration and use of age-appropriate guides or curricula in schools to promote GBV awareness, prevention, and early reporting.

This index is evaluated through four indicators:

- IA_1 – ***GBV IEC Materials***: Availability and wide dissemination of robust, accurate, and user-friendly GBV IEC materials across the state.
- IA_2 – ***GBV and Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) Guide***: Existence and use of a guide or curriculum for educating pupils and students about GBV and CSA across all levels of education, including basic/primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions.
- IA_3 – ***Public Sensitization and Awareness***: Existence, frequency, and reach of public awareness initiatives or programs targeting all LGAs, including rural and urban areas, to sensitize communities about GBV.
- IA_4 – ***GBV Information for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and Marginalized Groups***: Availability and accessibility of GBV information for persons with disabilities and marginalized populations, provided through formats and mediums that facilitate understanding.

The overall score for the Information and Awareness domain is calculated as:

$$\text{Information and Awareness Score} = \frac{IA_1 + IA_2 + IA_3 + IA_4}{4}$$

Where:

- IA_1 = Score for GBV IEC Materials (0–1)
- IA_2 = Score for GBV and CSA Guide (0–1)
- IA_3 = Score for Public Sensitization and Awareness (0–1)
- IA_4 = Score for GBV Information for PWDs and Marginalized Groups (0–1)

Index 5 – Budget and Spending

The Budget and Spending domain is based on the preceding fiscal year's budget and assesses how committed and effective state governments are in financing GBV prevention and response through the budgeting and expenditure practices of the State Ministry of Women Affairs and other relevant ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs). It examines the extent to which financial commitments are not only provided for in annual budgets but also translated into actual spending that supports effective GBV prevention and response.

This index is evaluated through three indicators:

- BS_1 – **GBV Budget Lines**: Existence of dedicated budget lines or allocations specifically targeting GBV prevention and response across relevant MDAs.
- BS_2 – **Budget Performance:** Budget allocation and actual spending by the State Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA) and GBV-related MDAs in the previous fiscal year.
- BS_3 – **Per Capita Spending:** Per capita expenditure, measuring the MoWA and GBV-related MDAs' total actual spending relative to the female population of the state. Using the female

population as the denominator ensures the indicator reflects investment per woman or girl, consistent with the Ministry's primary mandate. By prioritizing actual expenditure rather than allocations, the index captures the degree to which fiscal commitments are converted into real, measurable action.

The overall score for the Budget and Spending domain is calculated as:

$$\text{Budget and Spending Score} = \frac{BS_1 + BS_2 + BS_3}{3}$$

Where:

- BS_1 = Score for Ministry budget allocation and actual expenditure (%) (0–1)
- BS_2 = Score for dedicated budget lines addressing GBV (0–1)
- BS_3 = Score for per capita spending relative to the female population (0–1)

Research Methodology

Team Structure and Roles

The Womanity Index 2025 was implemented through a three-tiered team structure to ensure consistency and quality across all 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The structure included the Central Coordinating Team (CCT), State Research Consultants (SRCs), and Field Enumerators.

At the national level, the CCT, composed primarily of members of the Data and Research Department and relevant staff of Invictus Africa, provided overall leadership and technical support. The CCT developed the research tools and sampling design, trained state teams, monitored data quality, ensured ethical standards, and offered real-time guidance throughout the process.

At the state level, SRCs served as the lead coordinators for all data collection and research activities in their respective states. Selected for their research experience and local knowledge, SRCs managed field logistics, trained and supervised enumerators, conducted interviews, ensured ethical data collection, and submitted weekly reports to the CCT.

At the field level, 263 Enumerators were recruited and trained by SRCs to administer the quantitative survey accross the 36 states and FCT. They were responsible for engaging with respondents, following sampling protocols, and ensuring accurate and credible data collection in line with ethical guidelines.

Study Design and Population

The Womanity Index 2025 employs a mixed-methods approach combining both quantitative and qualitative research to access GBV prevention and response across Nigeria's 36 states and the FCT. This design enables comprehensive evaluation from both demand-side (public experience and perception) and supply-side (institutional capacity and service delivery) perspectives.

The research engaged two distinct populations corresponding to the demand-side and supply-side components of the assessment. The quantitative study population, which comprises adults aged 18 years and above across all 36 states and the FCT. Participants include GBV survivors, their family members and friends, and members of the public. This population provides insights into community-level awareness, experiences, and perceptions of GBV prevention and response systems, capturing the lived realities of those most affected by and exposed to gender-based violence.

The qualitative methodology explores GBV prevention and response through the perspectives of key stakeholders, using Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). This is complemented by a review of policy documents, legal frameworks, approved budgets, and budget implementation reports, to assess institutional efforts. In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) with survivors and their close relations offer firsthand insights into lived experiences and service access. The diverse group of stakeholders engaged include:

Government officials from key Ministries, such as Women Affairs, Justice, Health, Education, Budget and Planning, and Information and Communication.
Law enforcement and legal institutions, including the Nigeria Police Force, Legal Aid Council, International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), and the judiciary.
Advocacy and support organizations, such as Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), and the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA).
GBV survivors and their close relations, who provide personal accounts that humanize the data and enrich the analysis with lived experience.

Sample Size

Quantitative Sample Size

To ensure state-level insights for evidence-based advocacy, the sample size was calculated independently for each of Nigeria's 36 states and the FCT. This approach supports granular analysis of GBV patterns, policy implementation, and service delivery across diverse contexts.

The calculation was based on a ±4% margin of error at a 95% confidence level, which required a minimum of 600 respondents per state. To account for clustering effects from the multi-stage sampling design, a design effect of 1.5 was applied, increasing the required sample to 900 respondents per state. To further mitigate potential nonresponses, the sample size was rounded up to 1,000 respondents per state, resulting in a target national sample of 37,000 respondents. During fieldwork, a total of 41,236 responses were collected nationwide. After data cleaning and validation, the final dataset comprised 40,111 valid responses. A detailed breakdown of respondents across selected LGAs and wards in each state is provided in the Appendix.

Qualitative Sample Size

The qualitative component was designed to include 10 KIIs per state, targeting representatives from key sectors including relevant government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs), law enforcement, legal institutions, advocacy groups, and civil society organizations. Additionally, at least one IDI with a GBV survivor or their close relation was planned per state.

While the target was 370 KIIs and 37 IDIs, actual implementation varied due to logistical constraints and stakeholder availability. In total, 321 KIIs and 37 IDIs were successfully completed nationwide. A state-by-state breakdown of KIIs conducted is provided in the Appendix.

Sampling Strategy

Quantitative Sampling

The quantitative component used a multi-stage stratified cluster sampling method that follows Nigeria's administrative structure. This strategy ensured representative coverage across all 36 states and the FCT, with proportional inclusion of urban and rural populations and demographic diversity in gender.

Sampling Stages

The multi-stage stratified cluster sampling followed four distinct stages:

- **Stage 1** – Senatorial District Selection: All three senatorial districts in each state were included (the FCT has only one). Each district was allocated approximately 333–334 respondents, ensuring equal distribution across districts.
- **Stage 2** – Local Government Area (LGA) Selection: LGAs were selected from each senatorial district using a stratified random sampling approach to ensure proportionate representation of both urban and rural areas. Selection criteria:
  - States with ≤4 LGAs: All LGAs included
  - States with 5–9 LGAs: Half of the LGAs (rounded up)
  - States with ≥10 LGAs: One-third of the LGAs (rounded up)
- The sample per LGA was calculated by dividing the senatorial district allocation by the number of selected LGAs.
- **Stage 3** – Ward Selection: One ward was randomly selected from each chosen LGA using simple random sampling. The full LGA allocation was assigned to the selected ward, ensuring focused data collection within manageable geographical boundaries.
- **Stage 4** – Individual Selection: Within selected wards, respondents were identified using the random walk method. The process aimed for 60–70% female respondents to reflect the disproportionate impact of GBV on women and girls, while also including male perspectives.

Qualitative Sampling

The qualitative component employed purposive sampling to select key informants with relevant expertise and decision-making authority in GBV prevention and response. Participants represented critical institutions and sectors involved in policy, service delivery, and advocacy.

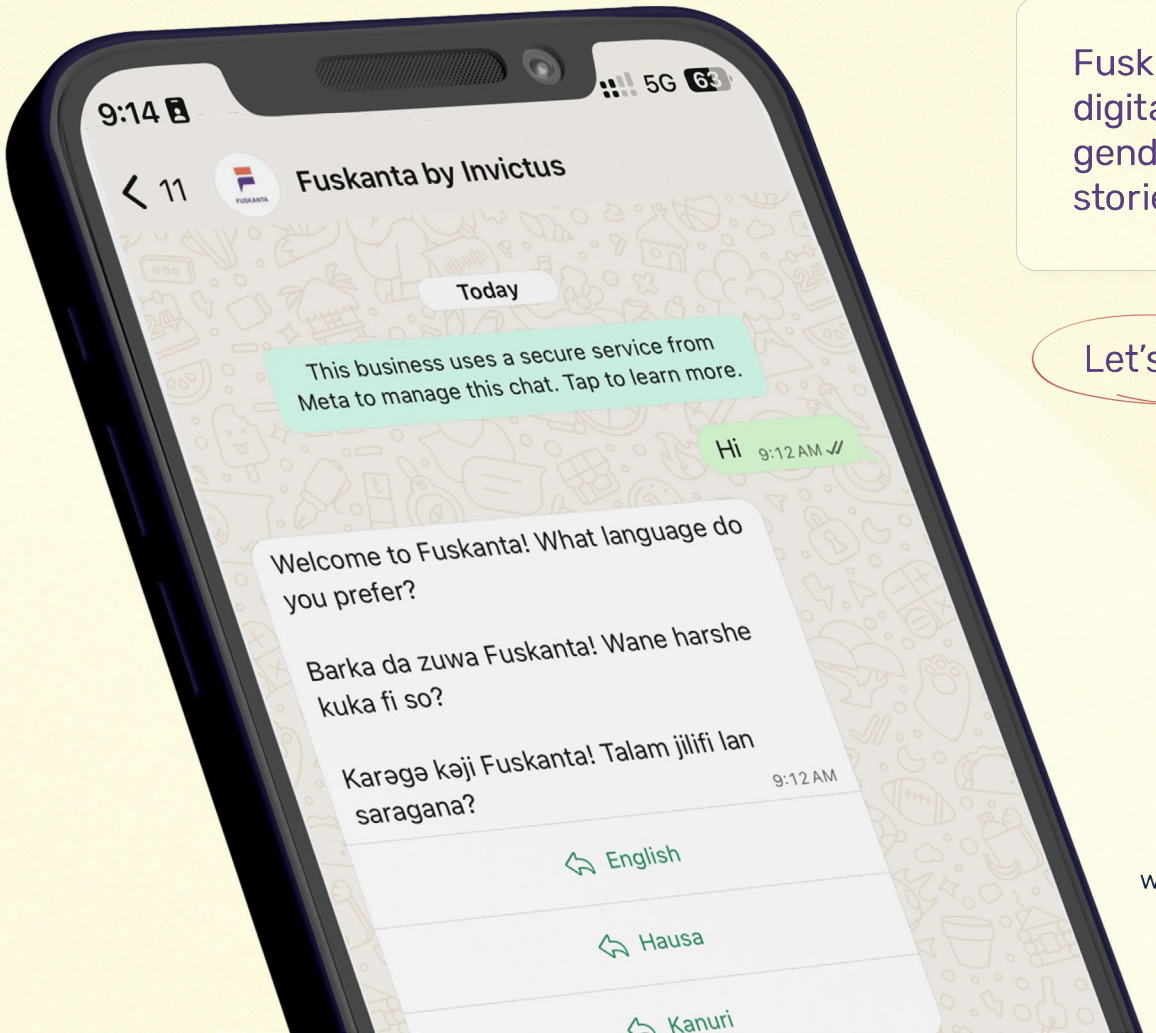
Prior to fieldwork, each SRC conducted a stakeholder mapping exercise to identify relevant MDAs, organizations, and individuals within their state. This involved submitting letters to MDAs, consulting with civil society networks, and engaging preliminary contacts to determine the most appropriate officials to interview.

Selection Criteria

Key informants were selected based on:
Institutional relevance: Officials from MDAs or organizations directly involved in GBV work.
Decision-making authority: Positions involving policy formulation, program implementation, or service delivery oversight.
Expertise and experience: Substantial knowledge in their area of responsibility related to GBV.
Availability and willingness: Confirmed availability and consent to participate.

Each MDA or stakeholder group was mapped to relevant Womanity Index domains to ensure questions aligned with participants' areas of expertise. This mapping ensured that each of the four Womanity Index domains was covered by at least three stakeholders.

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Fuskanta is a safe, sensitive, and supportive digital space where survivors of conflict-related gender-based violence (GBV) can share their stories.

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SCAN TO BEGIN

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MDA/Organization	Womanity Index Domains
Ministry of Justice	Laws and Policies; Access to Legal Justice
Legal Aid Council	Laws and Policies; Access to Legal Justice
NBA and/or FIDA	Laws and Policies; Access to Legal Justice
Nigeria Police Force	Access to Legal Justice
Court Officials	Access to Legal Justice
Ministry of Women Affairs	Support Services; Information and Awareness
Ministry of Health	Support Services
SARC Officials	Support Services
Ministry of Education	Information and Awareness
NGOs/CSOs	All five indexes

Data Collection Instruments

Demand-Side Questionnaire

The demand-side component utilized an interviewer-administered survey tool designed to collect quantitative data from respondents across selected LGAs and wards within each state's three senatorial districts. All questions were close-ended, requiring respondents to choose from predefined options.

The questionnaire comprised six sections:

- **Section A** – Demographics: Collected data on location (state, senatorial district, LGA, urban/rural), gender, age, and disability status.
- **Section B** – GBV Experience: Captured personal or witnessed GBV incidents within the past five years, including types, locations, initial help-seeking actions, and motivations.
- **Section C** – Laws and Policies: Assessed awareness and perceptions of formal, customary, and religious GBV-related laws, including their effectiveness and knowledge of convictions.
- **Section D** – Access to Legal Justice: Explored preferences for justice systems, awareness of legal aid, willingness to testify, perceptions of witness protection, and trust in informal justice mechanisms.
- **Section E** – Support Services: Measured awareness and accessibility of SARCs, shelters, and reporting pathways, and evaluated perceptions of service functionality and sustainability.
- **Section F** – Information and Awareness: Evaluated exposure to GBV awareness efforts, usefulness of educational materials, support for school-based GBV education, and awareness of disability-inclusive content.

Key Informant Interview Guide

The supply-side component utilized a semi-structured KII guide to collect qualitative data from government officials and service providers responsible for GBV prevention and response. Unlike the demand-side questionnaire, the KII guide featured open-ended questions that allow for detailed exploration of policies, systems, and service delivery mechanisms.

The interview guide was organized around four thematic areas aligned with the Womanity Index domains:

- **Laws and Policies:** Explored existing legal frameworks, policy gaps, customary and religious practices, recent reform efforts, and statistical data on GBV cases (reported, prosecuted, and convicted). It assessed the legislative and policy environment's adequacy and effectiveness.
- **Access to Legal Justice:** Examined formal and informal justice systems, legal assistance programs, witness protection mechanisms, specialized units (Family Support Units, GBV/Gender/Human Rights Desks), and dedicated judicial structures (courts and judges). It evaluated the accessibility and effectiveness of justice delivery mechanisms.
- **Support Services:** Assessed availability, distribution, and functionality of shelters and SARCs, referral pathways, formal and informal support systems. It evaluated service adequacy, accessibility, and resource allocation for survivor support.
- **Information and Awareness:** Reviewed state-led awareness campaigns, educational materials, school-based GBV education programs, disability-inclusive communication strategies, and public sensitization efforts. It evaluated the reach and effectiveness of information dissemination.

Additionally, the guide included an "Implementation Tracker" to assess the status of recommendations from the 2023 and 2024 editions of the Womanity Index across relevant domains.

Budget Analysis Framework

Unlike the demand-side and supply-side components, the Budget and Spending domain relied on secondary data collection using a standardized framework developed in partnership with BudgIT Foundation. The framework was applied to publicly available state budget documents and implementation reports for the 2024 fiscal year, for all 36 states, exempting the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) as its disaggregated budget documents have been unavailable.

The framework extracted:

- Total budget for each state.
- Dedicated gender-based violence (GBV) budget lines within ministry allocations.
- Total budget allocations to the Ministry of Women Affairs and other GBV-related ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs).

- Actual expenditure figures for the fiscal year under review.
- Population of each state and the gender distribution.

Data Collection Procedure

Training and Capacity Building

Prior to fieldwork, a comprehensive training programme was conducted at multiple levels to ensure standardization and quality across all states. From June 24 to 26, 2025, the CCT organized a three-day training session for all the SRCs. This workshop covered research objectives, sampling protocols, ethical guidelines, interview techniques, data collection tools, quality control procedures, field logistics, data analysis, and reporting requirements.

Following the central training, each SRC conducted a state-level training workshop for their enumerators. Held between June 27 and July 5, 2025, these sessions covered the demand-side questionnaire, procedures for obtaining informed consent, and protocols for administering the tool using the KoboCollect app on Android smartphones and tablets.

Sampling Protocol Completion

Before fieldwork began, each SRC completed a sampling protocol using a standardized Excel template provided by the CCT. This outlined the multi-stage stratified cluster sampling approach, specifying selected senatorial districts, LGAs, wards, and sample size allocations. All protocols were submitted to the CCT for review and approval to ensure consistency across states before data collection started.

Quantitative Data Collection

Quantitative data collection was conducted between July and August 2025 through face-to-face interviews by trained enumerators using the KoboCollect application. Data was uploaded daily to the KoboToolbox cloud server, accessible only to authorized members of the CCT, ensuring secure and timely transmission. To protect participant confidentiality, the application was configured to automatically delete completed forms from devices upon successful submission.

Qualitative Data Collection

Qualitative interviews were conducted by the SRCs, given the seniority of participants and the technical depth of the discussions. This took place simultaneously with the quantitative fieldwork. Using a semi-structured interview guide, SRCs carried out KIIs, which were audio-recorded with participant consent and supplemented by detailed written notes. In cases where participants declined recording, comprehensive notes were taken during and immediately after the interview to capture key insights and direct quotes. All audio files, consent forms, and transcripts were submitted to the CCT through a designated KoboToolbox form.

Budget Data Collection

Budget data collection was conducted by BudgIT Foundation, which was sourced from state budget offices and official government publications.

Data Monitoring and Quality Assurance

Several mechanisms were used to ensure data quality throughout the collection process, supported by real-time monitoring systems and structured reporting protocols.

Real-Time Data Monitoring Dashboard

To maintain continuous oversight of fieldwork and data quality, the CCT developed a monitoring dashboard in Power BI, directly linked to the KoboToolbox server. The dashboard provided real-time updates on survey completion rates, geographic coverage, demographic distributions of respondents, and data collection patterns across all 37 locations. Both SRCs and CCT members accessed the dashboard, allowing proactive monitoring and quick identification of issues.

Quantitative Data Quality Control

The Kobo Collect application included built-in validation checks that prevented enumerators from skipping questions, reducing missing data at the point of collection. SRCs uploaded completed survey forms daily to the KoboToolbox server, and the CCT reviewed these uploads to confirm successful submissions, monitor consistency, and detect unusual patterns such as rapid completion times or atypical response distributions. The CCT also conducted random spot checks and back-checks in the field to verify adherence to sampling protocols.

Qualitative Data Quality Control

For qualitative data, quality assurance focused on transcription accuracy and completeness. After interviews, SRCs prepared intelligent verbatim transcripts of audio recordings, ensuring accuracy while preserving the original language and meaning. The CCT reviewed transcripts for accuracy, completeness, and clarity, providing feedback to ensure standardization across states.

Progress Monitoring and Reporting

Weekly field reports, submitted every Friday at 6:00 PM via a designated Kobo Collect form, served as the main mechanism for systematic progress tracking. Reports captured both quantitative metrics (number of surveys completed, LGAs and wards covered, projections for the following week) and qualitative progress (number of KIIs completed, MDAs covered, IDI status). This structured reporting enabled the CCT to maintain real-time oversight across all states, identify areas needing additional support, and ensure adherence to timelines.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize patterns and trends. Frequency distributions and percentages were calculated for each survey question to show how responses were distributed across categories. Analysis was conducted at national, regional, and state levels, allowing for both broad comparisons and context-specific insights. The CCT produced frequency distribution tables, which SRCs interpreted to identify significant findings. As the third edition of the Womanity Index, the 2025 assessment also included trend analysis comparing results from 2023 and 2024. This helped track progress or setbacks in key indicators over time and assess whether observed changes signaled improvement, regression, fluctuations, or stability.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data was analyzed using deductive thematic analysis, organized around the five Womanity Index domains: Laws and Policies, Access to Legal Justice, Support Services, and Information and Awareness. Themes were drawn from a predefined coding framework based on the interview guide. For each theme, findings were informed by at least three key informant interviews to ensure diverse perspectives and avoid reliance on single viewpoints. The analysis also compared qualitative findings with survey results to identify areas of alignment or divergence.

Budget Data Analysis

BudgIT Foundation applied their standardized analytical framework to compute budget performance rates, per capita spending, and other key metrics for both MoWAs independently and combined GBV-related allocations across relevant MDAs. The analyzed data, along with supporting narratives, was submitted to the CCT in structured Excel templates. Upon receipt, the CCT conducted verification checks by cross-referencing figures, reviewing computational methods, and resolving any identified discrepancies in collaboration with BudgIT Foundation before incorporating the data into the Index scoring framework and the report.

Validation of Key Informant Interview Findings

Following data analysis and report drafting, the CCT conducted a validation exercise for the key informant interview findings. Preliminary results, specifically those reflecting the responses of government officials and the assessment of institutional GBV prevention and response, were shared with the respective state Ministries of Women Affairs. Stakeholders were invited to review the findings and provide clarifications or additional input as needed.

Limitations of the Research

The Womanity Index 2025 followed rigorous methods to ensure data quality and broad representation. However, several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings.

The qualitative component completed 321 key informant interviews out of a target of 370, representing an 87% completion rate. This gap was mainly due to stakeholder unavailability, scheduling conflicts with senior government officials, and logistical constraints across states. In some states, certain MDAs were unresponsive or declined to participate, potentially limiting perspectives from specific sectors. Nevertheless, purposive sampling ensured that each domain was represented by at least three stakeholders per state, supporting the validity of the analysis.

The quantitative survey relied on self-reported data about GBV experiences, awareness, and perceptions. This method carries inherent risks of recall bias, social desirability bias, and underreporting, especially given the sensitive nature of GBV. Although enumerators were trained in interviewing techniques, such biases could not be entirely avoided. Additionally, some remote or insecure areas were difficult to reach, which may have excluded highly vulnerable groups or those living in hard-to-access communities.

The budget and spending analysis relied on publicly available budget documents and expenditure reports, which varied in detail and accessibility across states. Some states provided comprehensive, disaggregated data, while others had limited transparency or delayed publication of expenditure figures. In cases where certain line items were ambiguous or not explicitly labeled as GBV-related, classification decisions were made in consultation between BudgIT Foundation and officials of the relevant MDAs.

Despite these constraints, the study employed several strategies to mitigate limitations, including triangulating qualitative and quantitative findings, applying real-time quality control, and engaging with a diverse set of stakeholders.

Purpose and Application of the Report

The Womanity Index 2025 is designed to serve as a practical tool for improving GBV prevention and response across Nigeria. This report provides evidence-based insights that can guide decision-making, resource allocation, and policy reforms at both state and national levels.

For Policymakers and Government Officials

State governments can use this report to identify strengths and gaps in their GBV systems. The comparative framework allows states to learn from higher-performing peers and adopt proven strategies. The findings also highlight priority areas requiring immediate attention, enabling targeted interventions and more effective use of limited resources.

The domain-specific scores provide a clear roadmap for reform. States can focus on specific areas, such as strengthening legal frameworks, improving access to justice, expanding support services, or enhancing public awareness, based on their performance in each domain.
For Civil Society Organizations and Advocates

This report equips advocacy groups with credible data to support evidence-based campaigns and policy dialogue. Organizations can use the findings to engage government stakeholders, propose specific reforms, and monitor progress over time. The Index also helps identify states where advocacy efforts may have the greatest impact. By comparing trends across the 2023, 2024, and 2025 editions, advocates can track whether their efforts are yielding measurable improvements or if new strategies are needed.

For Development Partners and Donors

International organizations and funding agencies can use this report to inform their programming and investment decisions. The state-level analysis helps identify where technical assistance, capacity building, or financial support is most needed. The Index also provides a baseline for monitoring the effectiveness of donor-funded interventions.

For Researchers and the Media

Researchers can draw on this data for further analysis, academic studies, and policy research on GBV in Nigeria. Media professionals can use the findings to inform public discourse, raise awareness about GBV issues, and hold governments accountable for their commitments to protecting women and girls.

Promoting Accountability and Progress

Ultimately, the Womanity Index serves as an accountability tool that measures government commitment to ending GBV. By publishing state-level performance data annually, the Index creates transparency and encourages healthy competition among states to improve their systems. This report is not merely a documentation of current realities but a call to action. It provides a foundation for collaborative efforts among government, civil society, development partners, and communities to build a Nigeria where every woman and girl can live free from violence.

PART 2

National Analysis and Findings



Nigeria

Population: 249,815,311

50.2% Female | Male 49.8%

Overall Grade 61.9%

Respondents Demography *(n = 40,111)*

GENDER — Female ■ Male ■

66.2% | 33.8%

AREA — Rural ■ Urban ■

54.3% | 45.7%

AGE

<20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69
2.3%	18.7%	34.9%	22.1%	13.8%	8.2%

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION — **₦114.7bn**
(This accounts for **0.6%** of total states budgets)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE — **₦41.8bn**
(This accounts for **39.0%** of total allocation to the ministry)

39.0%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ Others ■ (Actual Spend)

35.5% | 30.4% | 30.8% | 3.6%

Per Capita Spending

₦361.39

Index

Index					Total Grade
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	-	66.2%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	62.2%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	58.3%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	64.4%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	-	57.6%

National GBV Context

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

No ■ Yes ■

41.1% | 58.9%

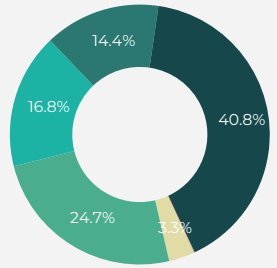
0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

75.8% | 29.3% | 8.6% | 25.0% | 20.3%

Home ■ Public ■ Religious ■ School ■ Workplace ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

51.5% | 44.3% | 35.6% | 35.8% | 18.3% | 8.7%

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

Where did you or the person first seek help?

3.0% | 34.4% | 9.6% | 3.1% | 2.4% | 34.0% | 4.9% | 8.6%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

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

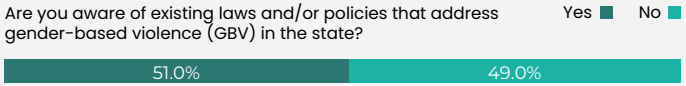
Trust ■
Services ■
Proximity or accessibility ■
Perception that they could help ■
Financial constraint ■

National GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 61.9%

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

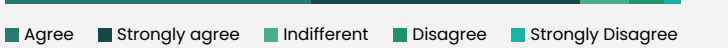


SUPPORT SERVICES

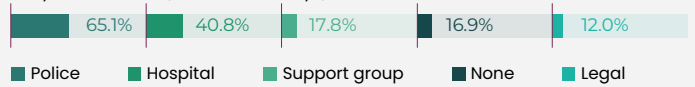
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state? — Yes / No



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)

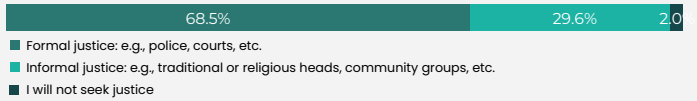


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors? — Yes / No

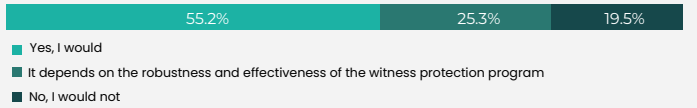


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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? — Yes / No

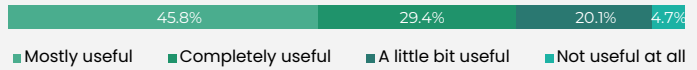


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

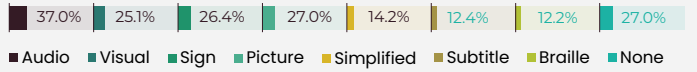
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state? — Yes / No



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



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



GBV Context

51%

Domestic or intimate partner violence (51%) is the most common form of gender-based violence in Nigeria, followed by physical violence (44%), sexual violence (36%), and psychological violence (36%).

3 in 5

59% of Nigerians – that is, 3 in 5 – have either experienced gender-based violence themselves or know someone who has.

61%

GBV survivors are about twice as likely to seek help from informal sources — family (34%), friends or neighbours (10%), employers or colleagues (3%), religious leaders (5%), or traditional leaders (9%) — adding up to 61%. This is compared to 34% who first turn to the police and 2% to lawyers. Another 3% did not seek help at all.

76%

76% of gender-based violence incidents happen in the home, 29% in public places, 25% in schools, and 20% in workplaces.

GBV Context

40%

40% of GBV survivors choose where to first seek help based on trust. Others choose based on where they think they'll get the help they need (24%), how close or accessible the option is (16%), the services available (14%), or cost (3%).

Laws and Policies

49%

1 in 2 Nigerians (49%) are not aware of the GBV laws and policies in their state. In eight states, unawareness is even higher: Osun (78%), Kwara (76%), Delta (72%), Niger (68%), Katsina (67%), Cross River (67%), Ebonyi (67%), and Kebbi (62%).

Even though 59% of Nigerians have either experienced GBV or know someone who has, 63% say they have never heard of anyone being convicted for it.

63%

Laws and Policies

61%

61% of Nigerians believe customary and religious laws are enough to prevent and respond to GBV. Confidence in these informal legal systems is highest in the north: 70% in the North East, and 66% in both the North Central and North West.

Access to Legal Justice

68%

68% of Nigerians prefer formal justice for GBV cases, yet 59% are unaware of the legal support available in their state. At the same time, 30% prefer to seek justice through traditional or religious institutions, and 2% say they will not seek justice at all.

63% of Nigerians do not know anyone who has been convicted of GBV, meaning nearly 2 out of 3 have never seen or heard of any legal punishment for this crime.

63%

Access to Legal Justice

55%

Fewer Nigerians feel safe testifying in gender-based violence cases – dropping from 61% in 2023 to 55% in 2025. Meanwhile, 25% say they will only engage with formal justice if strong witness protection is guaranteed.

Support Services

74%

74% of Nigerians have not heard of or visited an active shelter or Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). And 45% believe informal support systems are better than formal ones. Preference for informal support is highest in the north-east at 51%, and lowest in the south-south at 37%.

The police or community security (65%) is the most familiar reporting and referral pathway for GBV. This is followed by hospitals or healthcare facilities (41%), support groups (18%), and legal services (17%). About 12% are not aware of any pathway – meaning they would not know where to go if they experienced GBV.

65%

Information and Awareness

59%

59% of Nigerians have not come across any GBV information or education programs. Only three states have more than 70% of residents who have seen such programs: Yobe (80%), Zamfara (80%), and Lagos (71%).

37%

At 37%, audio or spoken content is the most familiar GBV information medium for persons with disabilities. This is followed by picture-based messages (27%), sign interpretation (26%), and visual content (25%). The least used are braille materials (12%), screen subtitling (12%), and simplified messages (14%).

Budget and Spending

0.60%

In 2024, the average share of state budgets allocated to the Ministry of Women Affairs is just 0.6%. Only six states – Adamawa (1.6%), Borno (2.3%), Katsina (1.3%), Kebbi (1.4%), Ondo (1.5%), and Sokoto (1.6%) – allocate at least 1%, with Borno topping the list at 2.3%. Thirty states allocate between 0.1% and 0.9%.

Budget and Spending

39%

The average budget performance of state Ministries of Women Affairs is 39%. Five states performed strongly – Yobe (92.6%), Delta (90.9%), Lagos (87.1%), Niger (78.4%), and Akwa Ibom (77.3%). Four states recorded very low performance: Ondo (7.2%), Anambra (6.8%), Rivers (6.3%), and Adamawa (4.9%). Average per capita spending is ₦361.39.

In 2024, Nigeria's 36 states collectively allocated a total of ₦120.22bn to gender-based violence prevention and response across various ministries, departments, and agencies. However, this amount represents just 0.66% of their combined state budgets.

0.66%

37.9%

Despite the ₦120.22bn allocated to GBV prevention and response by Nigeria's 36 states in 2024, the performance rate was only 37.9%, a decline from 51.5% in 2023 and 42.9% in 2022.

On average, Nigeria spent only ₦365.60 on each woman or girl for GBV prevention and response in 2024. This is a small rise from ₦310.89 in 2023 and ₦213.27 in 2022. Akwa Ibom recorded the highest per capita spending at ₦1,872.18, followed by Bayelsa at ₦1,716.00. The lowest was in Rivers at ₦34.41 and Anambra at ₦46.42.

₦365.60

National GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 61.9%

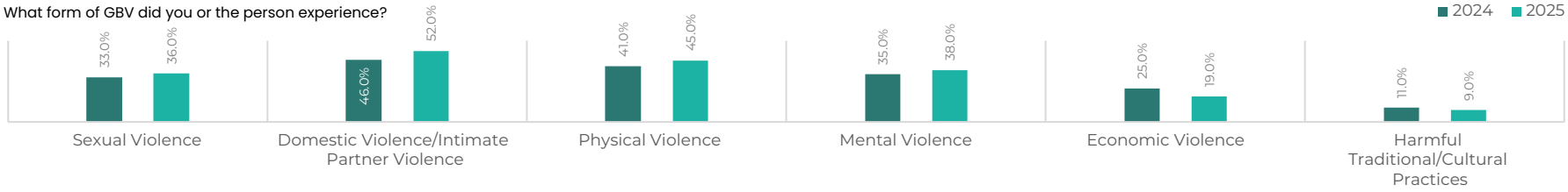
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



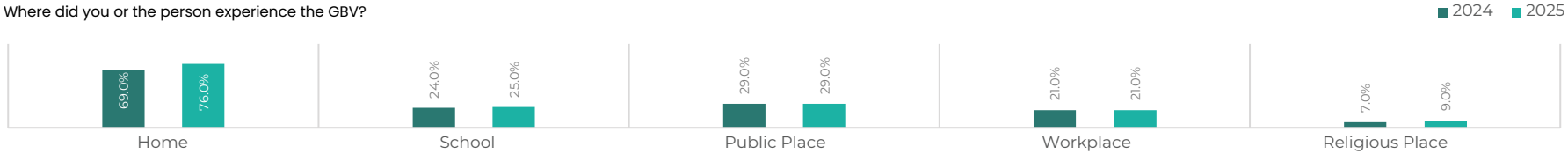
59.0%

of the Nigerian population have either experienced GBV or knows someone who have experienced GBV

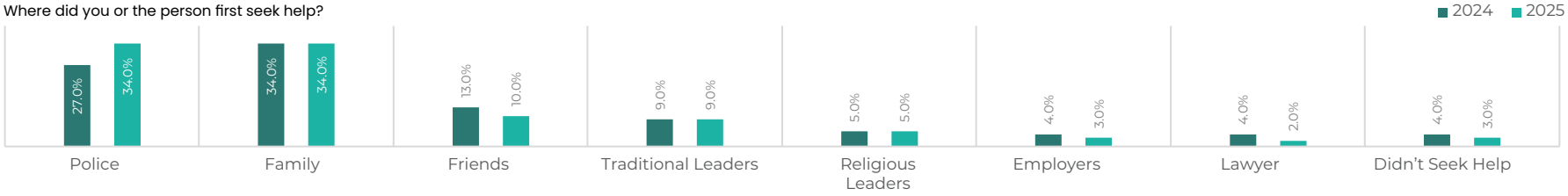
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



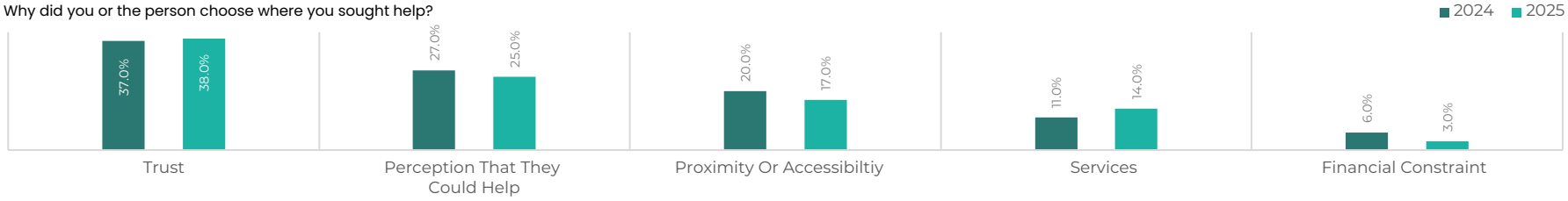
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

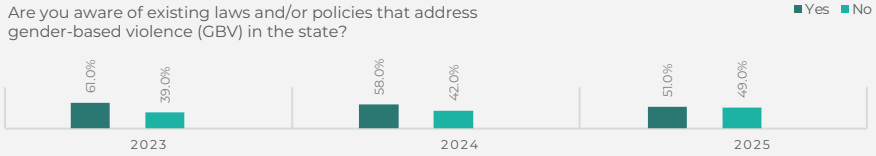


National Trend (Indices and Indicators) (2023-2025)

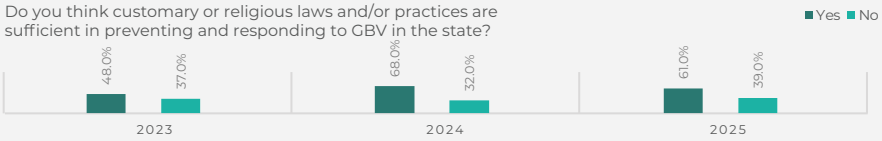
Overall Grade 61.9%

LAWS AND POLICIES

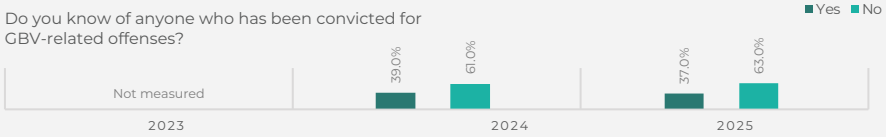
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

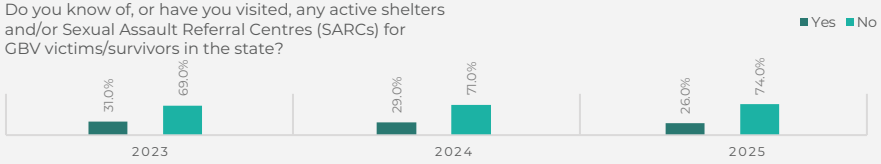


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

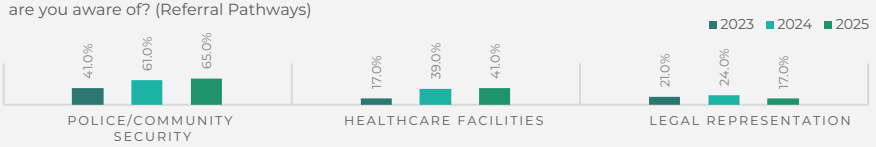


SUPPORT SERVICES

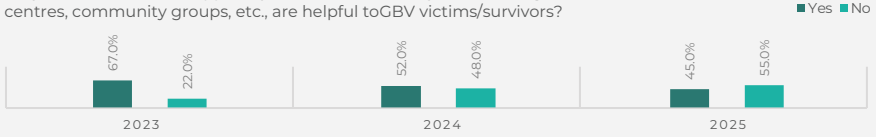
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

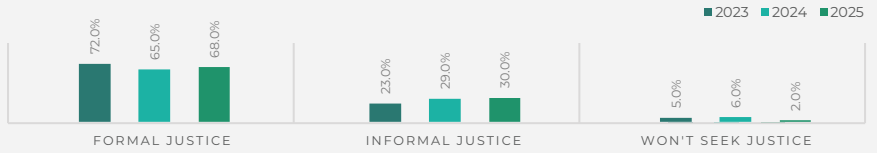


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

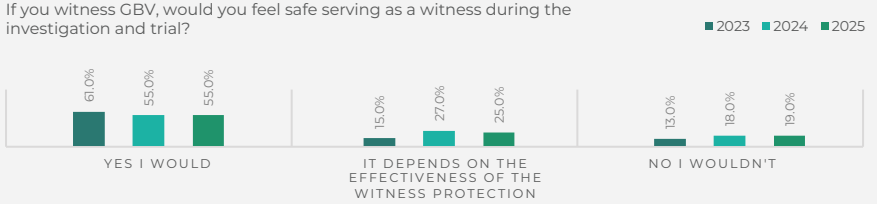


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

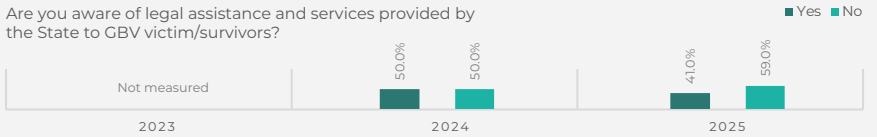
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

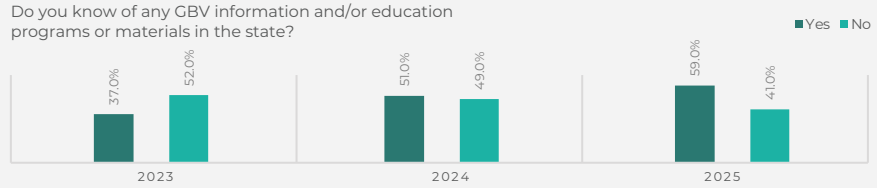


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

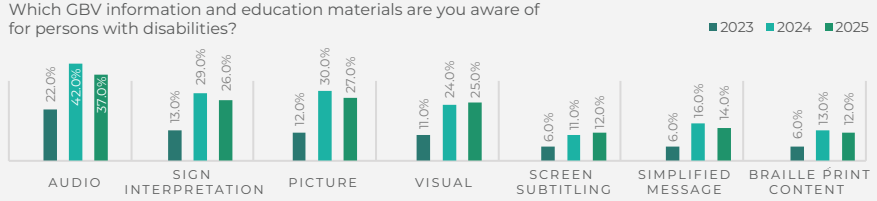


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

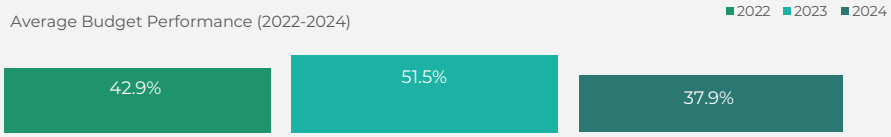


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

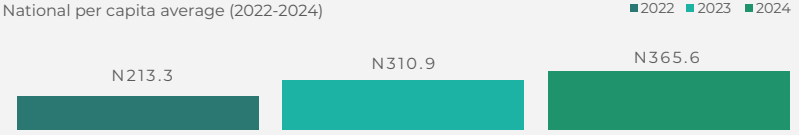


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



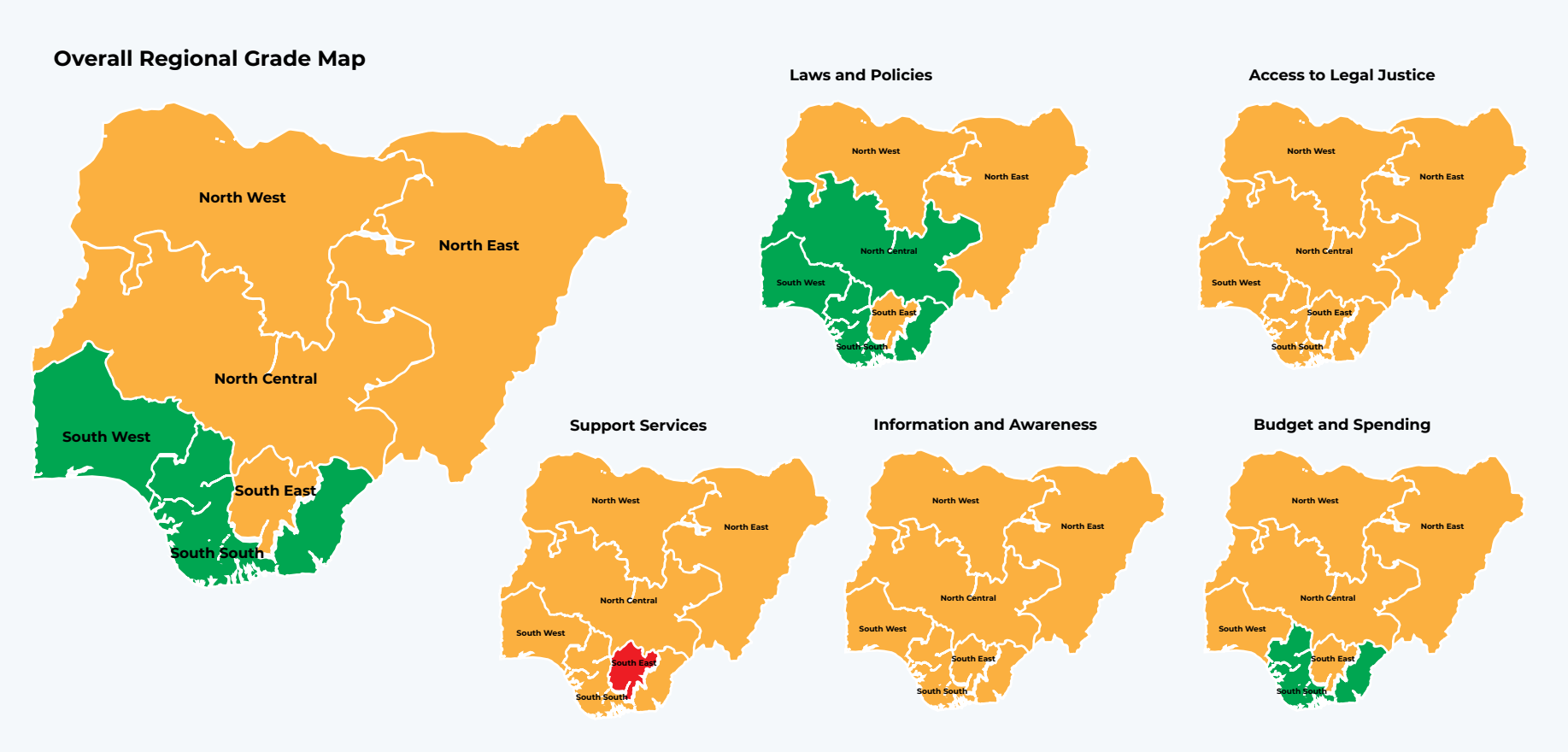
National per capita average (2022-2024)





PART 3

Regional Analysis



Regional Grade Rankings

Region	Rank	Overall	Laws and Policies	Access to Legal Justice	Support Services	Information and Awareness	Budget and Spending
South South	1st	68.7%	77.8%	68.8%	62.5%	67.7%	66.7%
South West	2nd	66.5%	68.1%	67.7%	62.5%	69.8%	63.9%
North East	3rd	62.4%	63.9%	57.3%	61.5%	65.6%	62.5%
North Central	4th	58.6%	65.5%	63.4%	58.0%	63.4%	50.0%
North West	5th	56.7%	64.3%	56.3%	55.4%	57.1%	50.0%
South East	6th	56.6%	56.7%	60.0%	48.8%	63.8%	53.3%

State Rankings (Based on Regions)

North Central

State	Regional Rank	National Rank	Overall	Laws and Policies	Access to Legal Justice	Support Services	Information and Awareness	Budget and Spending
Kwara	1st	4th	69.6%	58.3%	75.0%	62.5%	93.8%	58.3%
Niger	2nd	7th	67.1%	75.0%	62.5%	62.5%	68.8%	66.7%
Plateau	3rd	17th	57.1%	58.3%	75.0%	56.3%	62.5%	33.3%
FCT	4th	19th	55.8%	66.7%	68.8%	68.8%	75.0%	
Kogi	5th	21st	54.6%	75.0%	50.0%	43.8%	37.5%	66.7%
Benue	6th	22nd	54.2%	58.3%	62.5%	62.5%	62.5%	25.0
Nasarawa	7th	25th	52.1%	66.7%	50.0%	50.0%	43.8%	50.0%

North East

State	Regional Rank	National Rank	Overall	Laws and Policies	Access to Legal Justice	Support Services	Information and Awareness	Budget and Spending
Borno	1st	6th	67.5%	75.0%	62.5%	68.8%	56.3%	75.0%
Yobe	1st	6th	67.5%	75.0%	62.5%	68.8%	56.3%	75.0%
Gombe	2nd	10th	65.0%	75.0%	68.8%	75.0%	75.0%	25.0
Adamawa	3rd	14th	58.8%	50.0%	50.0%	56.3%	87.5%	50.0%
Bauchi	3rd	14th	58.8%	58.3%	50.0%	50.0%	68.8%	66.7%
Taraba	4th	18th	56.7%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	83.3%

North West

State	Regional Rank	National Rank	Overall	Laws and Policies	Access to Legal Justice	Support Services	Information and Awareness	Budget and Spending
Sokoto	1st	11th	63.3%	58.3%	62.5%	68.8%	68.8%	58.3%
Kaduna	2nd	12th	62.1%	66.7%	62.5%	62.5%	68.8%	50.0%
Jigawa	3rd	13th	60.8%	75.0%	56.3%	68.8%	37.5%	66.7%
Kebbi	4th	16th	57.9%	83.3%	50.0%	43.8%	62.5%	50.0%
Kano	5th	20th	55.0%	50.0%	62.5%	50.0%	62.5%	50.0%
Katsina	5th	26th	50.0%	66.7%	56.3%	43.8%	56.3%	25.0%
Zamfara	6th	27th	47.5%	50.0%	43.8%	50.0%	43.8%	50.0%

South East

State	Regional Rank	National Rank	Overall	Laws and Policies	Access to Legal Justice	Support Services	Information and Awareness	Budget and Spending
Ebonyi	1st	9th	65.8%	66.7%	81.3%	50.0%	81.3%	50.0%
Enugu	2nd	13th	60.8%	50.0%	56.3%	62.5%	68.8%	66.7%
Anambra	3rd	23rd	53.3%	66.7%	43.8%	43.8%	62.5%	50.0%
Abia	4th	24th	52.9%	58.3%	56.3%	43.8%	56.3%	50.0%
Imo	5th	26th	50.0%	41.7%	62.5%	43.8%	50.0%	50.0%

South South

State	Regional Rank	National Rank	Overall	Laws and Policies	Access to Legal Justice	Support Services	Information and Awareness	Budget and Spending
Akwa Ibom	1st	2nd	80.0%	83.3%	68.8%	75.0%	81.3%	91.7%
Cross River	2nd	5th	68.8%	75.0%	81.3%	75.0%	62.5%	50.0%
Edo	3rd	8th	66.3%	83.3%	75.0%	62.5%	68.8%	41.7%
Delta	3rd	8th	66.3%	75.0%	56.3%	56.3%	68.7%	75.0%
Bayelsa	4th	9th	65.8%	75.0%	62.5%	43.8%	56.3%	91.7%
Rivers	5th	10th	65.0%	75.0%	68.8%	62.5%	68.8%	50.0%

South West

State	Regional Rank	National Rank	Overall	Laws and Policies	Access to Legal Justice	Support Services	Information and Awareness	Budget and Spending
Lagos	1st	1st	91.3%	91.7%	93.8%	93.8%	93.8%	83.3%
Ekiti	2nd	3rd	72.1%	83.3%	81.3%	62.5%	75.0%	58.3%
Ogun	3rd	10th	65.0%	66.7%	56.3%	62.5%	56.3%	83.3%
Ondo	4th	12th	62.1%	66.7%	68.8%	56.3%	68.8%	50.0%
Osun	5th	15th	58.3%	58.3%	56.3%	56.3%	62.5%	58.3%
Oyo	6th	26th	50.0%	41.7%	50.0%	43.8%	62.5%	50.0%

PART 4

State-By-State Report

Scan to download the full report



Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



Abia State

God's Own State

Abia State

Population: 4,626,019

51% Female Male 49%

Overall Grade 52.9%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,101)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

64.1% | 35.9%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

41.0% | 59.0%

AGE

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

4.7% | 8.4% | 22.5% | 24.6% | 18.7% | 21.1%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

9.2% | 90.8%

SARCs: 0

Shelters: 1

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦420.01m
(This accounts for **0.2%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦207.73m
(This accounts for **49.5** of total allocation to the ministry)

49.5%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ (Actual Spend)

23.8% | 72.2% | 4.0%

Per Capita Spending

₦88.8

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	56.3%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	43.8%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	56.3%
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 ■

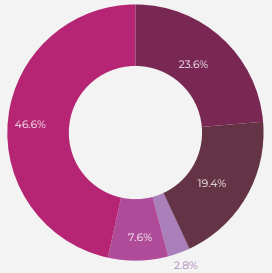
48.4% | 51.6%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

70.4% | 22.5% | 40.0% | 49.3% | 22.7%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

87.1% | 22.4% | 77.8% | 76.2% | 9.7% | 2.8%

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

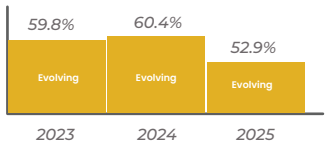
Where did you or the person first seek help?

14.1% | 72.2% | 7.9% | 0.2% | 0.4% | 1.1% | 0.2% | 4.0%

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

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
38%	18%

28%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 90.0%	-1 ▼ LP 66.7%	-1 ▼ LP 58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 62.5%	ALJ 56.3%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	-1 ▼ SS 43.8%	SS 43.8%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3%	IA 62.5%	IA 56.3%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+2 ▲ BS 66.7%	-1 ▼ BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Preference for seeking justice through police and courts surged from 47.37% in 2023 to 59% in 2024, then to 87.8% in 2025, while reliance on informal systems dropped from 48.08% to just 11.8%, indicating fundamental transformation in how communities view GBV as a criminal justice issue rather than private family matter.
- Public knowledge of GBV laws increased from 43% in 2024 to 60.6% in 2025, while awareness of legal assistance services doubled from 22% to 50.5%.
- The Gender Desk implemented a 7-day case completion requirement with Commissioner oversight and consequences for delays, handling over 97 cases (35+ defilement, 32 rape, 30+ battery) and demonstrating improved accountability despite resource constraints.

Areas of Concern

- Public awareness of GBV convictions fell from 88% in 2024 to 53.8% in 2025, with prosecutors continuing to charge offenders under Criminal Code rather than VAPP law.
- State's only Sexual Assault Referral Centre converted to Commissioner's office, leaving all 17 LGAs without dedicated SARC throughout 2024–2025 despite unfulfilled government promises of three RoLAC-supported replacements.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The Abia State House of Assembly appointed a 5-man Team to review and modify the State VAPP Law.

Access to Legal Justice

- The state established specialized family courts and juvenile courts with designated magistrates and judges to handle GBV cases across the judicial system.
- The Police Commissioner implemented a seven-day turnaround policy for GBV investigations, requiring officers to document, investigate, and complete cases within one week or face queries.

Support Services

- The state established specialized family courts and juvenile courts with designated magistrates and judges to handle GBV cases across the judicial system.
- The Police Commissioner implemented a seven-day turnaround policy for GBV investigations, requiring officers to document, investigate, and complete cases within one week or face queries.

Information and Awareness

- The Ministry of Women Affairs deployed GBV desk officers across all 17 local government areas to coordinate sensitization and response activities at the grassroots level.
- The state has commenced translating the VAPP law into Pidgin English and Igbo language to enhance accessibility and understanding among indigent communities.

Change Spotlight

Abia State's most significant achievement was behavioural change at the community level with increased preference for seeking justice through formal channels (police and courts) while reliance on informal systems declined drastically. This represents a fundamental transformation in how citizens view GBV, from a private family matter to a criminal justice issue requiring state intervention.

This attitudinal shift was supported by tangible improvements in police responsiveness. The Gender Desk described as "GBV-friendly," implemented a strict seven-day case completion including documentation, investigation, and rounding off the process within seven days with consequences for delays. The desk handled over 97 cases in 2024 (35+ defilement, 32 rape, 30+ battery cases), demonstrating active engagement despite resource constraints.

The Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) emerged as the state's most consistent survivor support infrastructure, providing accessible care across all 17 local government areas. Health workers conducted weekly community sensitization programs, meeting with village elders to announce services and educate residents about GBV. Treatment was provided at nominal cost ("little or nothing"). As the PHC officer explained: "We don't just treat them, we talk to them... bring them up and make them know that when you are doing something, it adds value to your life." The Governor's administration supported this through facility facelifts and empowerment programs for survivors aged 16-35.

Civil society organizations maintained critical frontline services despite severe funding challenges. CEHRAWS continued frontline services including petition writing, police liaison, and direct financial assistance to survivors, often from staff personal funds.

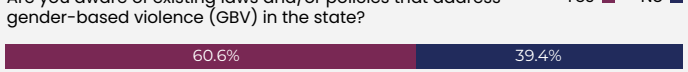
Abia State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 52.9%

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 ■



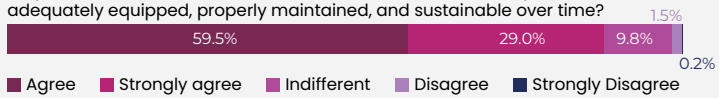
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

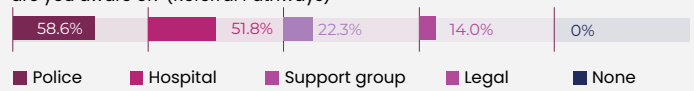
Yes ■ No ■



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)



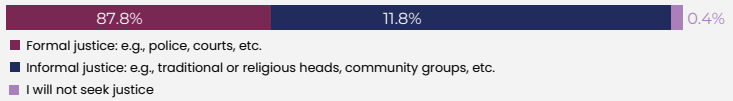
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

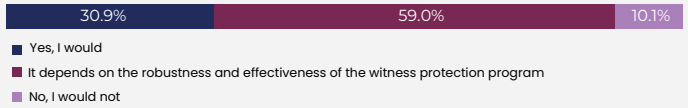


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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?

Yes ■ No ■



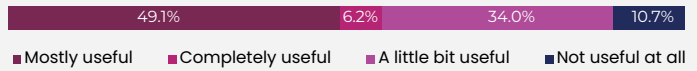
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

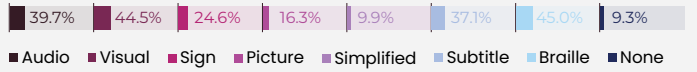
Yes ■ No ■



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



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



Abia State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 52.9%

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



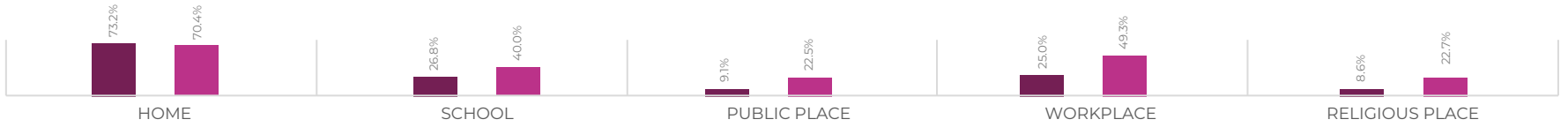
51.6%

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

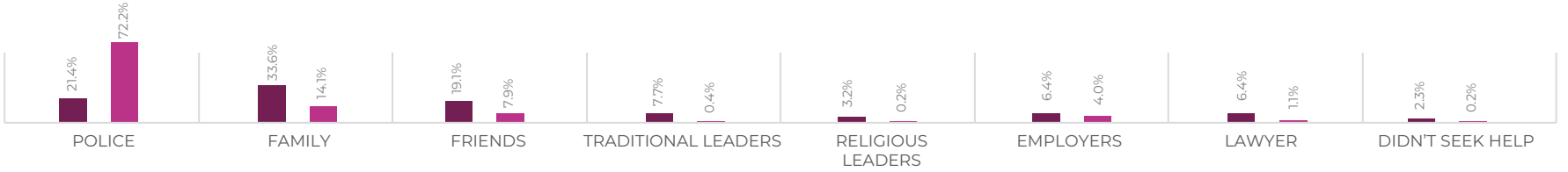
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



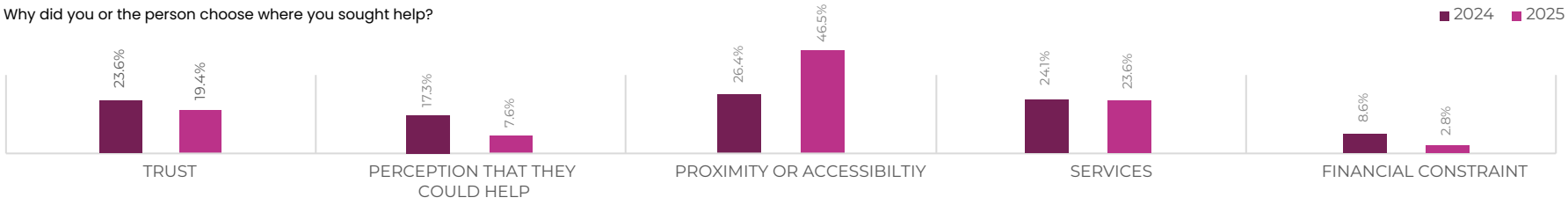
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

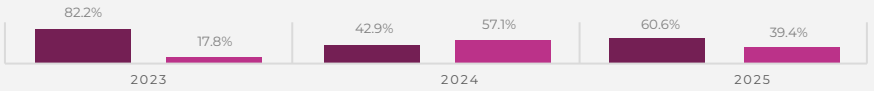


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

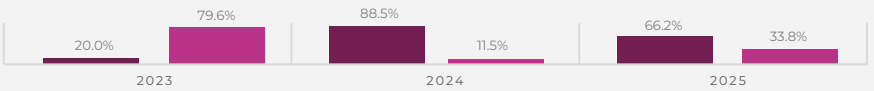
Overall Grade 52.9%

LAWS AND POLICIES

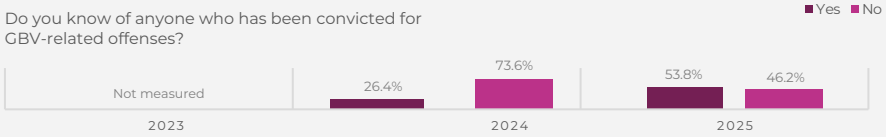
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

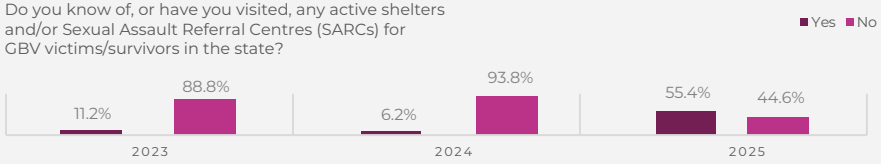


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

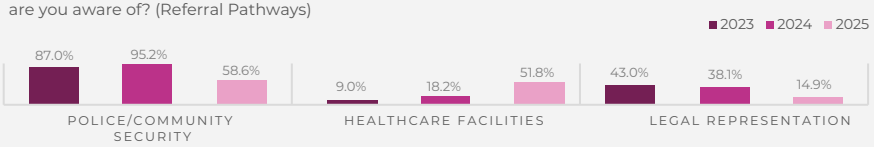


SUPPORT SERVICES

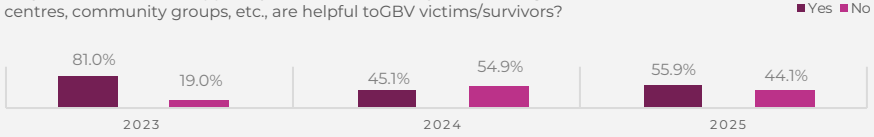
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

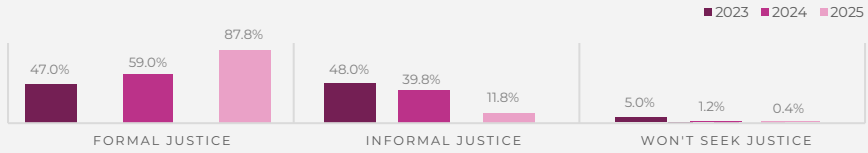


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

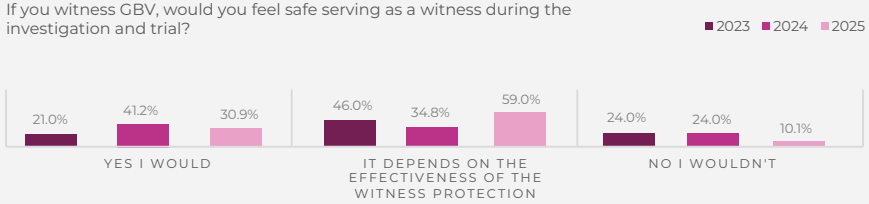


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

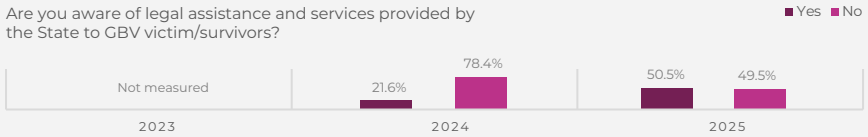
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

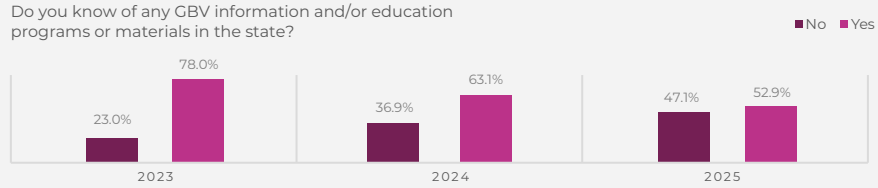


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

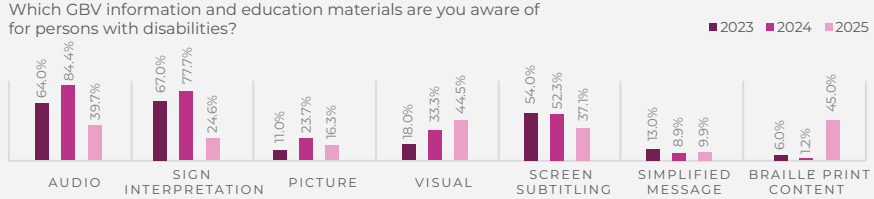


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

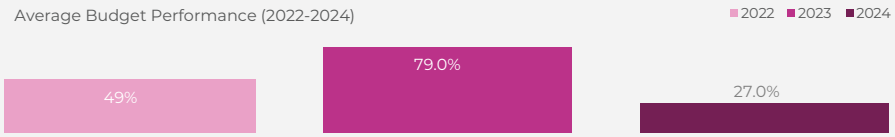


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

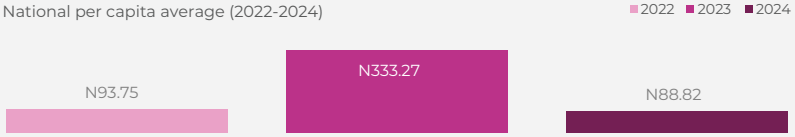


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Abia State domesticated the VAPP law in 2020, establishing a comprehensive legal framework that mirrors the federal VAPP Act of 2015. The law also provides for protection orders, survivor-centred procedures, medical and psychosocial referrals, compensation, and restitution. The State House of Assembly initiated a review process to harmonize criminal laws, aiming to eliminate sentencing disparities between VAPP law, Child Rights Act, and the Criminal Code. However, progress remained slow as of mid-2025. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Justice undertook an innovative accessibility initiative, translating the VAPP law into Pidgin English and Igbo language "where it can be accessible and everyone will understand their rights as contained in the law."

The 2025 Womanity Index survey data shows that public awareness of GBV laws in Abia State stands at 60.6%, showing recovery from the sharp decline to 43% in 2024, though still below the 82.2% recorded in 2023. Among those aware, 77.1% believe formal laws and policies are effective and sufficient in preventing and responding to GBV. Additionally, 58.9% of respondents are aware of customary and religious laws addressing GBV, with 66.2% believing these mechanisms help prevent and respond to violence, a dramatic increase from 20.39% in 2023 and 26% in 2024.

However, a critical implementation challenge undermines the law's effectiveness. A key officer at the Abia State's office of the National Human Rights Commission revealed that "the law enforcement agencies, that is the police, the Attorney General, the DPP – they have made the VAPP law optional. They now pick and choose under which law to charge, rather going to charge the person under the Criminal Code, which has lesser punishment for violence against women." This selective application means perpetrators of identical offenses receive vastly different sentences. During a prison visit, the coordinator observed "one is life imprisonment, another is 14-years imprisonment, and another is three years imprisonment" for rape cases, depending on whether prosecutors charged offenders under VAPP law or the Criminal Code.

Awareness of GBV convictions stands at 53.8%, a significant decline from 88% in 2024. The Legal Aid Coordinator explained that charges are often drafted by police and the Director of Public Prosecution, not judges, stating: "The judges do not prepare charges... whatever charge you bring to the judge, the judge will look at it, hear the evidence before it, and make a decision based on the charge." This places responsibility for appropriate charging squarely on law enforcement and prosecutorial discretion.

Harmful customary and religious practices persist despite legal prohibitions. The Legal Aid Coordinator confirmed: "There are harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation and widowhood rites. Those things are still prevalent in some remote areas." CEHRAWS documented a case in which "community met and decided that this woman did wrong. They never took her to police, didn't take her to court. They decided to ostracize her. Break into her house, pack her things out, and throw her out. After beating her up for using 'omu nkwu' (palm fronds) as a traditional warning sign on disputed property." The Executive Director explained that "in Igbo land, they say that a woman does not have right to do that," illustrating how customary norms directly contradict statutory protections for women's rights.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of GBV laws demonstrated volatility, dropping from 82.2% in 2023 to 43% in 2024, before recovering to 60.6% in 2025. This suggests awareness campaigns may be sporadic rather than sustained. Conversely, belief in the effectiveness of customary and religious mechanisms surged from 20.4% in 2023 to 26% in 2024 and then dramatically to 66.2% in 2025, indicating a concerning shift toward informal justice systems that often prioritize reconciliation over accountability.

The most significant regression occurred in conviction awareness. After reaching 88% in 2024, awareness fell to 53.8% in 2025. Stakeholders confirmed this trend is linked to systematic challenges in the justice system. The National Human Rights Commission documented how pressure from churches, traditional rulers, and community members forces victims to withdraw cases. As the coordinator stated: "the victim becomes the suspect... she has refused to forgive... she is now turned to be the wicked person... then the person that attempted to kill her becomes the nice person, because he has apologized."

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Access to formal justice mechanisms shows strong public preference, with 87.8% of respondents indicating they would seek justice through police or courts if they or someone they know experienced GBV. This represents substantial growth from 47.4% in 2023 and 59% in 2024, suggesting increasing trust in formal institutions. However, 11.8% still prefer informal justice mechanisms, while only 0.4%

stated they would not seek justice at all.

Awareness of legal assistance services stands at 50.5%, representing significant improvement from 22% in 2024, though baseline data from 2023 was unavailable. The Ministry of Justice confirmed that law officers are stationed in courts across all 17 local government areas, providing legal representation and prosecution services. The Gender Desk Officer explained: "We interview the person... help the person to go to the Police and make a report because investigations has to be carried out... after the investigation, the police come back to the Ministry with the case file and then we take it to court for prosecution."

Legal Aid Council maintains only one physical office in Umuahia, creating access barriers for residents in other areas, particularly Aba. However, the state has established specialized GBV infrastructure including family courts and juvenile courts with designated magistrates and judges. Family Support Units are also present in all police divisions. Despite these efforts, witness protection remains a concern: 59% of respondents said their willingness to testify depends on the strength of protection programs, while 30.9% would feel safe serving as witnesses, and 10.1% would not.

Informal justice mechanisms continue to obstruct formal processes with about 53.2% of respondents who believe that informal justice systems help ensure GBV victims/survivors get justice, indicating persistent community reliance on non-state mechanisms. The National Human Rights Commission observed: "Somebody assault a woman, almost killed her and when she is recovering, all the churches will come in preaching forgiveness and leave it to God... even traditional rulers, women meeting, entire community, including political office holders will step into it to force the woman to accept the apology."

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Preference for formal justice mechanisms increased substantially from 47.4% in 2023 to 59% in 2024, reaching 87.8% in 2025, demonstrating growing confidence in state institutions. Conversely, reliance on informal justice declined from 48.1% in 2023 to 40% in 2024, then drastically to 11.8% in 2025, indicating meaningful behavioural shifts in justice-seeking.

Awareness of legal assistance services jumped dramatically from 22% in 2024 to 50.5% in 2025, signifying improved information dissemination. However, this increase occurred despite the Legal Aid Council's continued resource constraints and limited physical presence, suggesting other actors, particularly the Ministry of Justice and civil society organizations, filled information gaps.

Witness protection concerns intensified, with 59% of 2025 respondents conditioning their cooperation on protection program effectiveness, compared to 35% in 2024 and 46.1% in 2023. This heightened concern coincides with documented cases of police-level intimidation, suggesting survivors and potential witnesses increasingly recognize safety risks within the justice process itself.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

There is no functional SARC in Abia State. A Director at the Ministry of Women Affairs stated: "Presently, we don't have one yet, but about three are in the making with the help of RoLAC... one is already ongoing at Aba, presently." The National Human Rights Commission confirmed: "I am not aware of any" operational SARC, adding that when she inquired in March 2025, the Permanent Secretary indicated "they are still working on it... means that they don't have it in place for the mean time." However, the Ministry of Justice confirmed three SARCs are under construction through RoLAC's partnership. Regarding shelters, the only temporal shelter owned by the state is the Half Way Home located within the premises of the Ministry of Women Affairs.

Despite this lack of a SARC, multiple GBV reporting and support channels exist in the state, including the Ministry of Women Affairs, police divisions, LGA social welfare units, and the media. However, these services remain fragmented and under-resourced, with uneven awareness of referral pathways. Police or community security pathways are known to 58.6% of respondents, down from 95.2% in 2024 but higher than 56% in 2023. Healthcare facility pathways are recognized by 51.8%, up from 18.2% in 2024 and 6% in 2023. However, awareness of legal representation pathways declined sharply to 14.9% from 38.1% in 2024, while support group pathways dropped to 22.3% from 71.9% in 2024.

To improve access, stakeholders report that hotlines for GBV reporting have been created and will be officially launched during this year's 16 Days of Activism. Staff training on the hotline system was completed in August 2025, laying the groundwork for more coordinated and accessible survivor support.

The Centre for Gender, Youth, and Child Development at Michael Okpara University provides counselling and limited support to students and surrounding communities and CEHRAWS manages cases through mediation and referrals but lacks resources for comprehensive support.

Regarding informal support systems, 55.9% of respondents believe family, friends, religious centres, and community groups are helpful to GBV survivors, down from 80.9% in 2023 and 45% in 2024. However, qualitative evidence contradicts this perception. The National Human Rights Commission documented how religious and traditional leaders pressure survivors to accept apologies and withdraw cases.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Support service infrastructure in Abia State experienced significant regression in 2025 as multiple stakeholders confirmed that the SARC that was established during the previous administration was repurposed for administrative use, with the Commissioner's office now occupying the space originally designated for survivor support services. However, the state continues to implement robust public sensitization campaigns about planned SARCs, creating awareness of the concept without corresponding service availability. This resulted in high increase of SARC/shelter awareness from 11.18% in 2023 to 55.4% in 2025, despite the absence of operational facilities. This paradox likely reflects heightened public discourse about the need for survivor services combined with government announcements.

Referral pathway awareness patterns show concerning instability. Police pathway awareness increased from 56% in 2023 to 95.2% in 2024, unfortunately if decreased to 58.6% in 2025, while healthcare pathway awareness increased from 6% in 2023 to 18.2% in 2024 and 51.8% in 2025. Legal

representation pathway awareness showed an increase from 28% to 38.1% in 2024, but a collapse to 14.9% in 2025, and support group pathway awareness showed a spontaneous increase from 8% in 2023 to 71.9% in 2024 but dropped sharply to 22.3% in 2025. These fluctuations suggest inconsistent messaging and lack of sustained coordination among service providers.

Most significantly, trust in informal support systems declined dramatically from 80.92% in 2023 to 45% in 2024, reaching 55.9% in 2025. This volatile pattern indicates communities are reassessing traditional support mechanisms, though qualitative evidence suggests this reassessment stems from recognition of how informal systems often perpetuate victim-blaming rather than from improved formal service availability.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Abia State demonstrates moderate reach as awareness of GBV information and awareness programs stands at 52.9%, down from 77.6% in 2023 and 63% in 2024. Among those aware, only 6.2% found materials "completely useful," down from 13.8% in 2023 and 9% in 2024. However, 49.1% found materials "mostly useful" and 34% found them "a little bit useful," indicating materials reach audiences but may lack depth or relevance. Many stakeholders confirmed the use of multiple dissemination channels including the use of handbills during the 16 days of activism, conducting free sensitization, and grassroots engagement.

However, radio remains the primary information source for those aware of GBV laws (72.7%), support services (73.2%), and awareness programs (80.8%). Television reaches 45.4% across different information categories, while social media reaches approximately 49.3% of aware respondents. Traditional channels like newspapers (19.9%), schools (6.1%), healthcare facilities (1.6%), NGOs (6%), traditional leaders (1.2%), religious centres (1%), and workplaces (1%) show minimal penetration.
The Ministry of Justice initiated an innovative accessibility project, translating the VAPP law into Pidgin English and Igbo language.

In the education sector, institution-based GBV campaigns have made meaningful progress with regular campaigns within academic and host community of the University by Centre for Gender, Youth, and Child Development. Public support for integrating GBV and child sexual abuse education into schools stands at 87.7%, showing strong demand for institutional prevention efforts. However, systematic curriculum integration remains absent.

While all statewide GBV campaigns and programs now include sign language interpretation, overall accessibility for persons with disabilities remains critically limited. Awareness of disability-inclusive materials shows severe gaps: audio/spoken content (39.7%), braille (45%), visual content (44.5%), screen subtitling (37.1%), sign interpretation (24.6%), picture-based messages (16.3%), and simplified messages (9.9%). These figures represent some improvement from 2023 baseline data but indicate that vast majority of GBV information remains inaccessible to persons with disabilities.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV programs and materials declined consistently from 77.6% in 2023 to 63% in 2024, reaching 52.9% in 2025. This erosion suggests awareness campaigns may have lost intensity, reach, or effectiveness over time. Simultaneously, perceived usefulness among those exposed showed dramatic decline, with "completely useful" ratings dropping from 13.8% in 2023 to 9% in 2024, then plummeting to 6.2% in 2025. This pattern indicates materials may not adequately address survivor needs or community questions, or that repetitive messaging without substantive service improvements creates disillusionment.

Disability-inclusive awareness showed mixed but generally disappointing patterns. After a temporary spike in 2024 when visual content awareness reached 84.4%, all formats collapsed in 2025. Audio/spoken content awareness rose from 26% in 2023 to 39.7% in 2025, braille awareness was 45% in 2025, and visual content reached 44.5%. However, these gains pale against the need for universal accessibility across all communication channels.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Abia State allocated ₦770 million to GBV programs in 2024, representing 0.46% of its total state budget. Of the allocated amount, only ₦207.7 million was actually spent, achieving a 27% implementation rate. This means nearly three-quarters of the budgeted resources remained unutilized by the end of the fiscal year. The actual GBV expenditure constituted 0.45% of the state's total spending, mirroring the budget allocation share. On a per capita basis, Abia State spent approximately ₦88.82 per female resident on GBV-related programs.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Across the last three budget cycles, Abia State has consistently included GBV-specific line items in its annual budget. In 2022, the state allocated ₦2 million for "COVID-19 Sensitization and Advocacy on Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Abuses" across the three senatorial districts. This allocation was over-executed at 300%, with an actual spend of ₦6 million. The same line item appeared in the 2023 budget with an allocation of ₦5 million and was fully executed at 100%. In 2024, the state introduced a major entry under the Ministry of Justice for the "Establishment of Five Mobile Court Units," which received an allocation of ₦350 million. Additional GBV-related line items under the Ministry of Women Affairs brought the total GBV allocation for the year to ₦694.50 million.

Despite this provision, actual implementation amounted to only ₦17.28 million, representing 29.8%. When assessed across all relevant MDAs, Abia State performed poorly in budget spending, as the state's GBV budget performance declined sharply from 79.0% in 2023 to 27.0% in 2024, placing it in the struggling (red) category. Per capita spending stood at ₦88.82 in 2024, ₦333.27 in 2023, and ₦93.75 in 2022. Although the 2023 figure reflects a significant spike, the sharp decline in 2024 highlights inconsistent investment and limited continuity in funding for GBV-related interventions.

Human Angle Stories

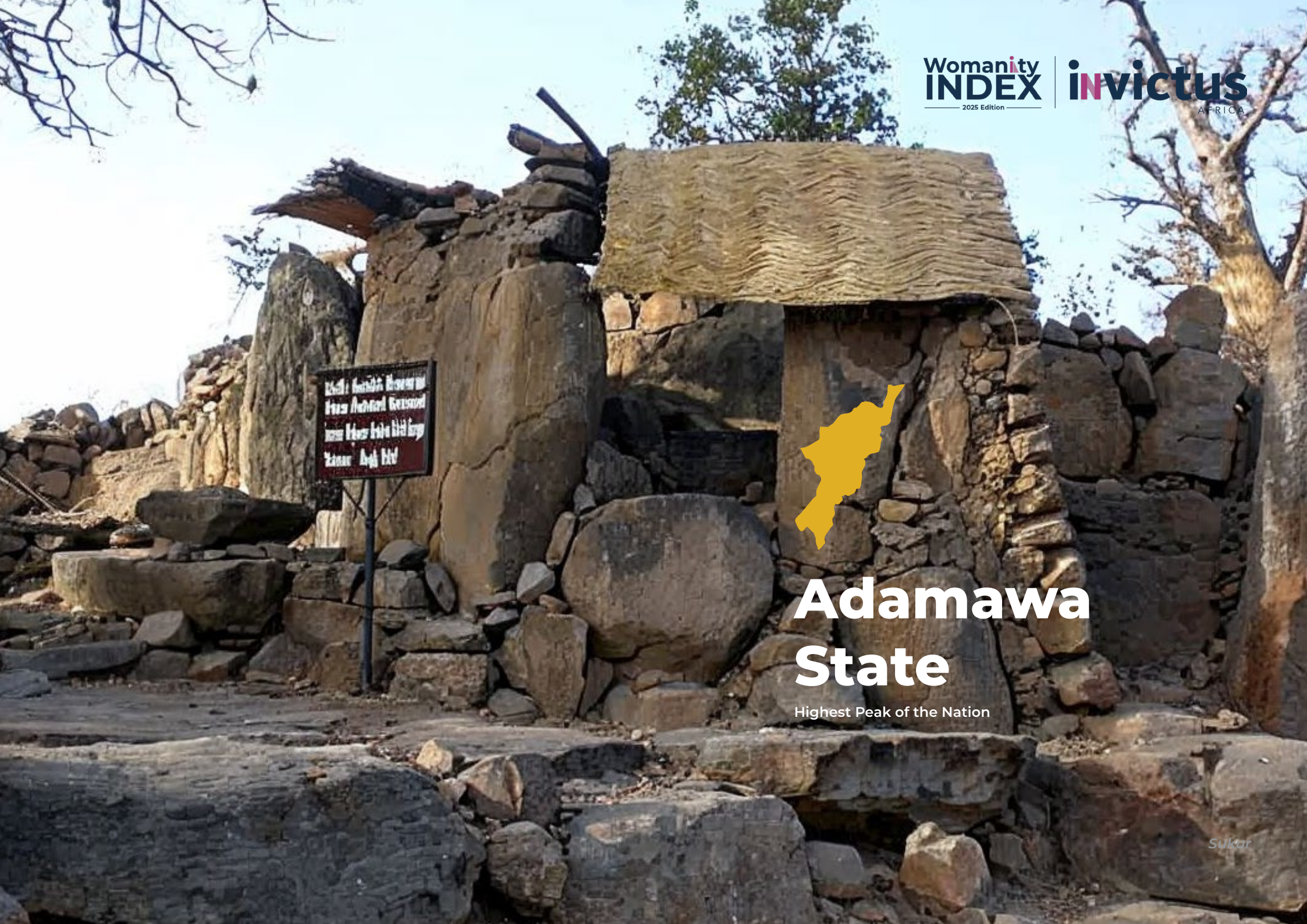
Madam Gift Uche was thrown out of her matrimonial home along with her five children. A victim of physical violence from her husband, she endured for a long time because of stigma and lack of access to information on the support systems that existed in the state. Madam Uche had to tackle her problems on her own, afraid to speak up because of the trauma of stigmatization that many women in her community have faced for leaving an abusive marriage.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	VAPP law exists but law enforcement agencies selectively apply Criminal Code provisions with lesser penalties, creating vast sentencing disparities.	Mandate that all GBV-related offenses must be charged under VAPP law provisions with quarterly reporting on compliance.
	Public awareness of convictions dropped from 88% in 2024 to 53.8% in 2025, suggesting reduced prosecution visibility.	Establish a public Sex Offenders Register accessible online and at courthouses, documenting all GBV convictions with case details (anonymizing survivors) to increase transparency and deterrence.
	Harmful customary practices including widowhood rights violations and community-imposed sanctions on women persist despite legal prohibitions.	Create a Traditional Leaders' Code of Conduct requiring reporting of GBV cases to formal authorities within 48 hours. Establish sanctions for traditional rulers who pressure survivors to withdraw cases or conduct harmful practices.
Access to Legal Justice	Witness intimidation begins at police stations and continues through prosecution, with 59% of respondents conditioning testimony on protection program effectiveness.	Establish a Witness Protection Unit within the Ministry of Justice with dedicated staff and budget. Train police and prosecutors on witness safety procedures.
	Churches, traditional rulers, and community groups pressure survivors to withdraw cases, transforming victims into social villains while perpetrators gain sympathy.	Launch a state-backed media campaign featuring traditional and religious leaders who support formal justice for GBV, countering narratives that frame forgiveness as superior to accountability. Include testimonies from survivors who found justice through formal systems.
Support Services	No operational SARC exists statewide.	Fast-track completion and operationalization of the three SARCs under construction with RoLAC by 2026.
	Referral pathways show dramatic instability, with legal representation awareness collapsing from 38.1% to 14.9% and support group awareness dropping from 71.9% to 22.3%.	Develop and operationalize the planned online directory of GBV services within three months. Create printed referral pathway cards distributed at police stations, health facilities, courts, and community centres showing phone numbers, addresses, and services for all GBV response actors.
	Primary healthcare centres provide counselling but lack systematic protocols for GBV medical care or forensic evidence collection.	Develop and disseminate standardized GBV medical response protocols to all primary healthcare centres and hospitals. Train healthcare workers on forensic evidence of collection, documentation, and survivor-centered care.

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Information and Awareness	Awareness of GBV programs declined from 77.6% in 2023 to 52.9% in 2025, with perceived usefulness dropping sharply to 6.2% rating materials "completely useful."	Consistently carry out GBV awareness programs, including in remote areas. Conduct formative research to assess what information survivors and communities need versus what is currently provided. Redesign awareness materials based on findings.
	There is 87.7% public support for school-based GBV education, but no systematic curriculum integration has occurred.	Partner with the Federal Ministry of Education and NERDC to integrate age-appropriate GBV and consent education into primary and secondary school curricula statewide. Train teachers as GBV champions. Establish reporting mechanisms in schools connected to formal GBV response structures.
	Only 39.7% of GBV information available in audio, 45% in braille, 44.5% in visual formats, indicating severe disability exclusion.	Produce all GBV awareness materials in accessible formats including braille, large print, sign language interpretation videos, audio recordings, picture-based messages, and in easy-to-understand versions. Partner with disability organizations to co-design materials and dissemination strategies.
Budget and Spending	GBV budget performance collapsed from 79% in 2023 to 27% in 2024, despite increasing total allocations from ₦694.5 million to ₦770 million.	Strengthen GBV budget execution by establishing clear implementation plans, ensuring timely fund release, and conducting regular performance reviews to translate allocations into impactful interventions.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | Invictus AFRICA



Adamawa State

Highest Peak of the Nation

Sukur

Adamawa State

Population: 5,357,787

50% Female | Male 50%

Overall Grade 58.8%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,179)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

72.9% | 27.1%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

53.6% | 46.4%

AGE

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

12.2% | 33.4% | 26.4% | 12.7% | 10.1% | 5.2%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

4.0% | 96.0%

SARCs: 5

Shelters: 0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦4.47bn

(This accounts for **1.6%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦217.99m

(This accounts for **4.9%** of total allocation to the ministry)

4.9%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ (Actual Spend)

2.4% | 66.6% | 31.0%

Per Capita Spending

₦81.52

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	50.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	50.0%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	56.3%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	87.5%
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 ■

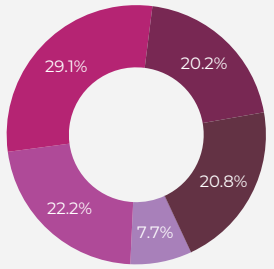
39.8% | 60.2%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

81.4% | 26.8% | 13.1% | 11.8% | 2.8%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

52.7% | 48.6% | 32.1% | 34.1% | 29.4% | 15.6%

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

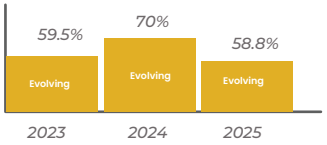
Where did you or the person first seek help?

24.1% | 24.8% | 8.7% | 20.8% | 12.7% | 4.6% | 2.0% | 2.3%

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 ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
38%	18%

28%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	-1 ▼ LP 58.3%	-1 ▼ LP 50.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 86.3%	ALJ 75.0%	-1 ▼ ALJ 50.0%
Support Services	SS 86.3%	SS 87.5%	-1 ▼ SS 56.3%
Information and Awareness	IA 25.0%	+1 ▲ IA 62.5%	+1 ▲ IA 87.5%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+2 ▲ BS 66.7%	-1 ▼ BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- In 2025, 70.4% are willing to report GBV to police or courts, with consistent confidence (approximately 90%) in state laws from 2023–2025.
- Five operational Hope Centers/SARCs now offer free medical care, legal aid, psychosocial support, shelter, and economic empowerment with startup kits.
- Established four designated high courts; Family Support Units at the State CID and Area Commands; gender desks in divisional police stations; and a forensic laboratory at FUTY.

Areas of Concern

- Public awareness of GBV convictions dropped sharply from 84% in 2024 to 42.8% in 2025.
- Prosecutors still rely on the Penal Code, with fewer than five VAPP-based convictions since 2021.
- Legal aid is available in only 3 of 21 LGAs; SARCs cover all LGAs but leave the southern zone underserved.
- No formalized referral pathway, causing coordination gaps with service providers relying on informal contacts.
- Heavy reliance on external funding from international partners like UNFPA threatens sustainability of support services.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Adamawa State has trained law enforcement agencies, strengthening Family Support Units to effectively handle GBV and child abuse cases..
- The state designated four high courts, established specialized units within the police and mandated all magistrates to handle GBV cases.

Access to Legal Justice

Support Services

- The number of safe spaces for women and girls has increased, with new safe spaces and SARC established in some LGAs, supported by partners like Malteser International, UNFPA, and the Royal Digital Foundation.
- Adamawa State established and revamped a “One-Stop Center” in Gulak, Madagali LGA, providing medical, legal, and psychosocial services for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence under one roof.
- The “Rape Survivor Support Project” has empowered survivors, helping five out of 22 participants become advocates for others, fostering long-term resilience and leadership.

Information and Awareness

- The Adamawa State Ministry of Education has integrated GBV and child sexual abuse education into schools, with 93.6% public support, through the AGILE Project, training teachers and students, and establishing reporting mechanisms for abuse cases.

Change Spotlight

Adamawa State successfully scaled school-based gender-based violence (GBV) and child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention between 2023 and 2025 through strong collaboration between the Ministry of Education, UN partners, and NGOs. The Life Helpers Initiative (LHI) first introduced life-skills and GBV prevention training in some secondary schools, which inspired broader action. In 2023, the UN Spotlight Initiative expanded the model by training teachers and principals as school champions and counsellors, embedding GBV prevention and life-skills education into school systems.

In late 2024, the AGILE programme deepened this progress through large-scale investments in education infrastructure by constructing classrooms, establishing 40 non-formal learning centers across 20 LGAs, and creating safe spaces for out-of-school girls. Media coverage and AGILE briefings documented these expansions, projected to reach tens of thousands of adolescents. Qualitative findings from the 2025 Womanity Index show early behavioral shifts, with teachers observing that students now “speak up at home” and discuss safety and rights.

Adamawa State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 58.8%

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

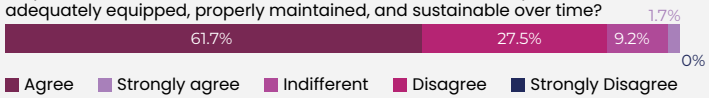


SUPPORT SERVICES

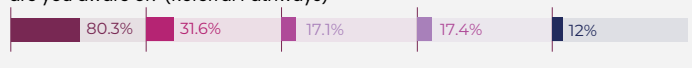
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state? Yes / No



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)

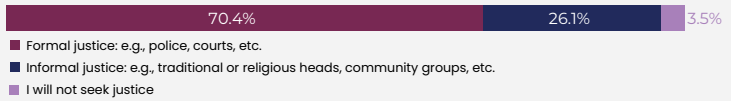


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors? Yes / No

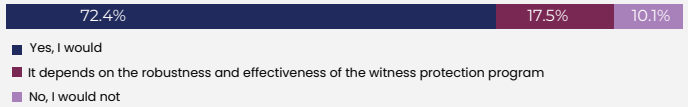


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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? Yes / No

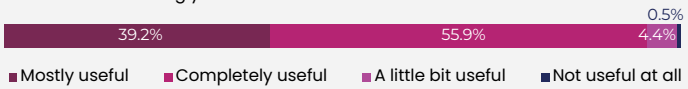


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

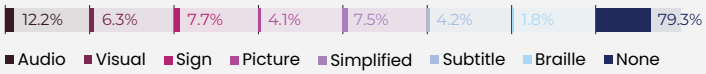
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state? Yes / No



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



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



Adamawa State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 58.8%

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



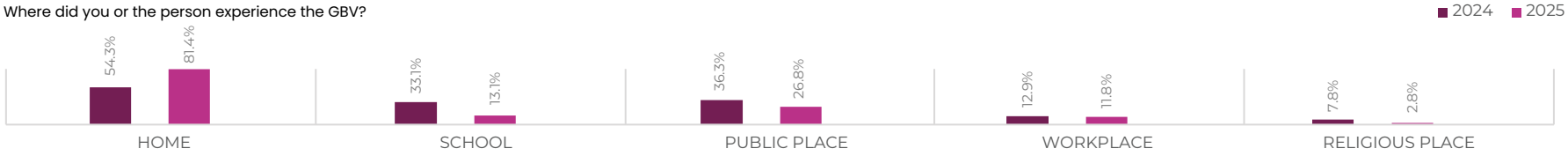
60.2%

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

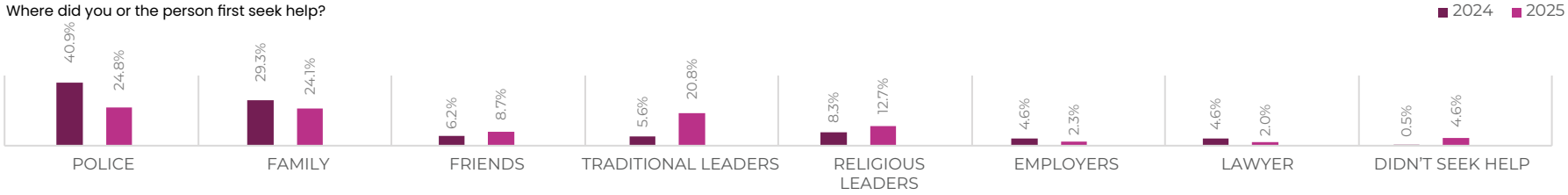
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



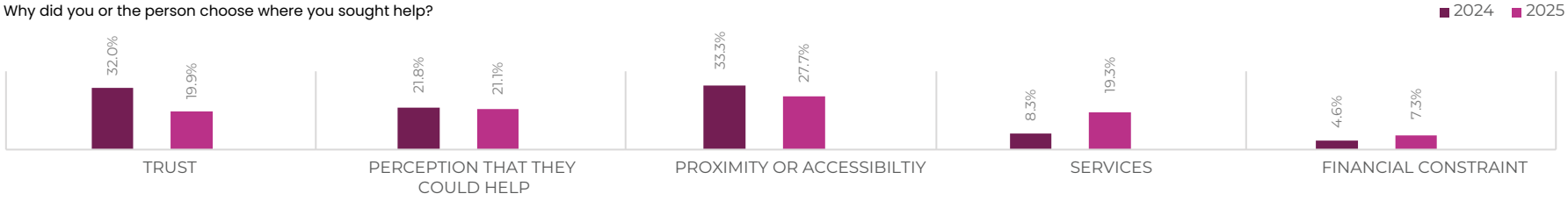
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

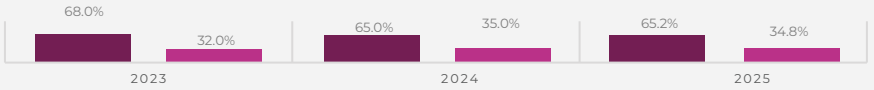


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

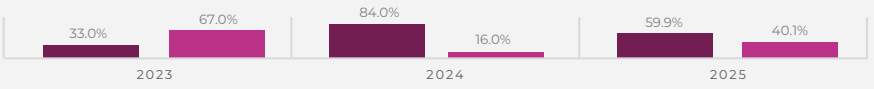
Overall Grade 58.8%

LAWS AND POLICIES

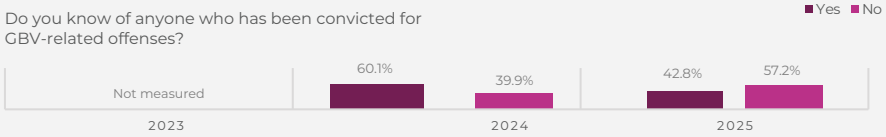
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Do you think customary or religious laws and/or practices are sufficient in preventing and responding to GBV in the state?

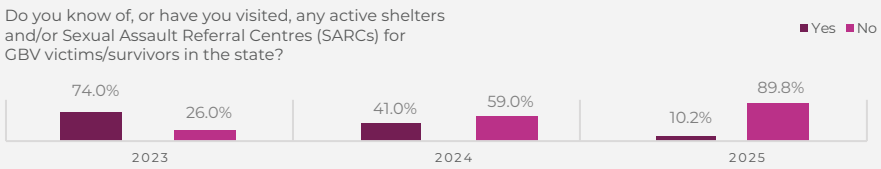


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

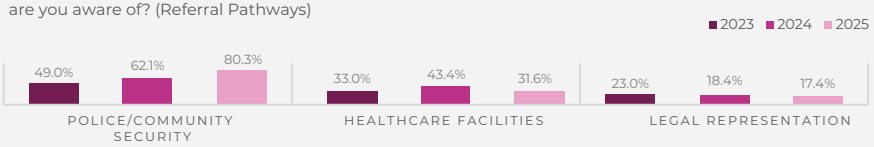


SUPPORT SERVICES

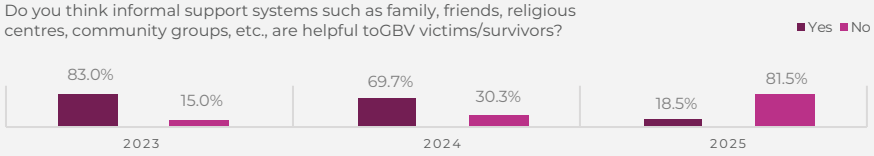
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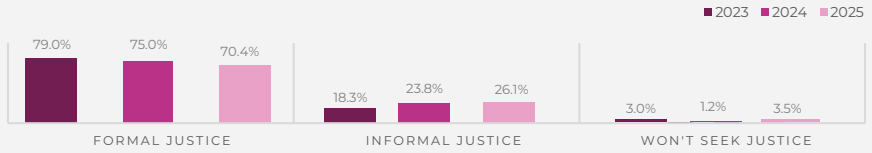


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

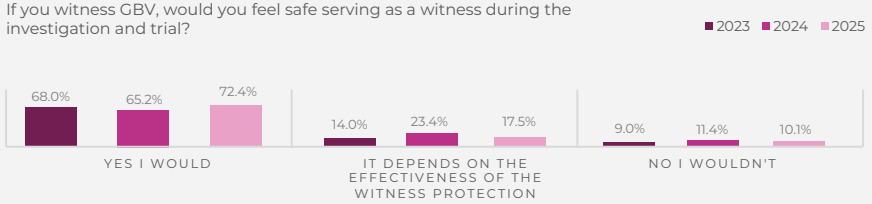


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

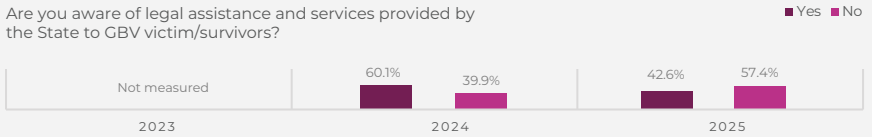
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If you witness GBV, would you feel safe serving as a witness during the investigation and trial?

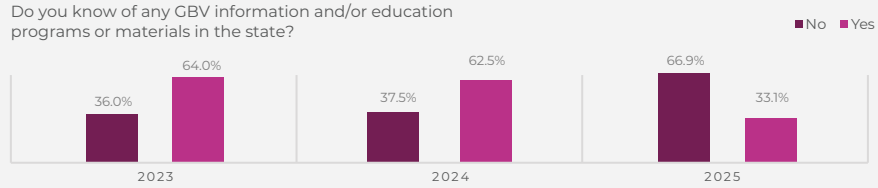


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

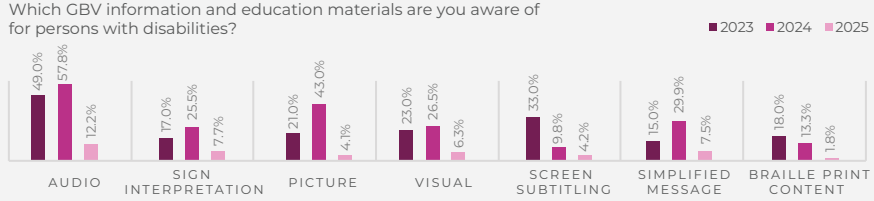


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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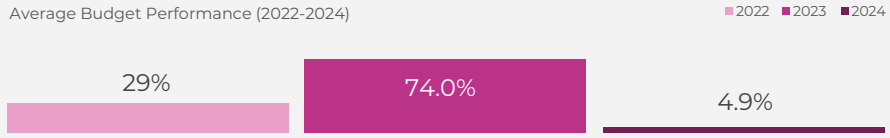


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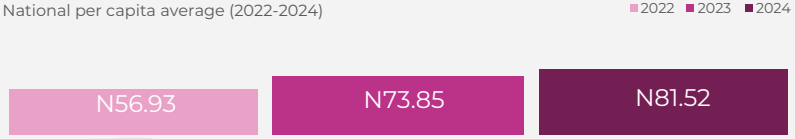


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Adamawa State domesticated the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act in 2021, with the law mirroring most provisions of the federal VAPP Act of 2015. The state introduced additional clauses to strengthen penalties and the Ministry of Justice confirmed that the Penal Code law was amended again concerning the rape of a child. The state has shown meaningful progress in establishing and promoting laws that criminalize GBV, reflected in the relatively high awareness level of 65.2% among respondents. The majority (90.2%) perceive these laws as effective and sufficient, indicating general trust in the formal legal system.

However, only 42.8% of respondents are aware of any convictions for GBV offenses highlighting a key enforcement gap. Stakeholders could not provide specific conviction numbers, indicating that the VAPP law, though enacted four years ago, remains underutilized in actual prosecutions.

Customary and religious systems also play a major role, with 85.1% of respondents aware of such frameworks and 59.9% believing they help prevent or respond to GBV. While these norms can complement state laws, they sometimes conflict with them, especially where cultural practices, such as inheritance restrictions against women, persist despite formal legal reforms like the 2012 Inheritance Law. The Ministry of Justice identified specific local governments in the southern zone (Guyuk, Numan, Shelleng) where "cultural practices prevent women and children from inheriting." FIDA documented additional harmful practices including "early marriage, forced marriage, keeping children out of school, and making children hawk or beg on the street, and giving tribal marks." The NGO representative noted that "religion has influenced or affected the view that one gender is superior to another" while the court official observed that "people tend to hide GBV cases because they believe that it is taboo to reveal them, or the lady will be unmarried if the case is exposed."

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of GBV laws remained relatively stable but stagnant between 2023 and 2025, hovering around 65-68%. While perception of the effectiveness of customary and religious mechanisms in addressing GBV increased significantly from 33.3% in 2023 to 60% by 2024-2025, awareness of actual GBV convictions plummeted dramatically from 84% in 2024 to just 42.8% in 2025. This sharp decline suggests weakening enforcement and reduced visibility of prosecutions, potentially undermining public confidence in the justice system's ability to hold perpetrators accountable.

Stakeholders revealed a critical implementation gap, noting that despite the existence of comprehensive laws like the 2021 VAPP Law and Child Protection Law, many citizens remain unaware of these frameworks, and prosecuting agencies continue to rely on outdated legislation such as the Penal Code rather than newer, more detailed statutes. This institutional inertia and lack of capacity among legal practitioners to effectively charge offenders under new laws directly correlates with the quantitative finding of declining conviction awareness. The evidence points to a systemic failure where robust legal frameworks exist on paper but fail to translate into consistent enforcement, visible justice outcomes, or meaningful deterrence in practice, highlighting an urgent need for both legal awareness campaigns and capacity building within the justice system.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Access to legal assistance in Adamawa State is limited, with only 42.6% of respondents aware of relevant services. The legal aid office is currently only available in three LGAs (Yola North, Yola South, and Girei), leaving 18 out of 21 LGAs without regular coverage. Plans for expansion to major towns like Mubi, Ganye, and Numan have been mentioned, but no expansion has occurred in years.

There is a promising shift toward reliance on formal justice systems, with 70.4% of respondents indicating they would report GBV cases to the police or courts. The state has established a specialized infrastructure to handle GBV cases, including a "family unit" at the State CID, family units in four Area Commands, Juvenile Welfare Centre offices in each division overseen by female officers, four designated high courts for GBV cases, and magistrates mandated to handle such cases. The police have improved reporting systems, including through social media and WhatsApp, and implemented community policing strategies to increase accessibility.

However, 26.1% still prefer informal systems, often driven by cultural or religious beliefs, including 29.3% who see "God as the ultimate dispenser of justice." These beliefs, coupled with reports that traditional and religious authorities sometimes treat GBV as "minor issues," continue to undermine formal prosecution and reinforce impunity. Multiple stakeholders confirmed that informal settlement practices obstruct justice.

About 72.4% of respondents are willing to serve as witnesses in GBV cases, showing strong

community support. The state covers witness expenses and pays transportation allowances. Nonetheless, NGOs still face challenges, such as police requiring payments from survivors, which can lead to cases being dropped.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Over the three years, formal justice channels remained the preferred option for Adamawa residents in cases of gender-based violence (GBV), with over 70% expressing this preference: 79.2% in 2023, 75% in 2024, and 70.4% in 2025. This sustained confidence in formal systems is echoed in the growing percentage of people who feel safe serving as witnesses in GBV cases, rising from 67.5% in 2023 and 65% in 2024 to 72.4% in 2025, the highest level recorded during the period. The consistently low share of those who feel outright unsafe is encouraging, but further strengthening of witness protection could help turn conditional willingness into full participation.

Awareness of state-provided legal assistance for GBV victims declined sharply, from 60% in 2024 to just 42.6% in 2025. This drop is concerning, especially as the proportion of those unaware of such services rose to 57.4%. Reversing this trend should be a priority, as awareness is a critical first step toward accessing legal protections and support.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Adamawa state operates five Hope Centres/SARCs across its 21 local governments. The Ministry of Women Affairs' Gender Officer detailed their locations: "We have one Hope Centre here at the Women's Development Centre, Hope Centre Yola at the Specialist Hospital, Hope Centre Numan at the General Hospital in Numan, Hope Centre Mubi at the General Hospital in Mubi, and one in Gulak, in Madagali Local Government." However, awareness and accessibility remain critically low with only 10.2% of respondents aware of any functional SARC or shelter, while 89.8% are unaware. Yet, among those who are aware, a strong 89.2% (27.5% strongly agree, 61.7% agree) believe these facilities are functional, adequately equipped, and sustainable, indicating that existing centres perform well but are poorly publicized and unevenly distributed.

A critical structural gap undermines service coordination: Adamawa State currently has no formalized GBV Reporting and Referral Pathway. The NGO representative stated explicitly, "Currently, there is not even a referral pathway in Adamawa State, and this presents a significant challenge for us working on GBV." The SARC Administrator confirmed informal arrangements exists, but assessment showed referral awareness is skewed toward security services, with 80.3% familiar with police pathways, but far fewer are aware of health (31.6%), legal (17.4%), or psychosocial support (17.1%) options.

Where services exist, they provide relatively holistic support. The Ministry of Women Affairs emphasized, "All the services including medical, legal, psychosocial, and economic are provided for survivors. Our aim is that if a survivor comes into this place, they can access all the services free of charge." Noteworthily, 81.5% of respondents trust formal support systems over informal ones, showing readiness to use official services if access improves. Informal support structures remain weak. The Ministry of Health explained this stems from cultural attitudes: "Nobody supports gender-based violence among families, religion, or any other group." .

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Adamawa State made uneven progress in GBV support services between 2023 and 2025. Awareness of SARC/shelters rose from 25.8% in 2023 to 41% in 2024, but dropped sharply to 10.2% in 2025, showing a serious decline in outreach. Awareness of referral pathways was heavily skewed toward police/security, which increased from 49.2% in 2023 to 80.3% in 2025, while healthcare pathway awareness fluctuated (32.5% in 2023, 43.4% in 2024, 31.6% in 2025) and legal pathway awareness remained low and declining (22.5% in 2023 to 17.4% in 2025). Public trust shifted dramatically from informal to formal support systems. Belief that informal systems were more helpful dropped from 82.5% in 2023 to 70% in 2024, then plummeted to just 18.5% in 2025, showing people now prefer formal services.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Adamawa State uses various channels to disseminate information, including television stations, jingles, and partnerships with NGOs, to raise awareness about GBV. The Ministries of Women Affairs and Education produce and distribute diverse materials such as fliers, banners, and billboards across all 21 LGAs, including in local languages like Fulani and Hausa. A toll-free hotline is also available, and sensitization sessions are conducted in localities, including during crisis situations like the recent flood in Yola South where psychosocial support was also provided. However, only 33.1% of respondents are aware of such initiatives. Despite this low reach, the vast majority of those exposed (95.1%) found the information useful, showing that when GBV messages reach people, they are clear, relevant, and impactful.

NGOs (58.2%) and religious centers (44.6%) are the leading sources of information, while formal institutions such as schools, workplaces, and government channels contribute minimally. The NGO representative detailed grassroots engagement: "In May, we launched the Rape Survivor Support Project, where 22 survivors are undergoing their healing process. Currently, we are conducting a sensitization program in Bachure, where we discuss the GBV reporting system. Coverage extends across Yola North, Yola South, Fufore, and Girei. A major annual campaign is the 16 Days of Activism, and the Ministry of Women Affairs explained: "From November to December, every day there must be awareness in almost every LGA in Adamawa State during the 16 days of activism."

Encouragingly, there is overwhelming public support (93.6%) for integrating GBV and child sexual abuse education into school curricula, signaling strong community demand for early and continuous awareness through the education system. The Ministry of Education has integrated GBV and sexual abuse education into the national curriculum, developed by the Federal Ministry of Education and NERDC. However, implementation is limited, with GBV topics taught as extracurricular activities, mainly in secondary schools.

The Ministry of Women Affairs supplements this effort by partnering with schools to establish GBV clubs and training teachers. Challenges include lack of privacy, insufficient stakeholder support, and absence of designated GBV officers in schools to handle cases. However, information dissemination remains neither inclusive nor fully accessible. Communication formats for persons with disabilities

are grossly inadequate, as only 12.2% use audio formats, 7.7% include sign interpretation, and a mere 1.8% employ braille..

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, public awareness of GBV information and materials declined sharply. Awareness dropped from 64.2% in 2023 to 62% in 2024, then plummeted to just 33.1% in 2025, suggesting a major erosion in the reach and effectiveness of information campaigns. However, perceived usefulness of materials fluctuated – 71% found them useful in 2023, dropping to 64% in 2024, then rising sharply to 95.1% in 2025, thus raising questions about whether messages were properly tailored to audience needs.

Awareness of disability-inclusive GBV materials showed consistent collapse across all formats by 2025, despite temporary improvements in 2024. Audio/spoken messages awareness rose from 49.2% in 2023 to 57.8% in 2024, then crashed to 12.2% in 2025. Similar dramatic declines occurred across all formats: visual content (22.5% → 26.5% → 6.3%), sign interpretation (16.7% → 25.5% → 7.7%), braille (18.3% → 13.25% → 1.8%), picture-based messages (20.4% → 43% → 4.1%), screen subtitles (13.3% → 9.8% → 4.2%), and simplified messages (15% → 29.9% → 7.5%). This regression suggests disability-inclusive communication lost priority or was not sustained in 2025, highlighting the urgent need for consistent investment in accessible GBV information for persons with disabilities. .

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis in 2024

Adamawa State allocated ₦4.5 billion to GBV programs in 2024, representing 1.60% of its total state budget. This is among the highest budget allocations for GBV interventions across Nigerian states. However, the state spent only ₦218 million of the allocated amount, achieving a mere 4.9% implementation rate. The actual GBV expenditure constituted just 0.10% of the state's total spending, far below the 1.60% budget allocation. On a per capita basis, Adamawa State spent approximately ₦81.52 per female inhabitant on GBV-related programs.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Adamawa State's budget performance decreased from 74.0% in 2023 to 29.0% in 2024. Gender-based violence-related programs received allocations of ₦495.08 million, ₦260.26 million, and ₦4.47 billion in 2022, 2023, and 2024 respectively. Actual expenditure, however, amounted to only ₦143.67 million, ₦191.85 million, and ₦217.99 million – that is, 29.0%, 73.7%, and 4.9%, respectively across the same period.

Although the state includes a limited number of GBV-specific line items in its budget, implementation continues to lag. One recurring line item, "Procurement of Banners and Billboards for the 16 Days of Activism for GBV Commemoration," appeared in both 2023 and 2024 with allocations of ₦10 million and ₦10.4 million, which achieved budget performance rates of 18.0% and 50.8% respectively. Per capita spending was ₦81.52 in 2024, ₦73.85 in 2023, and ₦56.93 in 2022, showing gradual increases over the three-year period. This steady upward trend suggests incremental improvement but still reflects relatively modest growth in investment levels year-on-year.

Human Angle Stories

Hauwa, a widow from Michika, first learned about the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Law through a radio program. Having endured years of abuse in her marriage, she was encouraged to seek help. However, her case was dismissed as a "family matter." As Hauwa reflected, "The law is incomplete. It looks good on paper, but when you go to use it, you find it is not for the poor woman." Her experience illustrates the disconnect between legal frameworks and survivors' ability to access protection, despite legislative progress.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	65.2% of respondents are aware of GBV laws, but confidence in enforcement is low.	Mandate continuous training for police, prosecutors, and judges on the VAPP Law, survivor-centred justice, and forensic handling to strengthen enforcement.
	Stakeholders describe laws as "incomplete" or not effectively implemented.	Review and amend state GBV-related laws to close gaps, harmonize them with the VAPP Act, and ensure clear enforcement guidelines.
	Cultural/religious settlements continue to undermine deterrence.	Institutionalize legal oversight of alternative dispute resolution by requiring mandatory referrals of GBV cases (especially sexual violence) to the formal justice system.
Access to Legal Justice	70.4% of respondents prefer to seek formal justice, while 26.1% still prefer informal mechanisms.	Create formal referral protocols requiring collaboration between informal leaders and formal justice actors to ensure all GBV cases reach courts.
	Only 2 convictions recorded out of 113 GBV cases in 2024 (NSCDC data).	Establish and operationalize specialized GBV prosecution units within existing courts to fast-track cases and improve conviction rates within one year.
	Lack of affordable or available legal representation that leads to case withdrawals, delays, or non-prosecution.	Scale up legal aid and pro-bono services by expanding Legal Aid Council presence across all 21 LGAs and incentivizing private lawyers to take GBV cases.
	Survivors report that cases "just disappeared" without resolution.	Establish a digital GBV case-tracking system to monitor progress from report to prosecution and ensure accountability for missing or delayed cases.
Support Services	Only 10.2% of respondents are aware of SARCs or shelters in the state.	Expand awareness of SARCs and shelters through state-backed campaigns, ensuring survivors know where to find help.
	Facilities exist but are often under-resourced ("no counsellors, no medicines").	Increase funding and staffing of SARCs/shelters, ensuring availability of trained counsellors, medicines, and psychosocial support.
	Services concentrated in Yola North, Yola South, and Girei, leaving rural LGAs underserved.	Decentralize GBV services by establishing satellite support units in rural LGAs and integrating more disability-inclusive survivor services.
Information and Awareness	33.1% of respondents are aware of GBV sensitization programs or materials; 66.9% are not.	Expand GBV awareness campaigns through radio, schools, and grassroots dialogues to reach underserved populations.
	93.6% support teaching GBV/CSA prevention in schools.	Scale up school-based GBV education as extracurricular content across all LGAs, with trained teachers delivering age-appropriate modules.
	Over 80% report no access to disability-friendly awareness materials.	Produce and distribute disability-inclusive IEC materials in braille, audio, sign language, and local languages to improve accessibility.
Budget and Spending	Budget performance collapsed from 73.7% to 4.9%, indicating the state allocated funds far beyond its capacity to implement projects. This unrealistic budgeting leaves GBV programs underfunded in practice.	Require the Ministry of Women Affairs to submit quarterly expenditure reports, and use these to improve planning, track fund utilization, and address barriers preventing funds from reaching GBV programs and survivors.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition

Invictus AFRICA



Akwa Ibom State

Land of Promise

Uyo town roundabout

Akwa Ibom State

Population: 7,195,834

50% Female | Male 50%

Overall Grade 80.0%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,084)*

GENDER — Female ■ Male ■

70.0% | 30.0%

AREA — Rural ■ Urban ■

50.4% | 49.6%

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

5.9% | 34.2% | 34.3% | 14.8% | 7.7% | 3.1%

DISABILITY STATUS — Yes ■ No ■

4.6% | 95.4%

SARCs: 4

Shelters: 1

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦8.71bn
(This accounts for **0.9%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦6.73bn
(This accounts for **77.3%** of total allocation to the ministry)

77.3%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

28.8% | 4.0% | 67.2%

Per Capita Spending

₦1,872.2

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	83.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	68.8%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	75.0%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	81.3%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	91.7%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

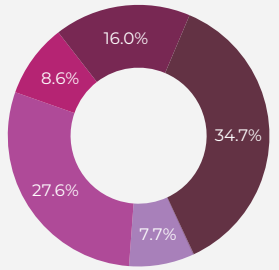
69.9% | 30.1%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

86.2% | 23.6% | 20.2% | 21.2% | 7.4%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

52.1% | 35.6% | 23.0% | 48.2% | 12.3% | 7.7%

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

Where did you or the person first seek help?

44.2% | 27.3% | 5.5% | 6.4% | 3.7% | 5.5% | 6.1% | 1.2%

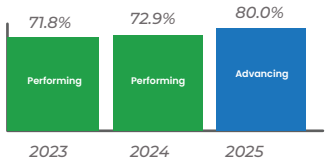
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ I did not seek help ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ Lawyer ■

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

STATE PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD (2023-2025)

Overall Grade 80.0%

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
50%	40%

45% Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	LP 75.0%	LP 83.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 56.3%	ALJ 68.8%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	+1 ▲ SS 81.3%	SS 75.0%
Information and Awareness	IA 86.3%	IA 93.8%	IA 81.3%
Budget and Spending	BS 75.0%	-1 ▼ BS 58.3%	+1 ▲ BS 91.7%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Residents unwilling to report GBV dropped from 7.9% (2023) to just 0.9% (2025), showing growing confidence to take action when violence occurs.
- Public perception that informal systems are more effective than formal services fell from 72% in 2023 to 45.6% in 2025.
- FIDA, the Ministry of Justice, and Legal Aid Council extended free legal services to all 31 LGAs, with trained paralegals and volunteer lawyers deployed statewide.

Areas of Concern

- Public awareness of GBV convictions fell from 70% in 2024 to 35.1% in 2025, despite stakeholders reporting consistent prosecutions.
- Residents who consider customary and religious laws sufficient for addressing GBV increased from 40.9% to 60.9%, threatening formal justice gains.
- Public awareness of shelters and SARCs dropped from 39.4% in 2023 to just 13.7% in 2025.
- Fewer residents now feel safe participating in GBV investigations and trials, with demand for witness protection increasing as security provisions remain inadequate.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Akwa Ibom State has translated the VAPP law into three indigenous languages (Ibibio, Oron, and Eket) and developed simplified versions for improved accessibility.
- Established multi-sectoral GBV response teams comprising government agencies, NGOs, and service providers.

Access to Legal Justice

- GBV units were set up in all 31 LGAs, coordinated by wives of local government chairmen or designated directors.
- FIDA deployed trained paralegals or liaison officers in each LGA to offer free pro bono legal services to survivors.

Support Services

- Four SARCs and one Shelters were established across the three senatorial districts: one in Ikot Ekpene, one in Eket, and two in Uyo.
- A unified referral pathway protocol was developed to coordinate services across the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Justice, NGOs, and partners

Information and Awareness

- Training manuals on GBV were developed through participatory processes involving teachers, lawyers, traditional leaders, survivors, and community members. These manuals, covering topics such as prevention, gender roles, and decision-making, were distributed to primary and secondary schools.
- Gender clubs were launched in several schools, providing peer-led platforms for GBV education and advocacy.
- Annual GBV Month campaigns are held every June, reaching all 31 LGAs through stakeholder trainings, media broadcasts, and printed awareness materials.

Change Spotlight

Akwa Ibom State achieved significant impact in GBV prevention through participatory development of training manuals involving teachers, legal experts, traditional leaders, survivors, and community members. These culturally appropriate, age-specific materials—ranging from comic books for primary students to comprehensive guides for older learners—have been widely distributed across schools and Sunday schools, equipping educators with structured tools to teach GBV prevention, gender roles, and decision-making while training them to recognize and appropriately respond to disclosures.

The program's life-saving potential was demonstrated when a young girl, after attending a training session using the manual, disclosed that her father was sexually abusing her and her two sisters with their mother's knowledge. The teacher's immediate report to authorities led to the perpetrator's arrest and the girls' rescue and support. This case illustrates how school-based GBV education creates critical ripple effects beyond awareness—building reporting pathways, strengthening teacher capacity to handle sensitive conversations, and ultimately saving children from ongoing abuse through early intervention.

Akwa Ibom State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 80.0%

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



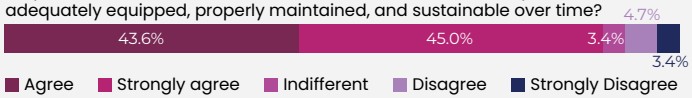
Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses? Yes No

SUPPORT SERVICES

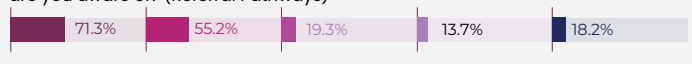
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state? Yes No



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)

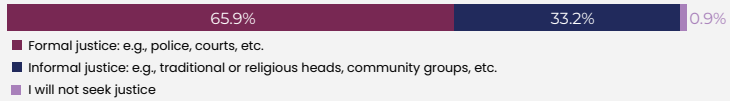


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors? No Yes

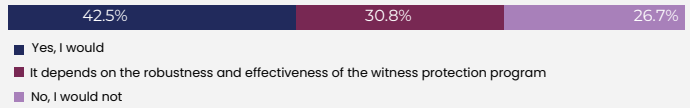


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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? Yes No

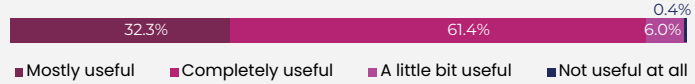


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

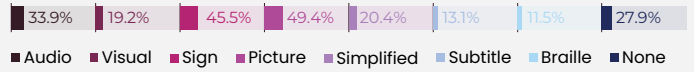
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state? Yes No



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



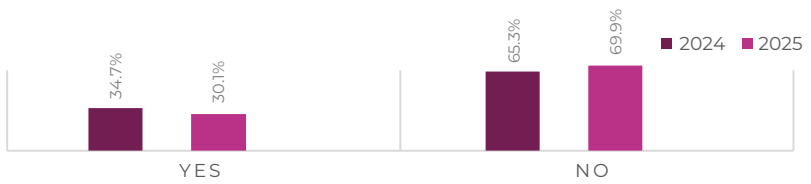
Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Akwa Ibom State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 80.0%

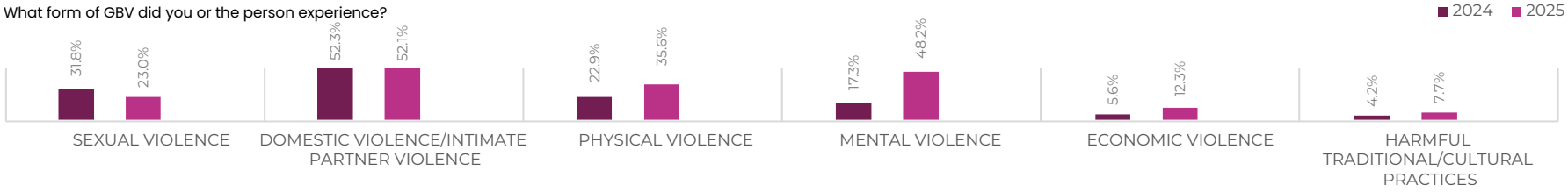
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



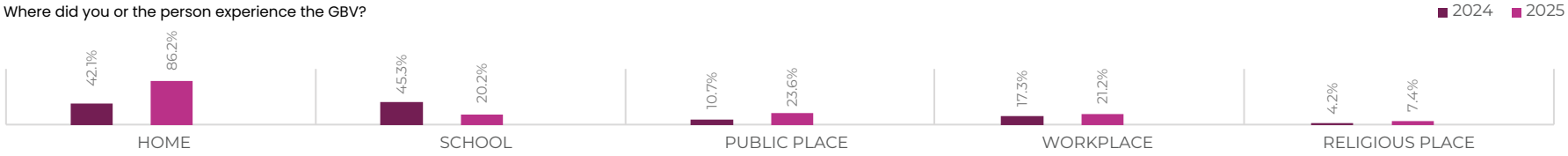
30.1%

of Akwa Ibom State population have either experienced GBV or knows someone who have experienced GBV

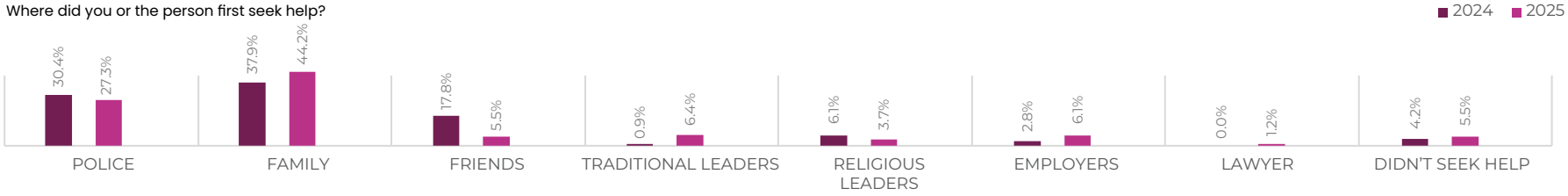
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



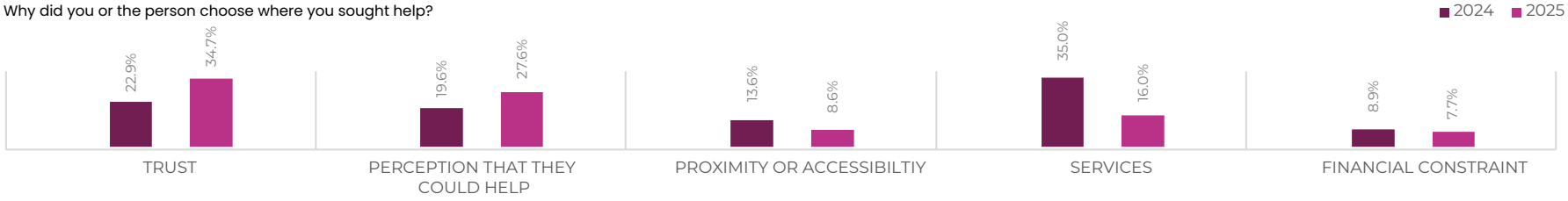
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

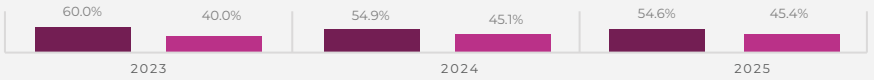


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

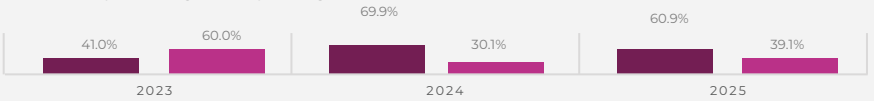
Overall Grade 80.0%

LAWS AND POLICIES

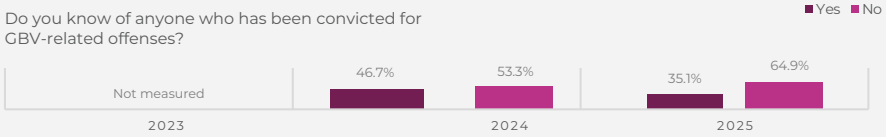
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

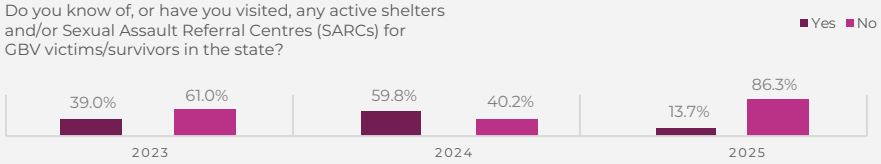


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

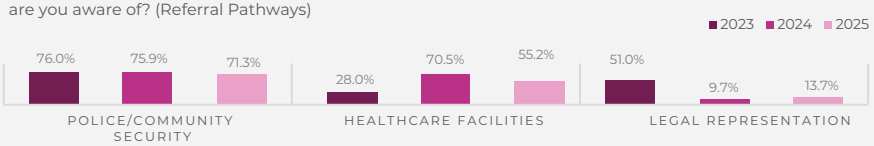


SUPPORT SERVICES

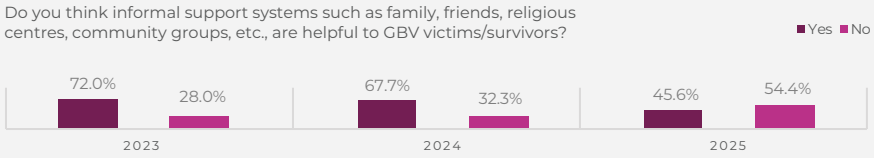
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

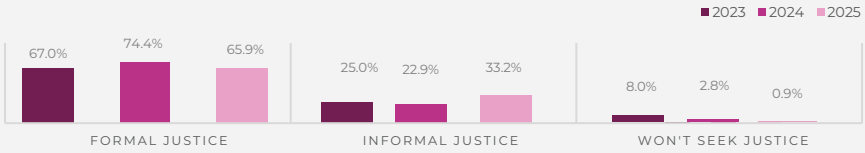


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

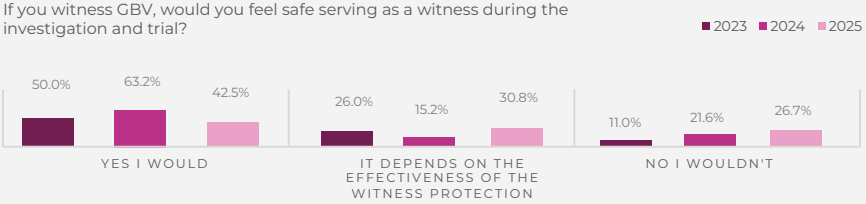


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

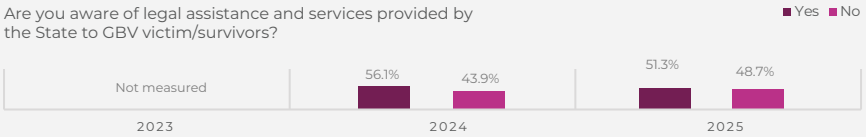
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

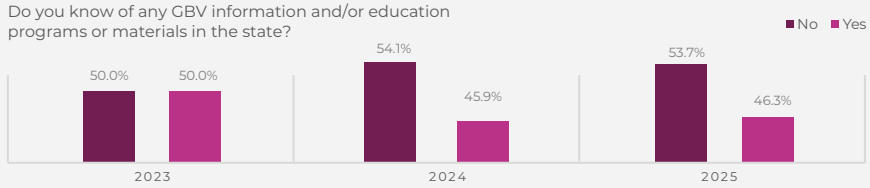


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

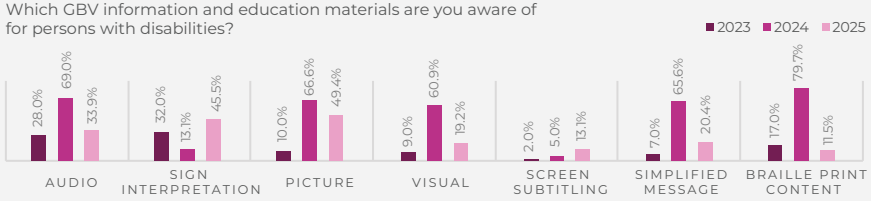


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

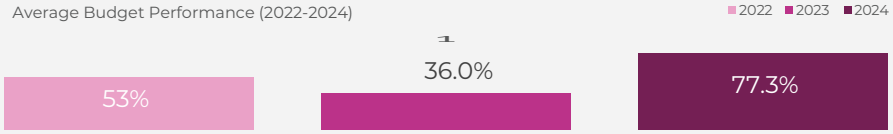


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

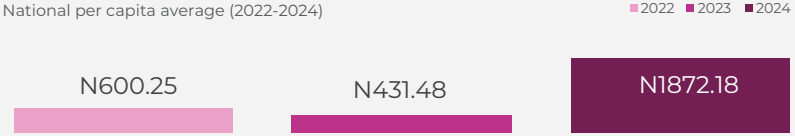


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Akwa Ibom State has strong legal frameworks to address GBV, including the VAPP Law, which retained core elements of the federal VAPP Act 2015 while introducing context-specific additions. These include the creation of a state multi-sectoral GBV response team, specific guidelines for engaging traditional rulers and religious leaders in prevention campaigns, and protocols for school-based prevention.

The state has translated the VAPP law into three major indigenous languages (Ibibio, Oron, and Eket) and developed simplified versions to improve accessibility, particularly in rural areas. These efforts appear to be yielding results: a majority of residents (60.9%) believe the laws are effective tools for preventing and addressing GBV, and overall awareness of the specific laws remains moderate (54.6%).

Public awareness of actual GBV-related convictions is low, with only 35.1% of residents reporting knowledge of anyone convicted for GBV offences. Stakeholder interviews offer mixed figures, but suggest that actual convictions likely fall between 5 and 10 cases in the past year. This discrepancy highlights challenges in data coordination and transparency, as well as weak communication of enforcement outcomes, all of which can erode public trust in the formal justice system.

Customary and religious laws continue to influence how communities in Akwa Ibom respond to GBV. While 56.1% of residents are aware of these informal practices and 60.9% consider them effective, stakeholders have raised concerns about harmful customs. These include early and forced marriages, resolving sexual assault cases through monetary compensation instead of prosecution, and pressuring survivors to marry their abusers or accept traditional remedies. Such practices often prioritize family honor over justice, creating tension with formal legal systems and prevent survivors from accessing the justice and support they deserve

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, public awareness of formal laws addressing GBV remained relatively stable but moderate, with 59.8% of residents aware in 2023 and 54.6% in 2025. However, public knowledge of actual GBV-related convictions declined significantly over the same period, from 46.7% in 2024 to just 35.1% in 2025.

At the same time, more residents now believe that customary and religious laws are sufficient for addressing GBV. This perception increased from 40.9% in 2023 to 60.9% in 2025, raising concerns about a shift away from formal justice systems. This trend can be partly attributed to the visible presence of traditional and religious leaders in communities, compared to less visible formal justice outcomes. The state has attempted to address this by engaging traditional rulers through training and creating local government bylaws against GBV. However, the effectiveness of these interventions remains limited when influential perpetrators use their positions to obstruct justice. These shifts highlight an urgent need to improve the visibility of formal justice outcomes and strengthen public confidence in the formal legal system, which is increasingly being overshadowed by trust in informal mechanisms.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Public engagement with the formal justice system in Akwa Ibom remains modest, highlighting the need for stronger efforts to build trust and improve access. While a majority of residents (65.9%) say they would seek redress through official channels, a nearly equal proportion (64.6%) still view community-based mechanisms as helpful for securing justice for GBV survivors. This indicates fragile confidence in formal systems. This limited trust is further reflected in residents' willingness to serve as witnesses in GBV cases. Only 42.5% feel safe doing so. Others are either conditionally willing; that is, depending on the availability of witness protection (30.8%), or unwilling to participate at all (26.7%).

Stakeholders observed that while the GBV reporting and prosecution process is functional, it remains slow and burdened by financial barriers. Survivors often face out-of-pocket costs for medical tests and police transportation, despite official claims of free services. These challenges can discourage reporting and delay justice.

Legal aid services are available in all 31 local government areas. FIDA provides free legal support through trained paralegals or liaison officers in each LGA, while the Ministry of Justice has set up GBV units in every LGA, often led by the wives of local government chairmen or directors. However, only 51.3% of residents are aware of these services. This suggests that the main challenge is not availability but limited awareness and access, especially in remote areas like Ibiono, Obot Akara, Ikono, and Ini, where many survivors may not know where to go for help or face transport difficulties.

There is a clear need to increase public awareness and improve access to legal support in these communities.

The state has Family Support Units (FSUs) in some police formations, but no dedicated GBV courts. Because regular courts are too busy, cases take a long time, placing additional strain on survivors and highlighting the need for specialized courts to ensure faster, more supportive legal processes.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

A positive shift observed over the three-year period is the significant drop in the number of residents unwilling to seek justice, from 7.9% in 2023 to just 0.9% in 2025. This indicates improved willingness to take action when GBV occurs. However, this shift has largely moved toward informal systems, with reliance on such mechanisms rising from 25.2% to 33.2%. Meanwhile, the proportion of residents preferring formal justice channels remained relatively stable, from 66.9% in 2023 to 65.9% in 2025. These trends highlight the need for stronger collaboration between formal and informal systems to ensure survivors receive fair and consistent support.

Concerns about safety during the justice process have grown. Fewer residents now report feeling safe participating in investigations and court proceedings, while more are willing to engage only if strong witness protection measures are in place. The lack of adequate security arrangements for witnesses (and legal professionals) undermines confidence in the system.

Awareness of state-provided legal aid for GBV survivors has not improved meaningfully, remaining at 56% in 2023 and dropping slightly to 51% in 2025. This decline, despite reported expansion of services by stakeholders, highlights the urgent need to strengthen legal aid outreach and accessibility.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Akwa Ibom State operates four SARCs across its three senatorial districts, along with one shelter. These include a government-run SARC at Ikot Ekpene General Hospital, a philanthropist-supported center in Eket, and two facilities in Uyo: an NGO-run SARC and a combined shelter/assault center. However, only two of these centers are described as “fully operational,” while others struggle with funding constraints that limit their effectiveness.

Despite these facilities, awareness remains low as only 13.7% of residents report knowing about or visiting a SARC or shelter. This low awareness is particularly concerning given that stakeholders describe a well-established referral pathway involving the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Justice, NGOs, and partner agencies. However, knowledge gaps persist, particularly in rural communities. While a majority of residents are familiar with reporting through the police (71.3%), and just over half are aware of hospital-based reporting (55.2%), knowledge of support groups (19.3%) and legal representation (13.7%) remain poorly known. Underserved LGAs identified include Ikono, Ini, Obot Akara, Ibiono, Eastern Obolo, and Mbo, where both services and information about services are limited.

Broader awareness of GBV support services, including medical, legal, psychosocial, and economic assistance, is higher, with just over half of residents (51.3%) aware of their existence. While this suggests some progress, the low level of direct engagement may indicate that these services are either not easily accessible or that information about them is not reaching the wider public.

This limited access and awareness may explain why nearly half of residents (45.6%) still believe informal support systems such as family, religious institutions, or community groups, are more effective than formal services. However, stakeholders report that these informal networks, while emotionally supportive, often lack the structure, accountability, and comprehensiveness required for survivors’ long-term recovery and access to justice

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, public engagement with shelters and SARCs declined significantly from 39.4% in 2023 to just 13.7% in 2025, despite reaching a peak of 60% in 2024. This sharp drop may point to reduced visibility, limited accessibility, or declining public confidence in these facilities.

At the same time, while informal support systems such as family networks, religious centres, and community groups remain a key part of the support landscape, public trust in their effectiveness appears to be waning. The proportion of residents who viewed these informal systems as more helpful than formal services dropped from 72% in 2023 to 45.6% in 2025. This growing recognition of informal systems’ limitations presents an opportunity for strengthening formal services, if adequate resources and political will are mobilized.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Akwa Ibom State continues to implement robust public sensitization campaigns, with its annual GBV Month observed every June serving as a major awareness platform. The June 2025 GBV Month was described as a “statewide program” that reached “almost all the local government in the state,” with sensitization delivered through stakeholder trainings for village heads and youth councils, radio jingles, television programs, flyers, posters, and even town criers in some communities. These campaigns are implemented in collaboration with key stakeholders such as the Ministry of Justice, FIDA, and other civil society organizations. Despite these efforts, only 46.3% of residents report having been exposed to GBV-related programs, highlighting the need to extend outreach to underserved communities and deepen public engagement.

In the education sector, school-based GBV initiatives have made meaningful progress. A participatory process involving teachers, legal experts, traditional leaders, survivors, and community members led to the development of contextually relevant and legally sound training manuals. These materials have been distributed across primary and secondary schools, and cover key topics including GBV prevention, gender roles, and decision-making. An official reported that “if you count up to 2,000 schools in Akwa Ibom State, 1,800 should have” the training manuals, indicating wide coverage.

To reinforce this learning, gender clubs have been set up in several schools, providing peer-led spaces where students can discuss sensitive topics and promote prevention messages among themselves. These interventions are showing promise, particularly in creating safe spaces for children to disclose

abuse. However, their long-term sustainability is at risk. While public support for integrating GBV and child sexual abuse education into the formal school curriculum is very high (95.9%), these topics remain outside the official curriculum. As a result, current progress is heavily reliant on external partners and donor-funded programs. Schools not reached by these efforts are less likely to have access to standardized materials and teacher training, leaving gaps in awareness and protection.

Efforts have also been made to promote disability inclusion in GBV communication. Sign language interpreters are recognized by 45.5% of respondents, and picture-based messages by 49.4%, indicating these formats are increasingly used in training and public events. However, other accessible formats remain significantly underutilized: only 11.5% are aware of braille printed content, 13.1% of screen subtitling, 19.2% of visual content, 20.4% of simplified messages, and 33.9% of audio/spoken content. While representatives of disability associations are sometimes included in programming, stronger efforts are needed to ensure consistent and accessible messaging across all formats.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV programs over the three years has remained average: 50% in 2023 and 46.3% in 2025. Stakeholders report that political discontinuity undermines long-term awareness gains and creates gaps in coverage, particularly in rural communities that depend on government outreach rather than NGO programs concentrated in urban centers. Between 2023 and 2025, awareness of accessible GBV materials improved notably. Audio content rose from 28% in 2023 to 69.0% in 2024, then decline to 33.9% in 2025. Visual content increased from 10% in 2023 to 60.9% in 2024 before declining to 19.2% in 2025. Picture-based messages grew from 9% in 2023 to 6.6% in 2024, then declined to 49.4% in 2025. However, braille awareness Increased from 17% in 2023 to 79.7% in 2024 and reaching only 11.5% in 2025.

Budget and Spending

2024 Budget Analysis

Akwa Ibom demonstrates exceptionally strong performance in addressing gender-based violence, both in terms of budget allocation and implementation. The state allocated ₦8.71 billion to GBV initiatives, representing 0.94% of its total state budget, and achieved an impressive 77.3% execution rate with actual spending of ₦6.7 billion (0.92% of total actual expenditure). This translates to a per capita GBV spend of ₦1,872.18, which is the highest nationally and significantly above the national average, indicating substantial financial commitment to GBV prevention and response programs. The strong budget-to-actual ratio suggests effective implementation capacity and genuine political will to address gender-based violence in the state.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Over the past three years, Akwa Ibom State has consistently increased its GBV-related budget allocations, rising from ₦3.83 billion in 2022 to ₦4.16 billion in 2023 and ₦8.71 billion in 2024. Actual budget performance, however, has fluctuated. The state achieved 53.0% in 2022, which declined to 36.0% in 2023, before rising significantly to 77.3% in 2024. The state included only one GBV line item in its 2024 budget: “Purchase of Furniture for Transit Camp Shelter Afrique, Uyo.” This line item also appeared in the 2023 budget with an allocation of ₦5 million in each year.

Despite its recurrence, no actual spending was recorded for this budget line. Additionally, under the Ministry of Justice, a budget line exists for “Office of the Sexual and Gender Based Violence Respond Department” (sic), with allocation of ₦1.2 million in 2024, yet no corresponding budget performance was reported. Per capita spending on GBV-related interventions stood at ₦1,872.18 in 2024, ₦431.48 in 2023, and ₦600.25 in 2022. The sharp rise in 2024 indicates a significant surge in investment, contrasting with the fluctuations recorded in the preceding years.

Human Angle Stories

Edima was raped by her neighbour, but didn’t report it for fear of being blamed. Through her own learning, she came across the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Law and understood that rape carries severe punishment. Her awareness shows that progress is being made in sensitizing people about the law. Yet the stigma and fear that kept her from seeking justice reveal that awareness alone is not enough. Survivors still need a system that protects and supports them when they speak up.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	Stakeholder data suggests 5-10 GBV-related convictions have occurred in the past year, but this information is not reaching the public. Only 35.1% of residents are aware of any convictions.	Establish a centralized GBV data system to track/publish quarterly conviction reports via the Ministry of Justice website, community bulletins, and radio to boost transparency and trust.
	Many residents (60.9%) now consider customary and religious laws sufficient for addressing GBV (up from 40.9% in 2023), while awareness of formal laws remained stagnant at 54.6%.	Strengthen enforcement of formal laws by mandating that all GBV cases reported to traditional or religious leaders must be referred to police within 24 hours, with penalties for non-compliance.
 Access to Legal Justice	Only 42.5% of residents feel safe serving as witnesses in GBV cases, while 30.8% would do so only with protection measures.	Establish a witness protection program that provides security escorts for witnesses and confidential reporting channels. Publicize these protections through community outreach to build confidence.
	Despite expansion in legal aid, only 51.3% of residents are aware of these services (down from 56% in 2023). Rural LGAs including Ibiono, Obot Akara, Ikono, and Ini remain underserved.	Launch a statewide legal aid awareness campaign using radio programs in local languages, community town hall meetings, posters at health centers and police stations, and toll-free hotlines. Deploy mobile legal aid clinics to underserved LGAs quarterly.
 Support Services	While four SARCs exist across senatorial districts, only two of these centers are described as "fully operational." Public awareness of these facilities dropped from 60% in 2024 to 13.7% in 2025.	Allocate dedicated annual budgets to all government-run SARCs for staffing, medical supplies, and operational costs. Launch statewide awareness campaigns to inform the public about their location and services.
	Many residents (45.6%) still view informal systems as more effective than formal services, yet stakeholders confirm these systems lack medical care, trauma counseling, legal representation, and long-term economic support.	Build bridges between formal and informal systems by equipping community champions with referral directories and emergency contacts and require them to refer survivors to SARCs or the police without delay.
 Information and Awareness	Only 46.3% of residents report exposure to GBV programs, largely unchanged from 50% in 2023. Stakeholders attribute this to political discontinuity, with programs losing momentum when administrations change.	Institutionalize GBV awareness programming by allocating permanent budget lines independent of administration changes and designating GBV focal persons in every LGA to ensure continuous community engagement.
	Despite wide coverage of training manuals across schools and strong public support (95.9%), GBV and child sexual abuse education remain outside the official curriculum, and current school programs depends entirely on donor funding.	Work with the Ministry of Education to integrate GBV and child sexual abuse education into the official school curriculum, ensuring sustainability beyond donor-funded programs.
 Budget and Spending	Akwa Ibom leads nationally in per capita GBV spending and 77.3% budget execution in 2024. However, the Transit Camp Shelter (₦5 million annually since 2023) and SGBV Response Department (₦1.2 million) recorded 0% implementation despite repeated allocations.	Ensure earmarked funds for Transit Camp Shelter and SGBV Response Department are disbursed and spent. Strengthen line-item monitoring to match overall execution performance with specific program delivery.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition

invictus AFRICA



Anambra State

Light of the Nation

Ogbunike Cave

Anambra State

Population: 6,915,681

50.1% Female | Male 49.9%

Overall Grade 53.3%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,375)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

72.2% | 27.8%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

60.4% | 39.6%

AGE

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

4.4% | 26.3% | 28.7% | 22.3% | 13.0% | 5.3%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

12.0% | 88.0%

SARCs: 1

Shelters: 0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦2.37bn

(This accounts for **0.6%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦160.86m

(This accounts for **6.8%** of total allocation to the ministry)

6.8%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

43.8% | 51.7% | 4.6%

Per Capita Spending

₦46.42

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	43.8%
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 ■

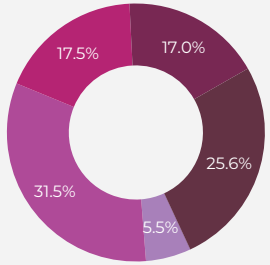
51.3% | 48.7%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

59.9% | 27.2% | 21.1% | 23.3% | 12.4%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

50.1% | 33.5% | 25.1% | 28.3% | 8.2% | 6.0%

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

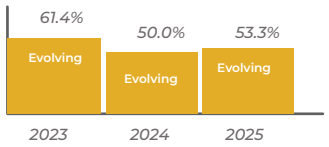
Where did you or the person first seek help?

41.6% | 22.3% | 10.9% | 7.8% | 4.9% | 2.8% | 5.4% | 4.3%

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

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
33%	46%

40%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 48.3%	LP 41.7%	+1 ▲ LP 66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 86.3%	-1 ▼ ALJ 56.3%	-1 ▼ ALJ 43.8%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	SS 50.0%	-1 ▼ SS 43.8%
Information and Awareness	IA 86.3%	-1 ▼ IA 50.0%	IA 62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 50.0%	BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Implementation of the VAPP Law imposed stricter penalties, reducing abusive traditional practices against widows.
- Preference for formal legal avenues rose from 78% in 2024 to 73.7% in 2025, showing growing confidence in police and courts.
- Willingness to serve as witnesses in GBV cases increased from 58% in 2023 to 61.1%, reflecting gradual improvements in survivor engagement.
- The proportion finding GBV educational materials completely useful rose from 9.2% in 2023 to 27.9%, showing better quality and relevance

Areas of Concern

- Awareness of protective laws fell from 75% in 2023 to 46.1%, indicating weak grassroots sensitization.
- 72.4% of respondents rely on traditional mechanisms, reflecting diminished confidence in formal justice.
- Awareness of shelters and SARCs fell from 37.5% in 2023 to 27.3%, with only 26.9% in 2025.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The state government fully implemented the VAPP Law and Child Rights Law by enforcing the provisions of these laws to combat harmful widowhood practices and other cultural violations.

Access to Legal Justice

- The government initiated weekly GBV mediation sessions on Wednesdays and Thursdays at the Ministry of Women Affairs, allowing survivors and alleged offenders to resolve disputes through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) before going to court.

Support Services

- Collaborated with CSOs to provide essential counseling, mentorship, and economic empowerment programs for survivors, addressing gaps in state response

Information and Awareness

- Utilize diverse media channels by leveraging social media, radio, and television as primary platforms to raise awareness about GBV, ensuring messages effectively reach a broad audience.
- Collaborated with WACOL and WRAPA to implement “Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls (PVAWG)’s campaigns in schools and communities to educate on GBV and promote gender equality .

Change Spotlight

Anambra State achieved a remarkable transformation in its formal justice system for GBV survivors, demonstrating measurable impact through both institutional reform and community response. The state established specialized GBV courts at magistrate and high court levels, alongside dedicated Family/GBV Support Units and gender desks in police stations, creating a comprehensive prosecution pathway from reporting through conviction. This structural innovation yielded concrete results: the Attorney-General reported securing “nothing less than 20 convictions” within 12 months—a tremendous improvement confirmed by FIDA as “far better than before.” The impact extended beyond courtroom outcomes to shift community behaviour, with public preference for formal legal avenues rising from 66% in 2024 to 73.7% in 2025, while those unwilling to seek justice dropped dramatically from 7% to just 1.7%

Anambra State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 53.3%

LAWS AND POLICIES

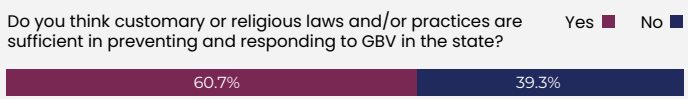
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?

Yes ■ No ■



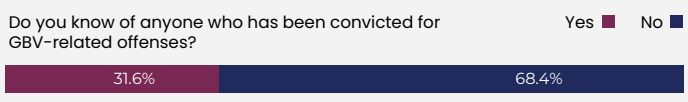
Do you think customary or religious laws and/or practices are sufficient in preventing and responding to GBV in the state?

Yes ■ No ■



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

Yes ■ No ■



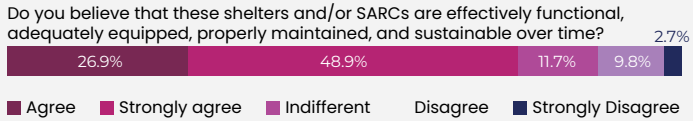
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

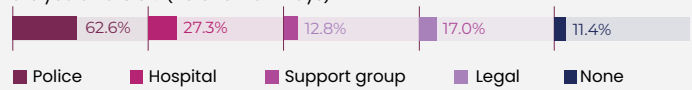
Yes ■ No ■



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)



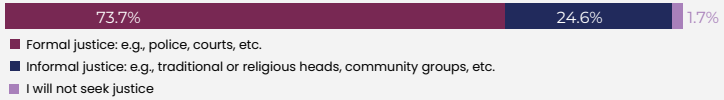
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

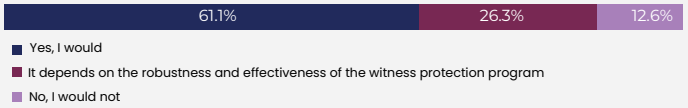


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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?

Yes ■ No ■



INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

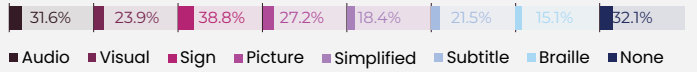
Yes ■ No ■



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



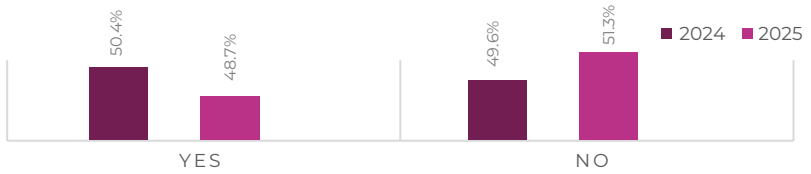
Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Anambra State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 53.3%

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



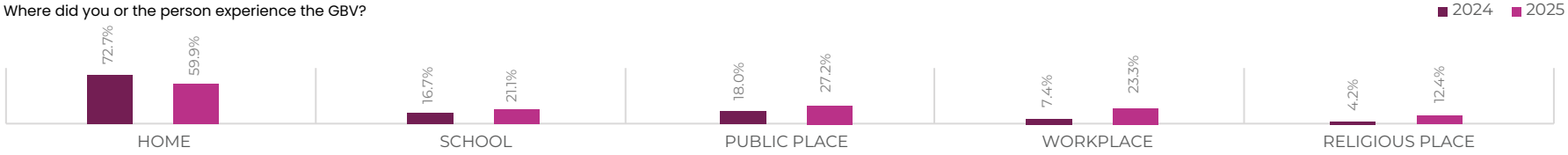
48.7%

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

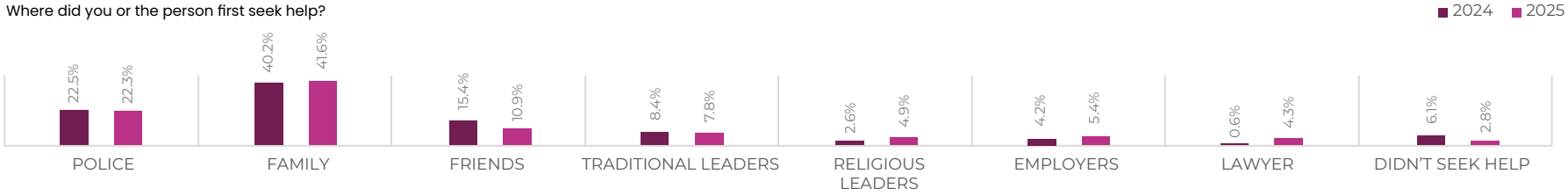
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



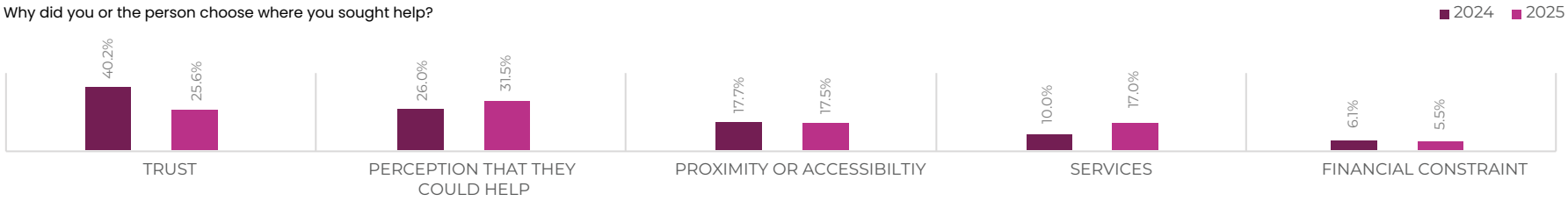
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

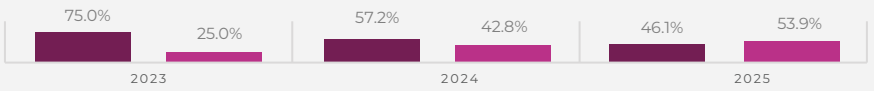


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

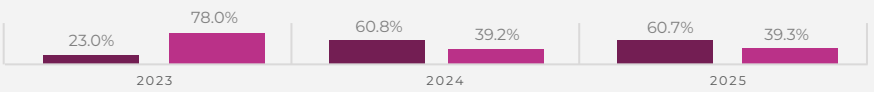
Overall Grade 53.3%

LAWS AND POLICIES

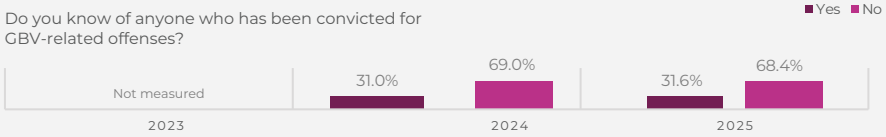
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

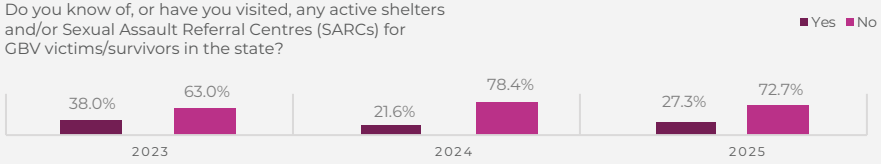


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

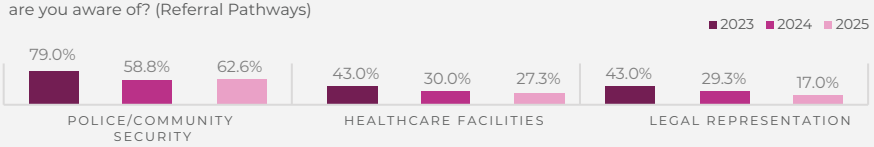


SUPPORT SERVICES

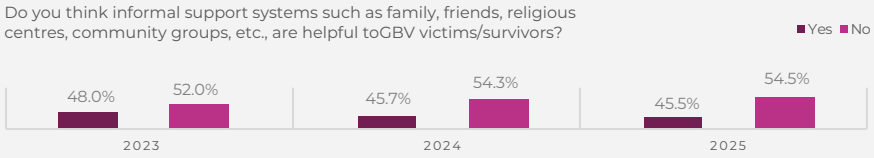
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

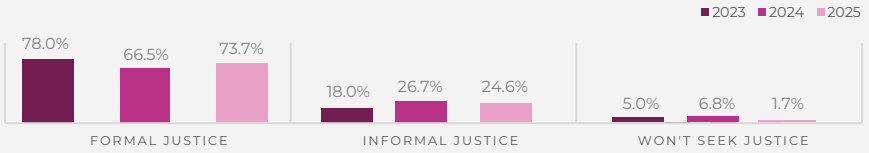


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

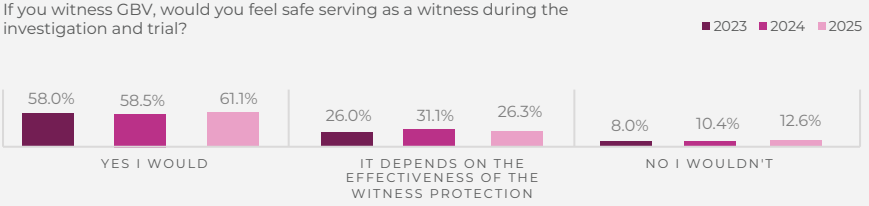


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

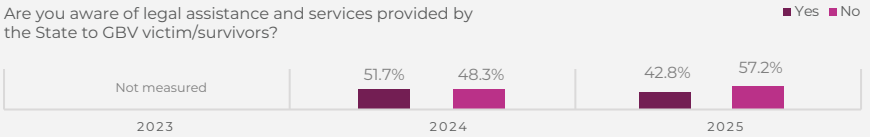
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

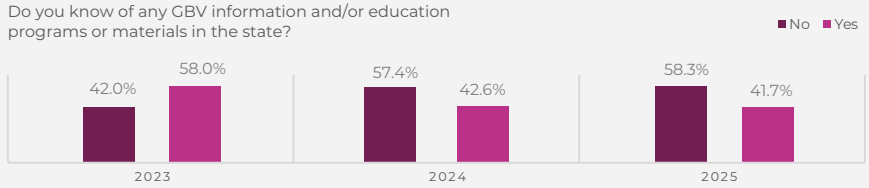


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

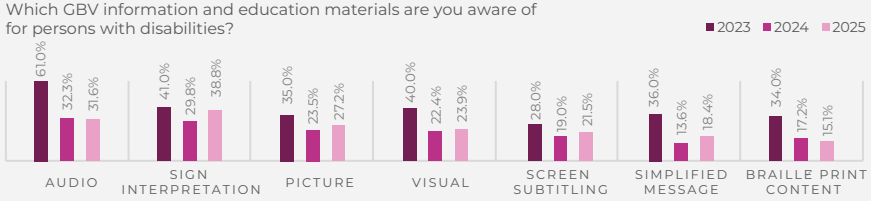


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

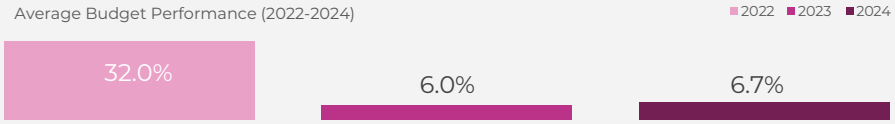


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

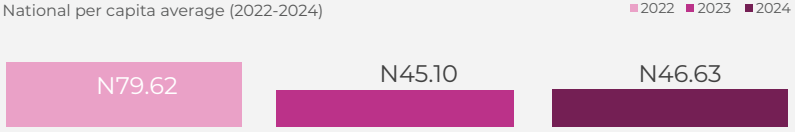


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Anambra State has a domesticated and comprehensive VAPP Law, aligned with the federal Act and used to prosecute GBV offenses. Stakeholders confirm that the State has added enabling structure, gender-specific courts at the magistrate and high court levels, and prosecutions and convictions have increased within the past year. The Attorney-General reports that the state has secured "nothing less than 20 convictions" in 12 months and that every SGBV file is assigned to lawyers for prosecution. FIDA also confirms a tremendous conviction rate, far better than before. Despite these reforms, public awareness remains weak: 53.9% of respondents are unaware of GBV-related laws, and only 31.6% know someone convicted. Limited visibility of justice outcomes fuels the perception that laws are ineffective.

Customary and religious systems continue to influence how cases are handled. Traditional and religious leaders sometimes attempt to settle cases privately or obstruct reporting which aligns with survey results showing 60.7% of respondents perceiving informal systems as effective. Yet, these systems lack criminal authority, and cases often collapse due to family resistance or pressure to "settle" rather than pursue prosecution. Legal actors note ongoing training for police, magistrates, judges, and CSOs to address harmful practices and improve consistent enforcement of formal law.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, awareness of GBV-related laws in Anambra State experienced a significant decline, dropping from 75% to 46.1%. This drop indicates a weakening in community sensitization efforts and a lack of effective grassroots engagement. Stakeholders have pointed to inconsistent advocacy efforts and limited male participation in awareness campaigns as key factors contributing to this decline. For instance, the Attorney General of the state stressed the importance of having men take the lead in discussions surrounding issues like rape and defilement, underscoring that broader community involvement is essential for achieving a lasting impact.

Additionally, belief in the adequacy of customary and religious laws showed considerable fluctuation during this period. It declined from 65% in 2023 to 31% in 2024, before making a comeback to 72.4% in 2025. This trend suggests a shift back to reliance on traditional systems as confidence in formal legal mechanisms diminishes. However, the Chairperson of the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) noted that progress has been made under the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) (VAPP) Law, particularly regarding the reduction of harmful widowhood practices due to the imposition of stricter penalties.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Anambra State has strengthened access to legal justice through specialized GBV courts at both magistrate and high-court levels and the establishment of Family/GBV Support Units, gender desks in police stations, and dedicated prosecutors within the Ministry of Justice. Survivors now follow a defined reporting pathway, from community vigilantes or police to the State CID gender desk, SARC for medical/forensic evidence, and onward to prosecution in the GBV court. Legal assistance is available through FIDA and the Legal Aid Council, both offering pro-bono representation, mediation, and court accompaniment across the state. Funding has also improved, and witness protection measures now include discreet statement-taking and home-based evidence recording. These mechanisms are reflected in community responses; as 73.7% of respondents are willing to engage formal legal channels, indicating rising confidence in institutional justice.

However, equal access is still constrained by financial limitations, bureaucratic delays, and survivor fatigue. Although 73.7% are willing to engage, confidence in testifying is conditional, driven by fear of retaliation and inadequate long-term protection. Informal systems, traditional rulers or religious institutions, remain widely used, yet nearly half of respondents doubt their fairness, as they often pressure survivors to settle privately, enabling perpetrators to evade accountability. Thus, while reforms have strengthened formal justice delivery, gaps in protection, affordability, and sustained case follow-through still hinder full, equitable access.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

The landscape of access to justice for GBV survivors in Anambra State demonstrated fluctuations between 2023 and 2025. Initially, the preference for formal justice systems declined from 77.5% in 2023 to 66% in 2024. However, this trend reversed in 2025, rising to 73.7%, indicative of a resurgence in trust toward formal mechanisms after a brief inclination towards informal systems. Moreover, the number of individuals unwilling to seek justice decreased significantly, dropping from 7% in 2024 to only 1.7% in 2025. This shift suggests that there is increasing confidence in available redress mechanisms.

In terms of community involvement, the willingness to serve as witnesses showed a gradual increase,

from 57.5% in 2023 to 61.1% in 2025. Despite this positive trend, concerns regarding effective witness protection remain high, highlighting ongoing safety issues for potential witnesses. Awareness of state-provided legal assistance, however, experienced a decline, dropping from 52% in 2024 to 42.8% in 2025.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Access to holistic support for GBV survivors in Anambra State remains uneven. The state currently operates only one SARC, located at Enugwu-Ukwu, serving the entire state and providing medical care, psychosocial counselling, forensic documentation, and linkage to prosecution. Functional referral pathways exist; survivors may report to vigilantes or police, who then transfer cases to the State CID gender desk, SARC, and subsequently to the GBV court. However, only 27.3% of respondents are aware of the SARC, and awareness of holistic services (medical, legal, psychosocial, economic) remains low at 36.9%.

Shelter services are inadequate and inconsistent. The state has no permanent shelter; survivors, especially women and children, are housed temporarily in children's homes or with relatives due to a lack of government-owned facilities. Survivors in remote LGAs face long travel distances to the single SARC, increasing reliance on informal family/community support systems. Stakeholders acknowledge this gap and report that additional shelters and SARCs are being requested for other senatorial zones. While the service framework is structurally defined, resource constraints, low public awareness, and geographic inequality limit true accessibility. Strengthening referral systems, expanding shelters, and increasing community-level sensitization are necessary to ensure equitable survivor-centered support.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, awareness of active shelters and the SARC in Anambra State declined from 37.5% to 27.3%. Confidence in these centers also dropped, with only 26.9% believing they are adequately equipped compared to 30% in 2023. Awareness of referral pathways showed significant reductions; police referral recognition fell from 79.2% in 2023 to 58.8% in 2024, though it slightly increased to 62.6% in 2025. Conversely, awareness of healthcare dropped from 43.3% in 2023 to 27.3% in 2025, and legal referrals from 42.5% to 17%. These trends reflect a declining understanding of reporting options for survivors.

In contrast, reliance on informal support systems, such as families and community groups, remained relatively stable at approximately 45%. This consistency suggests that, despite the presence of some institutional structures, survivors continue to depend on informal networks due to ongoing gaps in accessibility, awareness, and public confidence in state-managed GBV response services.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Dissemination of GBV information in Anambra State occurs through posters, community sensitization, radio programs, school outreaches, and campaigns led by the Ministry of Women Affairs, Education, CSOs, and task-force networks. IEC materials include posters and T-shirts with messages like "Say No to Violence" and sensitization is conducted across schools, churches, markets, and communities. However, over half of residents report not receiving GBV information, showing that dissemination is still not universal. Schools increasingly teach GBV and child-protection topics from primary to tertiary levels, supported by civic education content in the national curriculum.

Survey results show 90.4% of respondents support incorporating GBV education in schools, indicating high public demand. Anambra has also begun disability-inclusive communication: GBV awareness sessions involve the Joint Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD), and sign-language interpreters and social workers are assigned to support cases at the SARC. Yet, awareness of disability-friendly IEC formats (braille, audio, sign-language versions) remains low.

Although state campaigns are frequent, respondents note limited reach to rural and marginalized groups. A shift toward community-based and user-friendly IEC, beyond social media, is needed to guarantee universal access to information.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

In Anambra State, between 2023 and 2025, awareness of GBV information and education programs declined notably from 58.3% to 41.7%. This shows weakened outreach and limited visibility of state-led sensitization efforts. However, perceptions of the usefulness of GBV materials improved significantly, with those finding them completely useful rising from 9.2% in 2023 to 27.9% in 2025, suggesting better quality and relevance of materials among those reached. Awareness of disability-inclusive GBV materials dropped sharply, with knowledge of audio or spoken content declining from 60.8% in 2023 to just 15.1% in 2025. This indicates that while the general quality of GBV materials improved, accessibility for persons with disabilities has deteriorated, underscoring the need for renewed focus on inclusive communication strategies and equitable information dissemination across all population groups.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Anambra shows a significant gap between GBV budget allocation and actual implementation. The state allocated ₦2.4 billion to GBV initiatives, representing 0.58% of its total budget, but achieved only a 6.7% execution rate with actual spending of just ₦161.6 million (0.06% of total actual expenditure). This poor implementation resulted in a per capita GBV spend of only ₦46.63, among the lowest in the country, indicating severe underutilization of allocated funds despite having a specific GBV budget line.

Changes Over Time (2022–2025)

Over the last three years, Anambra has included several GBV-specific budget lines, including “Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence (SARCs)” under the State Ministry of Justice. This line item was allocated ₦50 million in 2023 but recorded no actual spending. In 2024, it received an allocation of ₦20 million, and an actual spend of ₦720,000, representing 3.6%. The “Anti-Child Abuse and Neglect Programme” received an allocation of ₦36 million with an actual spend of ₦4.65 million, amounting to 12.9%. These items are part of a broader pattern in which many GBV-related allocations received no spending and no implementation.

The low execution rate is reflected across the Ministry of Women Affairs as well as relevant components of other ministries, resulting in a combined budget performance of 6.7%. Per capita spending remained extremely low, with Anambra State recording ₦46.63 in 2024, ₦45.10 in 2023, and ₦79.62 in 2022. The decline from 2022 to 2024 highlights a downward trend in prioritization despite consistently low baseline investment. However, the 2024 figure is the lowest in the South East region and the second-lowest nationally, after Rivers State

Human Angle Stories

Chinwendu, a mother of two, endured prolonged abuse but avoided legal action for fear of exposing her children to stigma. She shared, “I was avoiding going to court so that people would not say I went too far.” Her story illustrates how cultural perceptions and fear of social backlash directly shape survivors’ decisions, even when legal remedies exist.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	Awareness of GBV laws in Anambra State declined from 75% in 2023 to 46.1% in 2025, indicating reduced community sensitization and limited male involvement in advocacy.	Strengthen community-based awareness campaigns. Also engage male champions and local influencers to promote understanding and enforcement of GBV laws at the grassroots level.
	Confidence in customary and religious systems rose to 60.7% in 2025, reflecting declining trust in formal legal mechanisms.	Improve effectiveness of formal laws and systems on GBV prevention and response. Integrate traditional and religious leaders into GBV prevention and response frameworks through targeted training on the VAPP Law and survivors' rights.
 Access to Legal Justice	Willingness to use formal justice systems increased from 66.5% in 2024 to 73.7% in 2025, showing growing trust in formal mechanisms.	Sustain the progress by expanding specialized GBV courts and continuous police capacity-building to ensure survivor-sensitive investigations and timely prosecutions.
	Awareness of state-provided legal assistance dropped from 52% in 2024 to 42.8% in 2025, showing declining visibility of free legal support.	Intensify public communication on available legal aid services through community radio, town halls, and collaboration with CSOs/ NGOs including FIDA, and local media channels.
 Support Services	Awareness of the existing SARC and shelters decreased from 37.5% in 2023 to 27.3% in 2025, limiting survivor access to essential care.	Establish additional SARCs and shelters across senatorial zones, coupled with consistent community sensitization on available support services.
	Only 26.9% of respondents in 2025 believe the existing SARC is adequately equipped to serve survivors.	Increase state budgetary allocation and donor partnerships to strengthen SARC infrastructure, equipment, and multi-sectoral coordination.
 Information and Awareness	Awareness of GBV education programs declined from 58.3% in 2023 to 42.6% in 2025, despite improved content usefulness.	Expand outreach beyond social media by engaging schools, religious institutions, and community platforms to improve coverage in rural areas.
	Awareness of disability-inclusive GBV materials fell sharply from 60.8% in 2023 to 15.1% in 2025, limiting accessibility.	Develop and distribute GBV education materials in accessible formats such as braille, audio, and sign language, ensuring inclusion of persons with disabilities.
 Budget and Spending	Anambra has one of the lowest GBV budget execution rates in Nigeria, spending only 6.7% of its GBV allocation in 2024, resulting in extremely low per capita spending (₦46.63) despite multiple GBV-specific budget lines.	Improve budget performance by addressing administrative and coordination bottlenecks, ensuring timely fund release, stronger inter-MDAs oversight, and clear implementation accountability for GBV-specific budget lines.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



Bauchi State

Pearl of Tourism

Owu Fall

Bauchi State

Population: 8,580,793

50.1% Female | Male 49.9%

Overall Grade 58.8%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,082)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

73.8% | 26.2%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

46.1% | 53.9%

AGE

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

8.4% | 36.1% | 28.6% | 14.9% | 8.4% | 3.6%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

11.8% | 88.2%

SARCs: 1

Shelters: 5

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦2.53bn

(This accounts for **0.6%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦1.68bn

(This accounts for **66.5%** of total allocation to the ministry)

66.5%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ Others ■ (Actual spend)

30.2% | 17.0% | 52.0% | 0.7

Per Capita Spending

₦391.04

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	50.0%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	50.0%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	68.8%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	66.7%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

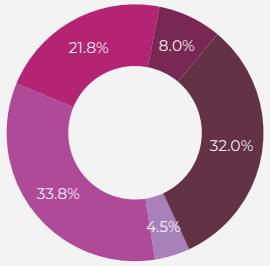
46.5% | 53.5%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

80.0% | 27.8% | 27.3% | 14.9% | 8.6%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

44.0% | 52.0% | 21.8% | 40.1% | 19.3% | 3.5%

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

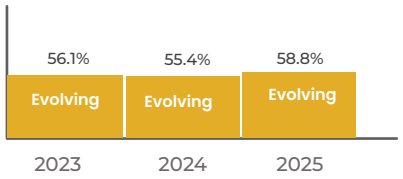
Where did you or the person first seek help?

35.8% | 27.8% | 7.4% | 10.7% | 9.8% | 3.5% | 2.1% | 2.9%

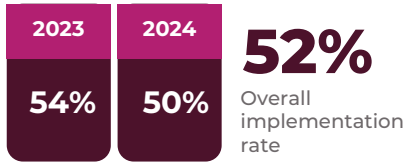
Family/relatives ■
Police/law enforcement authority ■
Friends/neighbors ■
Traditional/community leader or group ■
Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■
I did not seek help ■
Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■
Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



52%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 48.3%	+1 ▲ LP 66.7%	-1 ▼ LP 58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 68.8%	ALJ 50.0%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	SS 56.3%	SS 50.0%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3%	-1 ▼ IA 43.8%	+1 ▲ IA 68.8%
Budget and Spending	BS 48.3%	BS 41.7%	+1 ▲ BS 66.7%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Over ten convictions secured between December 2024 and July 2025.
- All 20 LGAs now have multi-sectoral committees serving as referral hubs and temporary shelters, receiving quarterly strengthening visits and transport stipends.
- Ministry of Women Affairs added PWD representative to Technical Working Group; introduced sign language interpretation, Braille materials, and picture-based messages in 2024-2025.

Areas of Concern

- State law deliberately excludes marital rape to accommodate "cultural peculiarities," leaving married women legally vulnerable.
- Knowledge of GBV laws dropped from 89.9% (2023) to 52.9% (2025).
- Single SARC in state capital leaves 80% of state geography unserved. Only 4 of 20 LGAs have functional referral access.
- Knowledge of GBV programs dropped from 77.5% (2023) to 53% (2025).
- Disability accessible materials confined to specialized schools in the Bauchi metropolis only.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Established State GBV Task Force and TWG in 2024, coordinated by the Ministry of Women Affairs with UNFPA support, involving Ministry of Justice, Police, Women Affairs, CSOs, and traditional leaders to improve inter-agency coordination.

Access to Legal Justice

- State government designated two specialized High Courts (High Court 11 and 16) with judges to handle GBV cases, as confirmed by the Court Official and Police in 2025.
- Introduction of streamlined prosecution procedures using Motion Ex-Parte for rape cases, allowing police to charge suspects in court within 21 days.

Support Services

- Establishment and operationalization of the first state-run SARC at Bauchi State Specialist Hospital in 2024, funded and coordinated by the First Lady, providing medical care, psychosocial counseling, transportation, and feeding support to survivors and families.
- Creation of 10-Man Committees across all 20 Local Government Areas by 2024, comprising MDAs, CSOs, NGOs, religious leaders, and traditional leaders to serve as referral pathways and temporary shelters, with quarterly strengthening visits and stipends for transportation.

Information and Awareness

- Launch quarterly state-wide sensitization campaigns by the Office of the First Lady targeting all 20 LGAs, utilizing radio jingles in local languages (Hausa, Fulfulde), television programs, and community dialogues with traditional and religious leaders, scaled up from ad hoc efforts in 2023.

Change Spotlight

Three years ago, survivors of rape or abuse in Bauchi State had limited support, relying on churches and small NGOs. However, in 2025, the government launched the first Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) at the Specialist Hospital, offering free medical treatment, counseling, food, and transportation, funded by the First Lady's office. Help centers have also been established in all 20 local government areas, staffed by health workers, police, lawyers, and community leaders.

These changes have significantly increased awareness of support services, rising from 19% in 2024 to 33% in 2025. Legal processes for gender-based violence cases have become faster, with cases now reaching court in 21 days and over 10 convictions secured in seven months. The centers prioritize inclusivity, providing sign language interpreters and braille materials to ensure access to resources for everyone.

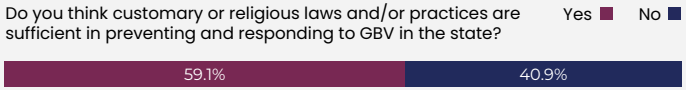
Bauchi State GBV Assessment Survey

LAWS AND POLICIES

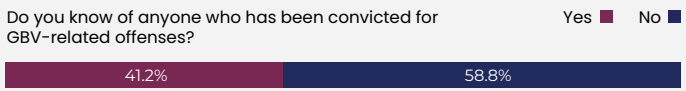
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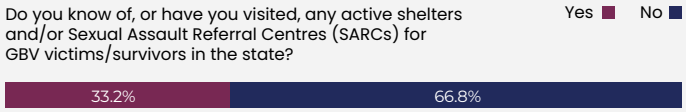


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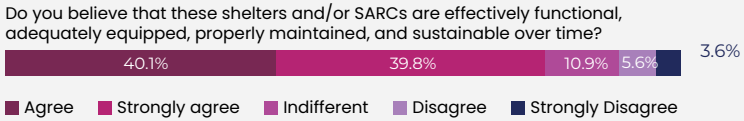


SUPPORT SERVICES

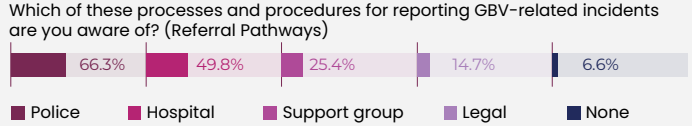
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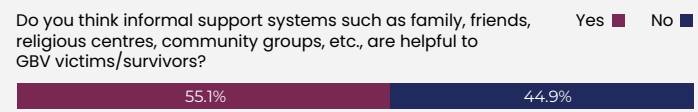
Do you believe that these shelters and/or SARCs are effectively functional, adequately equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable over time?



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

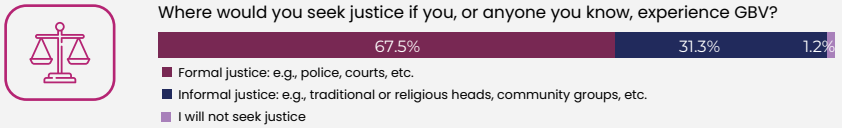


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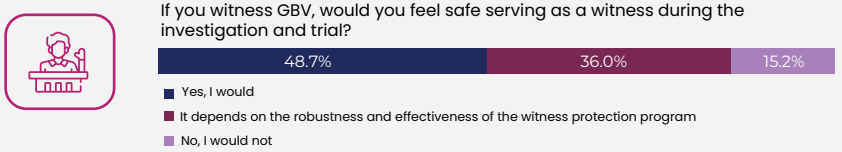


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

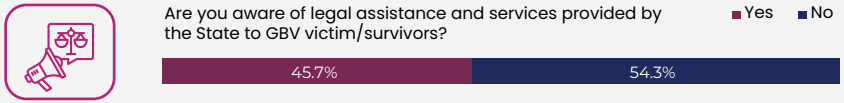
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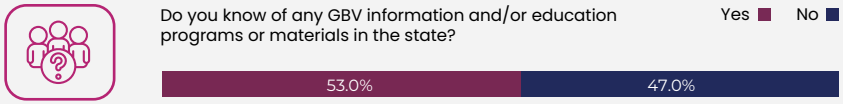


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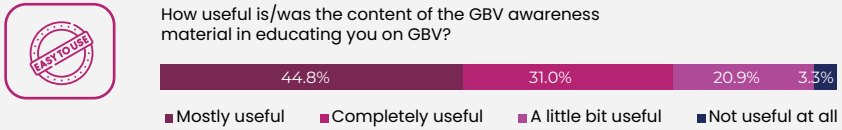


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

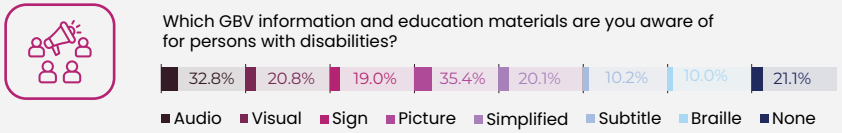
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?



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?



Bauchi State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 58.8%

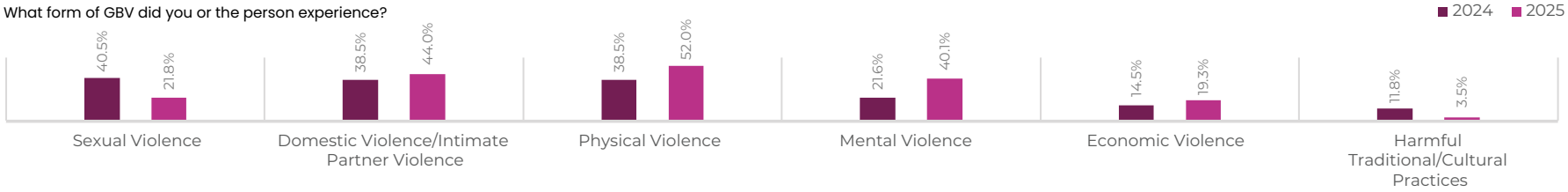
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



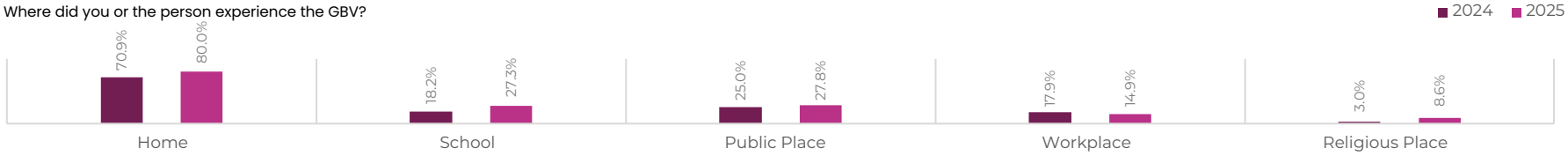
53.5%

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

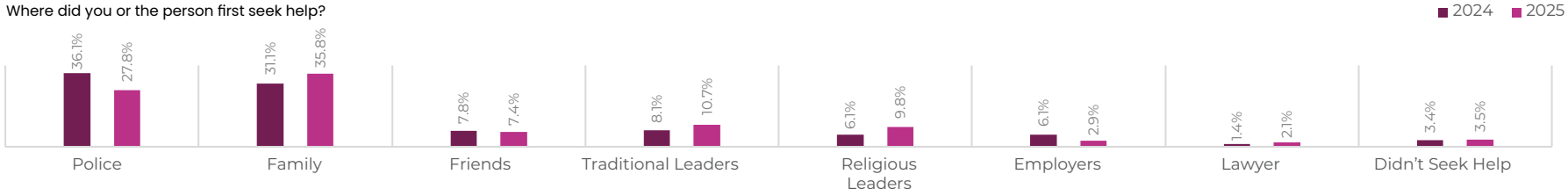
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



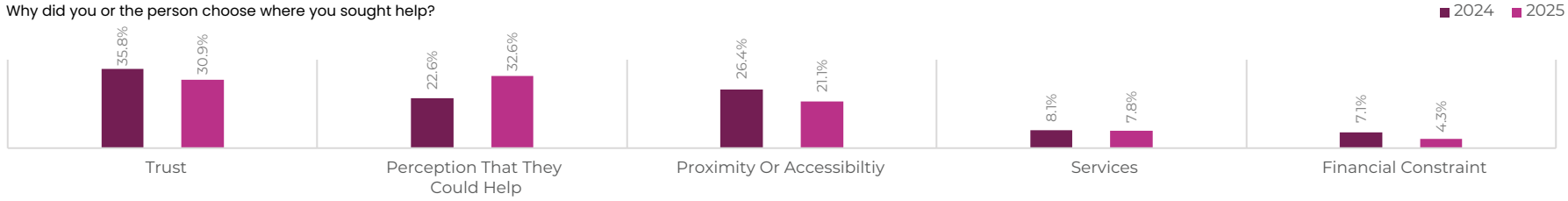
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

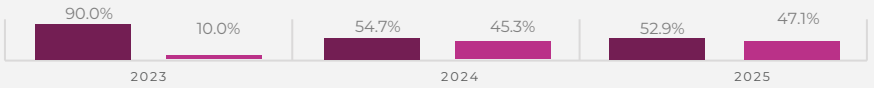


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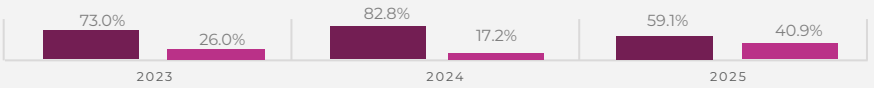
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LAWS AND POLICIES

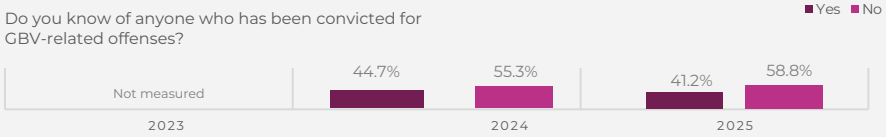
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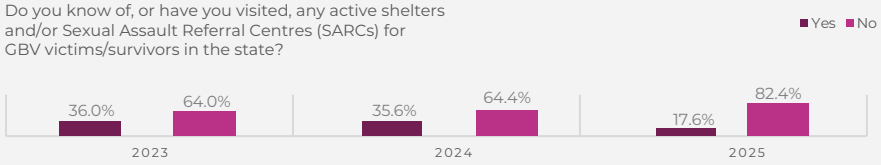


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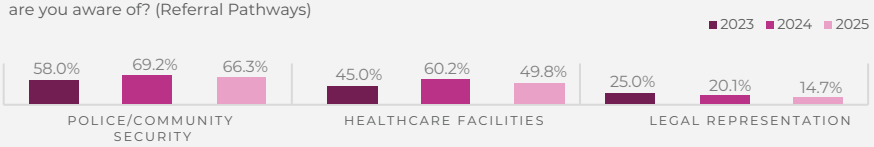


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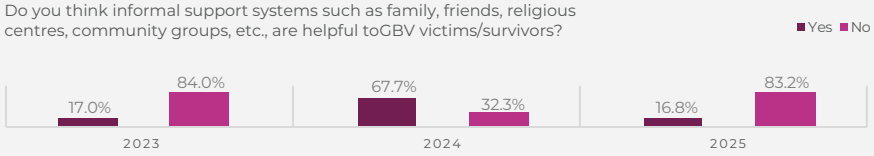
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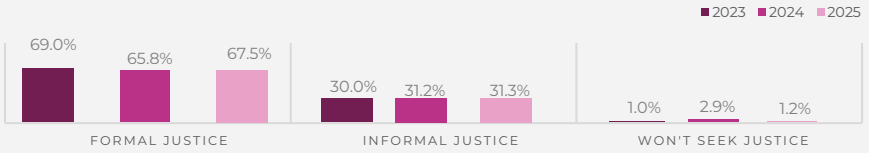


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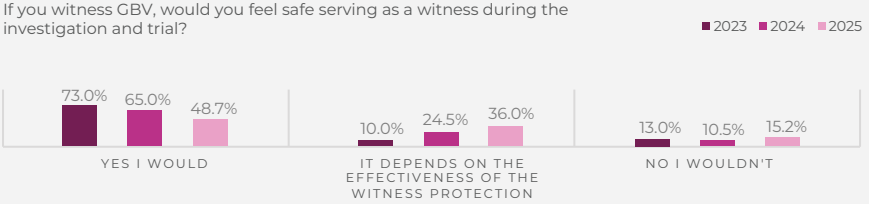


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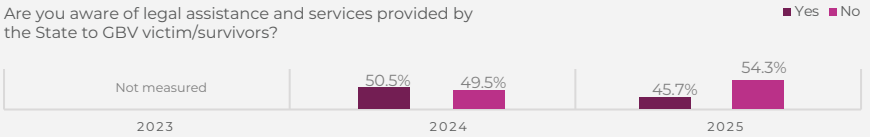
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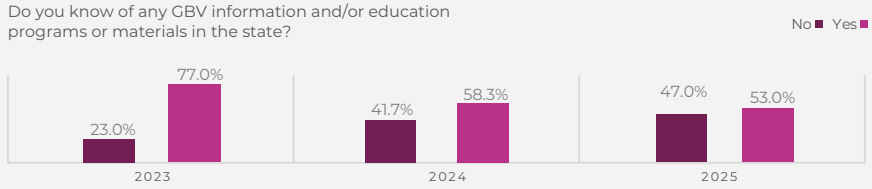


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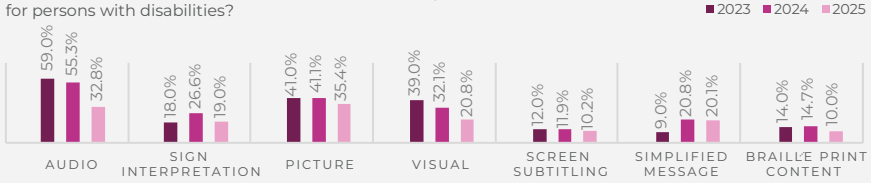


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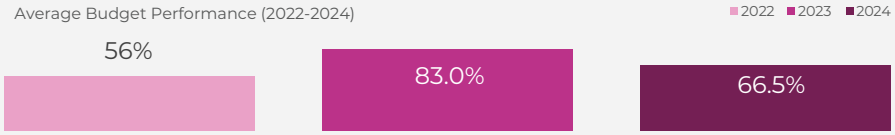


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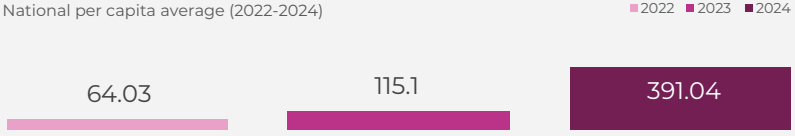


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Bauchi State has domesticated the VAPP Law, the Child Rights Law, and a revised 2022 Penal Code that broadens the definition of rape to include penetration by objects, and recognition of male GBV survivors. However, marital rape is explicitly excluded, a concession that stakeholders described as reflecting "cultural and religious realities," showing that sociocultural norms still shape legislation. Enforcement remains weak: only 47.1% of respondents are aware the VAPP Law exists, dropping to 31% in rural areas. Stakeholders stated that although prosecutions occur, "people don't see convictions, so they believe nothing is happening." Consistently, 58.8% of respondents cannot name a single GBV conviction, and 37.2% believe the law is ineffective.

Customary and religious mechanisms continue to influence justice outcomes. While 59.1% acknowledge traditional dispute-resolution practices, 40.9% do not believe these systems can prevent or respond to GBV effectively. Interviews show that traditional rulers often pressure families to withdraw cases to "protect community reputation," undermining accountability. Despite the legal framework, low awareness, limited visibility of convictions, and sociocultural interference reveal a policy environment where laws exist, but enforcement and public adoption remain weak.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Bauchi State's legal framework for addressing GBV has evolved structurally, but public awareness and confidence have declined sharply. Awareness of existing GBV laws plummeted from 89.9% in 2023 to 55% in 2024, and further to 52.9% in 2025, a 37-percentage-point collapse over three years. This trend suggests that despite the 2020 VAPP Law domestication and 2022 Penal Code revision, knowledge of legal protections has not penetrated communities.

The establishment of the Technical Working Group in 2024 and increased use of VAPP provisions in court filings by the Ministry of Justice represent institutional progress, but these gains remain invisible to the majority. Meanwhile, trust in customary and religious laws fluctuated dramatically: from 80.2% in 2023 to 45% in 2024, before rebounding to 59.1% in 2025, reflecting inconsistent messaging and persistent reliance on informal systems despite their documented tendency to obstruct formal justice. Most striking is the collapse in conviction awareness. While 83% of respondents in 2024 knew of GBV convictions, only 41.2% did in 2025, a 41.8-percentage-point drop.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Bauchi shows structural improvements but still struggles to guarantee equal access to justice. 67.5% of citizens are now willing to seek formal justice, up from 36% in 2023. However, the formal system remains severely understaffed: the Legal Aid Council confirmed having only one officer responsible for the entire state, causing rape cases to remain in court for 3–4 years awaiting trial. While the Ministry of Justice secured over ten convictions between December 2024 and July 2025, 58.8% of citizens are unaware of any convictions, demonstrating a disconnect between justice delivery and public perception.

Specialized units exist, GBV desks, Family Support Units, and dedicated prosecutors, but coverage is uneven. Only 4 of 20 LGAs have regular access to referral pathways, as rural survivors are effectively unserved. Witness protection remains fragile: only 48.7% feel safe testifying, and 36% say willingness depends on protection measures. Courts lack forensic laboratories and rely heavily on eyewitness testimony, which cultural pressure often silence. Informal systems complicate justice; 31.3% believe survivors can get justice through traditional or religious leaders, yet interviews show these leaders regularly pressure families to withdraw cases, prioritizing social harmony over accountability.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Preference for formal justice systems has remained relatively stable, 69% in 2023, 66% in 2024, and 67.5% in 2025, but the underlying confidence supporting these choices has eroded dramatically. Most alarming is the collapse in witness willingness: 73.6% felt safe testifying in 2023, but only 48.7% do in 2025, a 25-percentage-point drop. Simultaneously, those demanding effective witness protection before testifying surged from 10% in 2023 to 36% in 2025, exposing growing fear and mistrust in the system's ability to shield witnesses from retaliation. Stakeholders confirmed these concerns are justified. The Legal Aid Council reported that cultural pressure and intimidation from perpetrators' families routinely silence witnesses, while police officers acknowledged using personal funds to transport survivors to court due to chronic underfunding.

Awareness of state-provided legal assistance has also declined sharply, from 50.5% in 2024 to just 45.7% in 2025, meaning more than half the population now remains unaware of available support services. Despite structural improvements like dedicated GBV courts and streamlined prosecution procedures introduced in 2024-2025, these advances have not translated into public confidence or accessibility, particularly in rural areas where the single Legal Aid Council officer cannot meet demand.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Bauchi State has expanded GBV support services from no facility in 2023 to one government-affiliated SARC (located within a teaching hospital) and five NGO-run shelters by 2025. The SARC provides medical treatment, Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), counseling, documentation, and referral to prosecution through SOP-guided pathways linking hospitals, FSU/GBV desk, and Ministry of Justice. However, access remains uneven: only 33.2% of residents know these facilities exist. The SARC Coordinator confirmed that operations are sustained "whether money is available or not," revealing over-dependence on donor/First Lady–driven funding rather than stable state budget allocation. Only 4 of 20 LGAs have functional referral pathways, leaving 80% of the state without structured access.

Knowledge of holistic support remains poor. Although the support system includes medical, psychosocial, legal, and temporary economic assistance, 55.7% of the population are unaware that these services exist. Survivors, therefore, continue to rely on informal family and religious support systems, which stakeholders noted often prioritize reconciliation over safety, sometimes returning survivors to unsafe environments. Without expanded SARCs, permanent state-run shelters, and awareness of referral channels, equal and sustained access to survivor-centered care remains limited.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

The state's support infrastructure underwent a dramatic transformation, though public awareness struggled to keep pace. Knowledge of the active shelters and SARC decreased from 45% in 2023 to 19.5% in 2024, following the closure of informal facilities, before partially recovering to 33.2% in 2025 after the government inaugurated its first official SARC at the Specialist Hospital. However, confidence in these facilities' functionality declined, while 47% believed shelters were adequately equipped in 2024, only 40.1% agreed in 2025, suggesting that visibility did not guarantee quality or sustainability. The SARC Coordinator's admission that they need "more staff and supplies" confirms that resource constraints undermine the centres' potential impact despite government funding for transportation and feeding.

Referral pathway awareness also shifted unpredictably. Police reporting pathways surged from 58% awareness in 2023 to 69.2% in 2024, before settling at 66.3% in 2025. Healthcare pathways rose from 45% in 2023 to 60.2% in 2024, then dropped to 49.8% in 2025. Most troubling is the decline in awareness of legal representation, which fell from 20.1% in 2024 to just 14.7% in 2025, a critical gap when justice depends on legal support. Meanwhile, trust in informal systems (family, friends, religious centers) fluctuated wildly: from 86.8% in 2023 to 45.5% in 2024, rebounding to 55.1% in 2025, reflecting persistent reliance on traditional networks despite documented cases where they obstruct formal justice.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Information dissemination on GBV in Bauchi has improved: 53% of respondents reported exposure to GBV messaging in 2025. Radio remains the dominant channel (43.2%), followed by health workers (36.4%) and television (16.2%). However, traditional/community leaders account for only 1.9%, despite their influence over decision-making in GBV cases, limiting reach in rural areas. IEC materials exist, but their effectiveness is low: only 31% of respondents find the materials "completely useful," and 20.9% find them "a little bit useful," indicating that messaging does not yet empower action. Public demand for structured GBV education is strong. 83.1% of respondents support integrating GBV/child protection into school curricula. Yet, the Ministry of Education limits GBV content to clubs and extracurricular programs rather than formal classroom instruction, leaving most learners unreached.

Disability-inclusive communication is inconsistent. While sign-language interpreters are deployed during campaigns, awareness of accessible formats remains low (10% braille, 19% sign interpretation, 10.2% subtitled content). Visual IEC (35.4%) and audio-based methods (32.8%) are more effective but largely concentrated in urban areas. The state conducts awareness, but reach, simplicity of messaging, and disability inclusion remain weak, especially for rural populations.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV programs and materials has declined sharply despite increased campaign activity. Knowledge dropped from 77% in 2023 to 58% in 2024, and further to 53% in 2025, a 24.5-percentage-point collapse over three years. This trend directly contradicts the expansion of state-led initiatives, including quarterly sensitization campaigns by the Office of the First Lady, the AGILE program in schools, and the Technical Working Group's multi-sectoral outreach. The gap reveals a fundamental communication failure: campaigns are happening, but they are not effectively reaching or registering with the population. Paradoxically, those who do encounter materials report growing satisfaction, perceived usefulness climbed from 20.2% rating content "completely useful" in 2023 to 26% in 2024 and 31% in 2025, suggesting quality improvements in messaging even as reach contracts.

Disability-inclusive materials show volatile and inconsistent progress. Awareness of audio/spoken content surged from 28.2% in 2023 to 55.6% in 2024, before plummeting to 32.8% in 2025, a pattern suggesting sporadic, donor-dependent initiatives rather than sustained programming. While the Ministry of Women Affairs introduced braille materials and sign language interpretation in 2024-2025, stakeholders confirmed these remain confined to specialized schools in urban areas, leaving rural persons with disabilities entirely excluded from potentially life-saving information about their rights and available support.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Bauchi State allocated ₦2.53 billion to GBV programs in 2024, representing 0.64% of its total state budget. Of the allocated amount, ₦1.68 billion was actually spent, achieving a 66.5% implementation

rate. This means approximately one-third of the budgeted resources remained unutilized by the end of the fiscal year. The actual GBV expenditure constituted 0.49% of the state's total spending, slightly lower than the budget allocation share. On a per capita basis, Bauchi State spent approximately ₦391.04 on GBV-related programs.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Bauchi State's GBV-related allocations was ₦461.62 million in 2022, ₦578.47 million in 2023, and ₦2.53 billion in 2024. Budget performance improved from 56.0% in 2022 to 83.0% in 2023, before declining to 66.5% in 2024. Although Bauchi continues to struggle with per capita spending, gradual improvement is evident. In 2024, the state included one GBV-specific line item, "Purchase of Application Software for Programmes on Gender-Based Violence." This represents progress compared to 2022 and 2023, when no GBV-specific line items were included. However, the 2024 line item recorded no implementation. Per capita spending increased steadily, with ₦391.04 in 2024, ₦115.10 in 2023, and ₦64.03 in 2022. The significant rise in 2024 reflects growing fiscal attention to GBV-related needs after two years of modest incremental growth.

Human Angle Stories

Amina suffered regular physical abuse from her husband. One night, during a beating, she hit her head on a wooden stool. That night, she decided to report him to the police. She almost withdrew her case, but a visit from a government official from the Ministry of Women's Affairs changed everything. Amina was taken to the Bauchi SARC, where she received free medical care, counselling, legal guidance, and her rights under the VAPP Act were explained to her. With the Centre's support, Amina chose to continue her case. Although the court process has been slow and emotionally draining, having safe accommodation through the support of the first lady's office has made it more bearable.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Frontline officers remain inadequately trained on VAPP provisions, leading to inconsistent application.	Mandate quarterly training for police, judges, and legal officers on VAPP Act application, and establish a public conviction registry accessible through community notice boards and radio announcements.
	Bauchi's VAPP Law excludes marital rape to respect cultural and religious views, contradicting federal law and leaving married women unprotected. While 59.1% believe customary and religious systems cannot effectively prevent GBV, traditional leaders often obstruct justice by pressuring families to withdraw cases.	Establish a legislative review committee with religious scholars, women's rights advocates, and Ministry of Justice representatives to align state law with federal VAPP provisions within 12 months. Additionally, formalize the role of the 10-Man Committees with SOPs that prevent case withdrawal pressures and require referrals to formal courts for capital offenses.
Access to Legal Justice	The Legal Aid Council operates with a single staff member covering the entire state, resulting in rape cases awaiting trial for 3–4 years.	Recruit and deploy at least five additional Legal Aid officers across the three senatorial zones, with mobile legal clinics visiting remote LGAs monthly.
	Only four out of the twenty LGAs have functional referral pathways, and the lack of forensic laboratories means cases depend heavily on witness testimony—an evidence source often undermined by cultural intimidation. Witness willingness to testify collapsed from 73.6% in 2023 to 48.7% in 2025.	Establish a state forensic laboratory or formalize a partnership with the Yola facility for evidence of processing. Introduce a witness protection program with safe houses, pseudonym provisions, and financial support for relocation when necessary.
Support Services	Only 33.2% of residents know the state's one SARC exists, dropping to 18% in rural areas, and 55.7% remain unaware that medical, legal, psychosocial, and economic support services are available. The single SARC, located in Bauchi metropolis, serves all 20 LGAs, leaving 80% of the state's geography functionally unserved.	Establish two additional satellite SARCs in Toro (Bauchi North) and Ningi (Bauchi South) within 12 months, equipped with dedicated medical personnel, counselors, and legal officers. Concurrently, deploy mobile SARC units, equipped ambulances with trained staff, to visit remote LGAs monthly on publicized schedules.
	Awareness of legal representation pathways collapsed from 20.1% in 2024 to 14.7% in 2025. Shelters managed by NGOs and the 10-Man Committees often become sites where traditional leaders pressure survivors into reconciliation rather than prosecution, undermining accountability before cases reach court.	Mandate that all SARC and shelter referrals to legal services be tracked through a digital case management system with automated follow-ups every 48 hours until legal representation is secured. Prohibit informal mediation for capital GBV offenses (rape, defilement, grievous bodily harm) through formal directives to the 10-Man Committees, with penalties for non-compliance including removal from the committee and prosecution under Section 2(1) of the VAPP Law for accessory after the fact.
Information and Awareness	Awareness of GBV programs dropped from 77.5% in 2023 to 53% in 2025 despite expanded state campaigns, revealing a fundamental communication failure.	Integrate age-appropriate GBV and consent education into the formal curriculum for Primary 4–6 and all secondary school levels by the 2026 academic year, with trained teachers delivering quarterly modules.
	Only 31% find awareness materials "completely useful," and traditional leaders, who wield significant community influence, account for just 3.5% of information dissemination.	Collaborate with traditional and religious leaders to share co-branded awareness messages during community gatherings, offering small stipends and public recognition for participation and IEC materials based on community feedback to ensure cultural relevance and effectiveness.
	Disability inclusion remains tokenistic: only 10% know of braille materials, 19% of sign interpretation, and 10.2% of screen subtitling.	Establish a Disability Inclusion Unit within the Ministry of Women Affairs, with a budget for accessible GBV materials and train at least one community health worker and one Gender Desk officer in each LGA on disability-responsive communication and referral.
Budget and Spending	Budget execution declined from 83% in 2023 to 66.5% in 2024, and the only GBV-specific line item—Application Software for GBV Programs—recorded 0% implementation.	Execute the Application Software line item and include additional GBV-specific budget lines such as shelters, SARCs, and survivor support services. Improve overall budget execution from 66.5% to at least match the 2023 performance levels.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | Invictus AFRICA



Bayelsa State

Glory of All Lands

Bayelsa State Ecological Park

Bayelsa State

Population: 2,872,781

49.9% Female | Male 50.1%

Overall Grade 65.8%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,002)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

62.2% | 37.8%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

77.7% | 22.3%

AGE

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

11.8% | 39.7% | 27.6% | 14.0% | 5.8% | 1.1%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

7.8% | 92.2%

SARCs: N/A

Shelters: N/A

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦3.94bn

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

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦2.46bn

(This accounts for **62.4%** of total allocation to the ministry)

62.4%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ Others ■ (Actual spend)

35.0% | 30.3% | 34.7%

Per Capita Spending

₦1,716

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	62.5%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	43.6%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	56.3%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	83.3%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

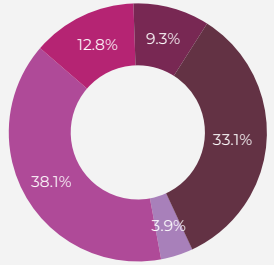
36.6% | 63.4%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

70.6% | 29.3% | 19.2% | 15.3% | 5.2%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

34.5% | 44.3% | 25.0% | 34.6% | 23.3% | 6.5%

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

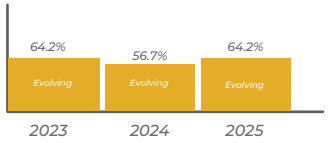
Where did you or the person first seek help?

32.3% | 24.7% | 16.4% | 6.8% | 6.6% | 2.8% | 6.6% | 3.8%

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

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
31%	59%

44%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	-1 ▼ LP 58.3%	+1 ▲ LP 75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ	-1 ▼ ALJ	ALJ 62.5%
Support Services	SS 25.0%	+1 ▲ SS 86.3%	-1 ▼ SS 56.3%
Information and Awareness	IA 86.3%	IA 75.0%	-1 ▼ IA 56.3%
Budget and Spending	BS 48.3%	BS 50.0%	+1 ▲ BS 91.7%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- The number of designated family courts increased from 2 to 4 within the past year (3 magistrate courts and 1 high court), with dedicated judges improving case management and accelerating GBV case hearings.
- Approximately 20 GBV-related convictions were secured in the past 12 months.
- A Connect Center for GBV reporting became operational at the Ministry of Health in collaboration with NCDC, providing phone, SMS, WhatsApp, and social media channels for reporting, with staff on duty Monday to Friday.
- Public preference for formal justice systems increased from 61% in 2023 to 65.6% in 2025.

Areas of Concern

- Critical Shortage of SARCs and Safe Homes: Only 1–2 functional SARCs exist, both in Yenagoa (12.5% LGA coverage), with the government-supported FMC SARC remaining non-functional due to renovations.
- No dedicated government-operated safe homes exist for survivors needing separation from perpetrators.
- No formal witness protection framework exists, with only 42.2% of respondents feeling safe serving as witnesses.
- Awareness of GBV laws dropped from 84% in 2024 to 60.2% in 2025, while awareness of convictions plummeted from 63.8% to 28.1%.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Formulation and establishment of the Bayelsa State Action Plan for Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment and Gender-Based Violence by the Ministries of Health, Education, and Justice in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Formulation of Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools policy by the Ministry of Education in 2024.

Access to Legal Justice

- More family courts have been established to facilitate GBV cases. This also increased the number of Judges assigned to the family courts in 2025

Support Services

- Establishment of the Gender Response Initiative Team (GRIT) to provide support services to GBV victims and survivors in the state.
- The Ministry of Health in collaboration with the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) has also built an event-based Surveillance Connect Center.

Information and Awareness

- Production of new IEC materials for sensitization and awareness creation purposes by the Ministry of Women Affairs.

Change Spotlight

A standout achievement in Bayelsa State's efforts to enhance GBV prevention and response between 2023 and 2025 is the expansion of family courts specifically dedicated to GBV cases, addressing a major bottleneck in the litigation process. Previously, only two family courts existed – one at the magistrate level and one at the high court, leading to significant delays given the rising number of GBV cases. In direct response to findings in the Womanity Index, which highlighted the critical need for more specialized courts, the state successfully established two additional family courts. This expansion has already improved the judicial capacity to handle GBV issues more efficiently, facilitating quicker hearings and demonstrating the state's resilience and commitment to strengthening legal frameworks. Community stakeholders and survivors have reported increased confidence in accessing justice, and local coverage has praised this reform as a vital step toward reducing GBV impunity and better protecting victims, aligning closely with the broader state goals of improving GBV prevention and response outcomes.

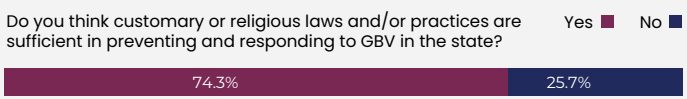
Bayelsa State GBV Assessment Survey

LAWS AND POLICIES

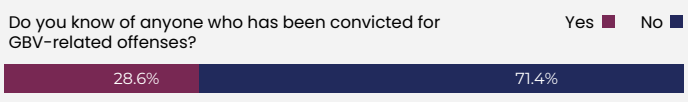
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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?

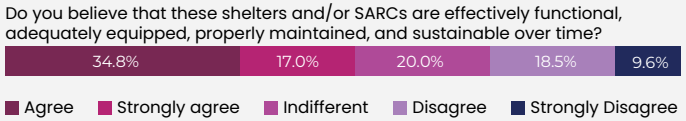


SUPPORT SERVICES

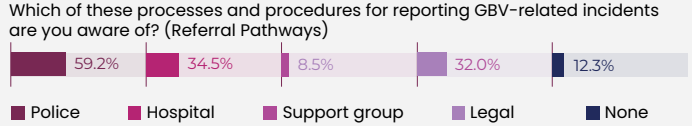
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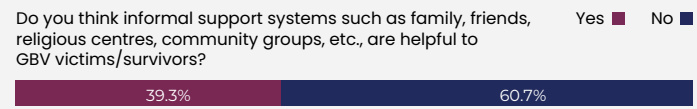
Do you believe that these shelters and/or SARCs are effectively functional, adequately equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable over time?



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

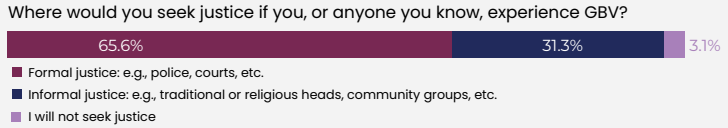


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

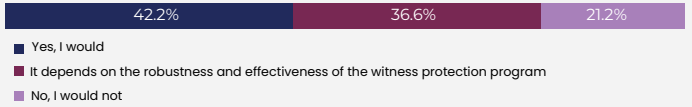


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

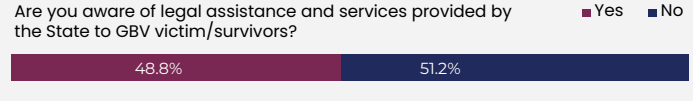
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If you witness GBV, would you feel safe serving as a witness during the investigation and trial?

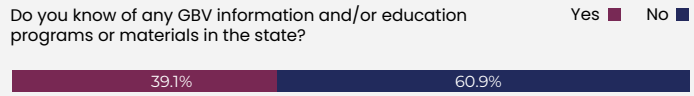


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

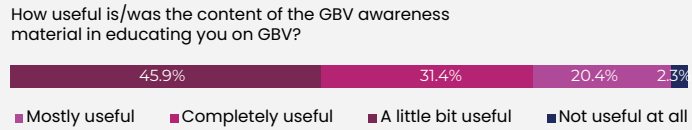


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

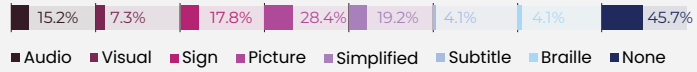
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?



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



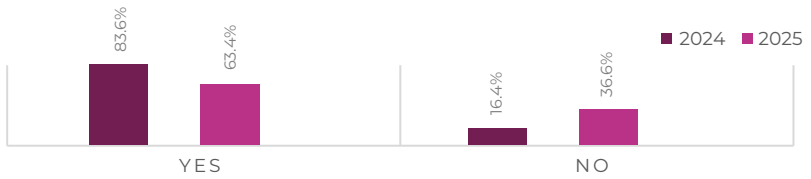
Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Bayelsa State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 65.8%

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



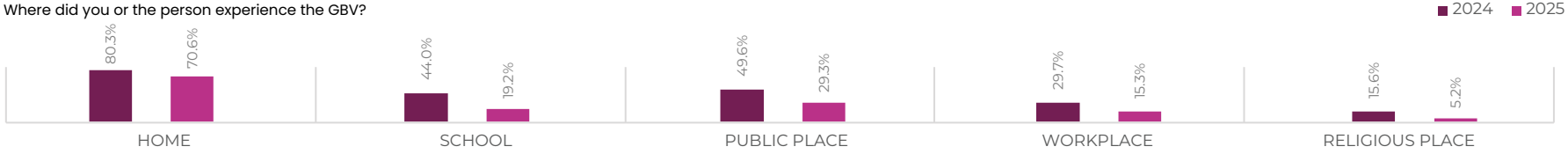
63.4%

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

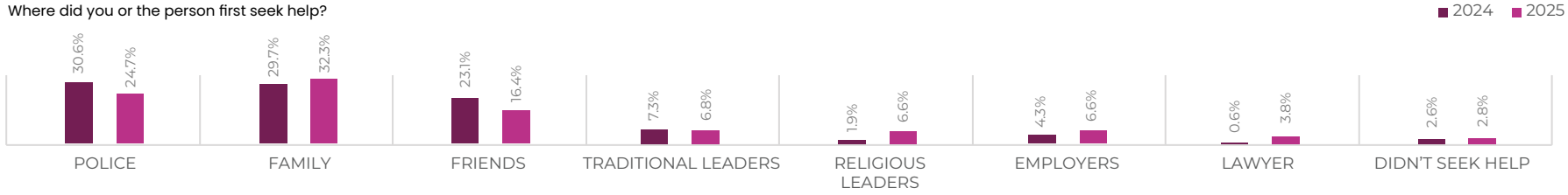
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



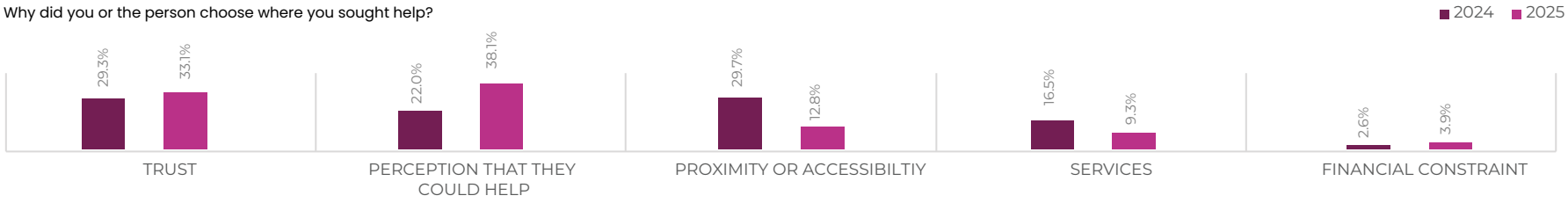
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

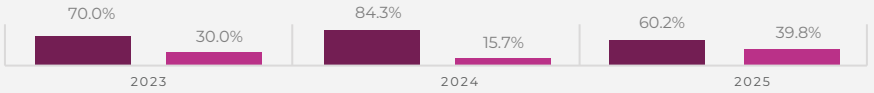


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

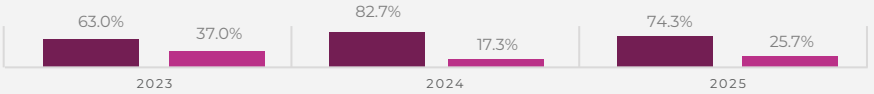
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LAWS AND POLICIES

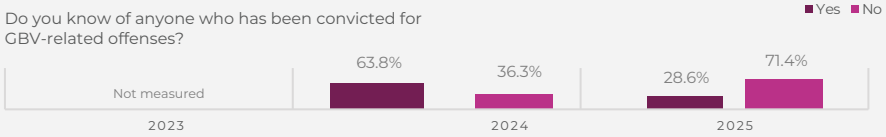
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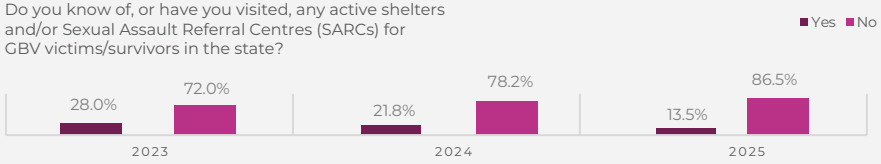


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

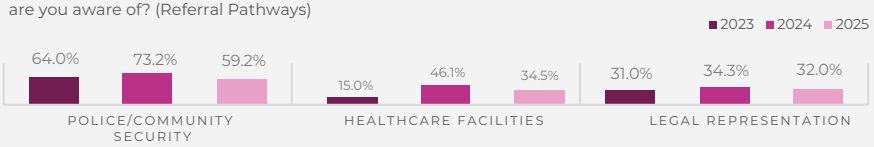


SUPPORT SERVICES

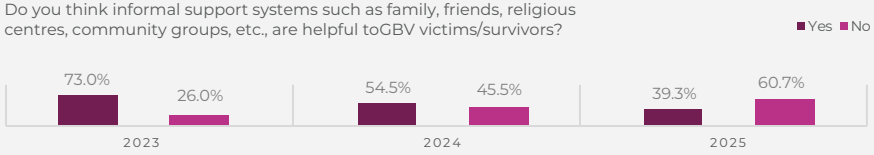
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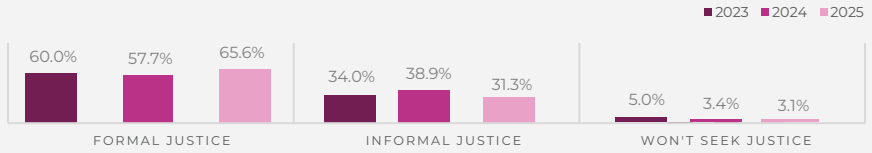


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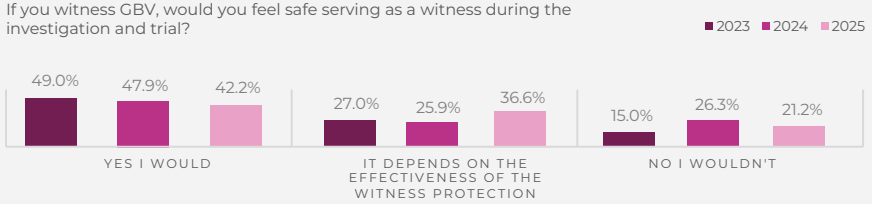


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

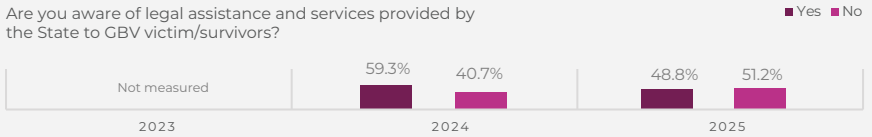
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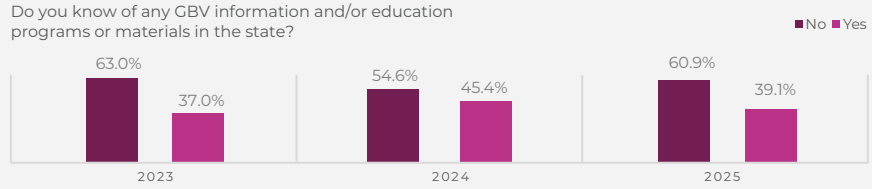


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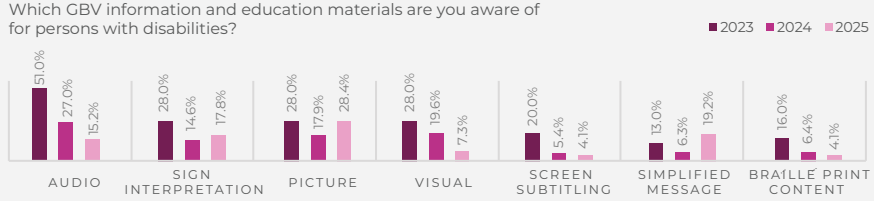


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

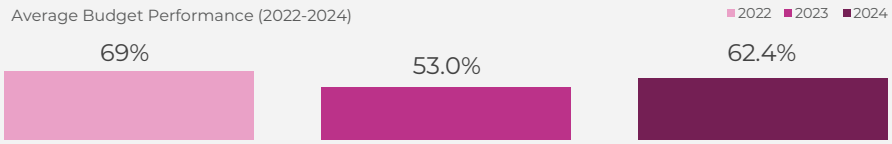


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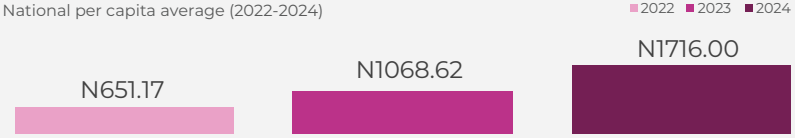


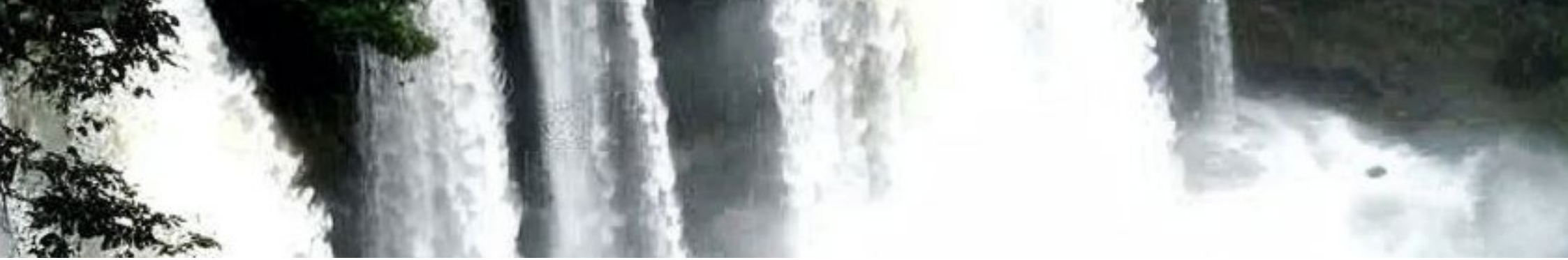
BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

The 2021 Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Law in Bayelsa has improved the legal landscape, especially with an expanded definition of rape that includes penetration beyond vaginal intercourse, even encompassing oral rape. However, notable gaps persist: the law does not criminalize indecent exposure, and the criminalization of female genital mutilation (FGM) is weaker than the federal law, with lower penalties and criminalization of victims. Pre-existing laws, such as the Criminal Code and Child Rights Law, continue to be used alongside the newer legislation.

Awareness of GBV laws and policies in Bayelsa State stands at 60.2% among respondents, with key information sources including radio (44.8%), NGOs (38.6%), social media (36.8%), and friends and family (34.7%). Despite this awareness, 71.4% of respondents were unaware of any GBV convictions, and only 28.6% knew of successful prosecutions, representing a significant drop of 63.8% points in conviction visibility since 2024. Nonetheless, 68% expressed confidence in the current formal legal framework, supported by recent legal reforms and improved institutional collaboration. Cumulatively, stakeholders across the state confirmed approximately 20 convictions.

Customary and religious laws remain influential, with 55.6% of respondents aware of these norms, and 74.3% believing they effectively prevent and respond to GBV. Government-led reforms and active church involvement have boosted confidence in these traditional mechanisms. However, harmful practices such as wife inheritance and FGM persist, especially where traditions are deeply entrenched. The Ministry of Justice notes some women within families enforce such customs. Religious leaders' resistance to divorce and encouragement for women to stay in abusive marriages further complicate GBV interventions.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

The level of awareness of existing GBV laws and policies in the state declined notably from 69.9% in 2023 and 84.3% in 2024 to 60.2% in 2025. This sharp drop is largely attributed to the inability to access funds for sensitization and awareness programs following the death of the former Commissioner of Women Affairs and the delay in appointing a replacement. Interestingly, while awareness of GBV-related laws decreased, the percentage of respondents who believe that customary or religious laws are sufficient in addressing GBV increased from 62.6% in 2023 and 64% in 2024 to 71.4% in 2025. Conversely, knowledge of actual convictions for GBV-related offenses dropped significantly – from 63.8% in 2024 to only 28.6% in 2025, highlighting a growing gap between awareness, enforcement, and perceptions of justice.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Legal aid is available throughout Bayelsa State, free for GBV survivors' prosecutions, but physical access is problematic in remote riverine areas due to high transportation costs. The 2025 Womanity Index shows that only 48.8% of respondents are aware of any legal assistance and services provided by the state to GBV victims/survivors. 65.6% of respondents prefer to seek justice from formal institutions if they experience GBV, while 31.3% prioritize informal justice systems.

The reporting process in the state usually starts at police stations, where survivors receive medical referrals; investigations are survivor-centered, and evidence is collected before prosecution. The Ministry of Justice follows up cases from police to court, but enforcement faces challenges including victim reluctance to pursue cases, court delays lasting over six months, and limited family court capacity with only one court at the high court level, causing significant backlogs.

Specialized GBV support has improved with gender desks at all police formations and an increase in family courts from two to four, helping manage cases more effectively. Training for police and judicial officers on GBV is ongoing. However, informal justice practices remain widespread, with 61.4% of respondents believing informal systems support justice, while 38.6% disagree. In practice, informal settlements often block formal justice due to poverty-driven settlements and traditional leaders preferring community resolution.

Witness protection remains a critical gap, with 42.2% feeling safe to testify, 36.6% cautious depending on protection programs, and 21.2% feeling unsafe. No formal witness protection system exists in Bayelsa State, exposing witnesses to violence and intimidation. The Legal Aid Director cited a case where a police witness was murdered before the trial. Calls have been made to establish robust, confidential witness protection laws to improve safety and encourage survivor and witness participation in GBV cases.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

There has been a notable increase in preference for formal justice systems from 60% in 2023 to 65.6% in 2025, suggesting rising confidence in formal legal institutions. The proportion relying on

informal justice declined from 34% in 2023 to 31.3% in 2025, indicating a gradual shift toward formal legal channels. However, the percentage of respondents who would feel safe serving as witnesses declined from 48.5% in 2023 to 42.2% in 2025 (a 6.8 percentage point drop). Those who said their willingness depends on witness protection effectiveness increased from 27% in 2023 to 36.6% in 2025, reflecting growing awareness of the importance of institutional protection.

Awareness of legal services dropped from 59.3% in 2024 to 48.8% in 2025. This reversal suggests poor publicity and accessibility of legal aid programs, possibly linked to reduced sensitization campaigns following the death of the Commissioner of Women Affairs

Support Services

Current State in 2025

The Womanity Index data reveals that 86.5% of respondents are unaware of or have ever visited SARCs or shelters in the state, with only 13.6% reporting awareness. Among those aware, 34.8% consider these facilities functional, well-equipped, and properly maintained. The limited awareness is linked to the reality that existing centres are few and mainly concentrated in Yenagoa, the state capital.

Referral pathways for GBV cases are mainly directed to police or community security (59.2%), hospitals/healthcare (34.5%), and legal representation (32%). However, 65.5% of respondents lack knowledge of reporting processes. Efforts to improve reporting include the recent establishment of a Connect Center for surveillance and communication, though a toll-free hotline is still missing. Collaborative planning between ministries has produced a State Action Plan addressing sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment, and GBV, but implementation is pending. Despite attempts, access to dedicated GBV hotlines remains a challenge.

On survivor support, 59.4% of respondents lack awareness of available support services, relying mostly on radio (52.8%) and NGOs (48.6%) for information. The state offers legal, counselling, and economic assistance through aligned ministries and GRIT coordination. Some medical services are subsidized but not free, with official charges varying widely. Geographic access is limited, mostly benefiting Yenagoa residents, while safe homes for survivors are notably absent, highlighting a critical gap in protection and accommodation.

Informal support systems are generally perceived as less effective than formal ones, with 60.7% disagreeing that informal systems are better. While family and community awareness is increasing, stigma and harmful cultural practices hinder formal reporting and effective intervention. Attempts to resolve GBV cases through informal or religious channels often fail, leading to continued abuse. Traditional support exists but does not sufficiently replace formal structures needed for survivor protection and justice.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, the state shows consistent increase in lack of awareness of SARCs/Shelters (72% in 2023, 78.2% in 2024, and 86.5% in 2025). There is increasing preference for reporting to formal referral pathways like the police and healthcare facilities. The proportion believing informal support systems are helpful dropped sharply from 73% in 2023 to 54.5% in 2024, suggesting declining trust in family- and community-based responses but experienced a slight increase to 60.7% in 2025. Knowledge of referral pathways fluctuated from 2023 to 2025, peaking in 2024 before declining in 2025, revealing fragile and unsustained sensitization efforts.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

The assessment of knowledge on GBV information and awareness programs reveals significant gaps, with 60.9% of respondents lacking awareness while 39.1% show knowledge. Key information sources include radio (57.7%), NGOs/CSOs (40.3%), family and friends (39%), social media (36%), television (34.9%), healthcare workers/facilities (30.1%), educational institutions (28.3%), and workplaces (7.1%). Despite production of IEC materials like flyers and T-shirts carrying GBV messages, their distribution has stalled due to leadership changes in the Ministry of Women Affairs.

Regarding the usefulness of GBV materials, 45.9% find them mostly useful, 31.4% completely useful, 20.4% a little useful, and 2.3% not useful. There is strong support for GBV and child sexual abuse education in schools, with 94% in favor. The Ministry of Education has integrated GBV topics in Social Studies and Civic Education from primary to secondary levels, supplemented by NGOs. However, implementation challenges persist, particularly the incomplete child protection policy and funding constraints hindering the effectiveness of school-level desk officers.

Public sensitization efforts are conducted through radio, television, town hall meetings, and road walks, with the Gender Response Initiative Team (GRIT) active in monthly radio programs and planned sensitization tours. Social media plays an increasing role, while a reporting center for GBV has been established in partnership with public health authorities. However, funding challenges and leadership gaps have hindered progress.

Use of GBV information and education materials designed for persons with disabilities is generally low. Only 15.2% of respondents reported using audio or spoken content, 4.1% braille or screen subtitling, 7.3% visual content, 17.8% sign interpretation, 28.4% picture-based messages, and 19.2% simplified messages. GRIT includes PWDs and uses visual and written materials, though braille materials for visually impaired persons are yet to be fully developed. The Ministry of Education is pursuing braille resources for special needs students, recently receiving shipments from abroad to support inclusive GBV education.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

There was significant improvement in awareness between 2023 (37%) and 2024 (45.4%), indicating that GBV sensitization programs gained traction. However, by 2025, awareness dropped to 39.1%, reversing earlier gains. The sharp increase in those unaware (from 54.6% to 60.9%) points to a weak sustainability framework for GBV education efforts. The Ministry of Education confirmed funding challenges: “So much has been put in place to carry out major GBV related activities in the state particularly with schools (both private and government-owned) but funds have been the major challenge with the implementation of such programmes.” The fluctuating trend reflects short-term impacts rather than institutionalized approaches. On awareness of GBV materials for PWDs, those

reporting no knowledge rose from 13% in 2023 to 46% in 2024, remaining almost unchanged at 45.7% in 2025. This indicates consistent neglect of PWD-inclusive communication over the three-year period.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Bayelsa state allocated ₦3.94 billion to GBV programs, representing 0.52% of its total budget, and achieved a 62.4% execution rate with actual spending of ₦2.46 billion (0.52% of total actual expenditure). This translates to a per capita GBV spend of ₦1,716.00, the second highest nationally, reflecting substantial investment in GBV prevention and response services relative to the state's female population.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Bayelsa State's GBV-related allocations was ₦1.27 billion in 2022, ₦2.80 billion in 2023, and ₦3.94 billion in 2024. Actual budget performance, however, fluctuated. Bayelsa achieved 69.0% in 2022, declined to 53.0% in 2023, and improved again to 62.4% in 2024. While the state did not include any GBV-specific line items in its 2022 or 2023 budgets, an allocation of ₦109 million was introduced in 2024 for the "Construction of Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) and Construction of Correctional Facilities." Despite this positive step, no actual spending was recorded for the project. Per capita spending stood at ₦1,716.00 in 2024, ₦1,068.62 in 2023, and ₦651.17 in 2022. The consistent upward movement across all three years demonstrates sustained and strengthening commitment to GBV-related prevention and response.

Human Angle Stories

She thought it was just a stroll with her boyfriend, but it turned into a near-death experience. He lured her into a nearby bush and attempted to take her life. When he left briefly to fetch a bag, intending to return and finish what he had started, concerned bystanders noticed his suspicious movements and intervened. The survivor was found with life-threatening injuries but survived. The Bayelsa State Government responded by establishing the Gender Response Initiative Team (GRIT), a coordinated structure to ensure justice for survivors and strengthen prevention and response mechanisms across the state.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Low level of awareness of GBV convictions and prosecution in the state.	Convicted and prosecuted cases in the state should be collated, printed, and disseminated to organizations/institutions working on GBV on a quarterly basis by the Ministry of Justice.
	High level of knowledge of customary and religious practices in preventing and responding to GBV exists.	Institutionalize partnerships with traditional rulers and faith leaders to implement community GBV prevention protocols in all 105 wards of Bayelsa State.
Access to Legal Justice	Findings show increased preference to seek formal justice systems on GBV matters.	Strengthen and decentralize GBV legal support desks within the formal justice system to all eight (8) LGAs of Bayelsa State.
	No formal witness protection program exists in the state. Only 42.2% of respondents feel safe serving as witnesses, while 36.6% condition their participation on effective protection mechanisms.	Develop and implement a state-level witness protection policy in collaboration with security agencies.
	Informal justice systems obstructing formal processes – despite 65.6% preference for formal justice, traditional and religious leaders routinely settle GBV cases outside the legal system, often through monetary compensation.	Enforce laws against obstructing justice, sensitize traditional and religious leaders on reporting GBV cases, incentivize referrals to formal justice, and publicize successful prosecutions to promote formal justice.
Support Services	Critical shortage of SARCs and shelters, as only 1-2 functional SARCs exist, both in Yenagoa (1 of 8 LGAs), representing 12.5% LGA coverage. The state-supported SARC at FMC has been under renovation and non-functional.	Prioritize immediate reopening and full operationalization of the FMC SARC with adequate staffing and equipment and establish at least one functional SARC in each of the three senatorial districts.
	Available support services are concentrated at the urban centre, leaving most rural communities grossly underserved.	Establish GBV Response Units in the 8 local government areas of Bayelsa State.
	No government-operated safe homes exist for survivors needing separation from perpetrators.	Establish dedicated government-funded safe homes in at least two locations (urban and riverine access points) with capacity for long-term accommodation, psychosocial support, skills training, and educational support.
	No public health facility provides free medical care to GBV victims and survivors.	Institute a GBV Free Medical Care Policy across all public health facilities in Bayelsa State, ensuring that survivors receive post-GBV treatment.
Information and Awareness	Public awareness of GBV information and programs dropped from 45.4% in 2024 to 39.1% in 2025, while unawareness rose from 54.6% to 60.9%.	Institutionalize GBV awareness campaigns across MDAs (Women Affairs, Education, Health, Information, Justice) to reduce dependence on a single ministry. Allocate quarterly budgets specifically for radio programs, community outreach, and IEC material production and distribution.
	While 94% of respondents support teaching GBV and child sexual abuse education in schools, no standardized curriculum or guide exists. Education relies on ad-hoc NGO visits and embedded content in social studies/civic education.	Develop a standardized, age-appropriate GBV and child sexual abuse prevention curriculum for primary and secondary levels in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and NERDC. Train teachers as first responders and establish school-based GBV reporting desks with clear referral pathways to police and women affairs.
	Severe neglect of PWD-inclusive information and PWD representation in GRIT has not translated to accessible information dissemination.	Develop and disseminate PWD-inclusive GBV IEC materials including braille pamphlets, sign language video content, and audio materials in collaboration with disability organizations. Ensure all public sensitization programs include sign language interpreters and accessible formats.
Budget and Spending	Bayelsa ranks second nationally with ₦1,716.00 per capita GBV spending in 2024, but execution declined from 69% to 62.4% over three years. The ₦109 million SARC construction—the state's first GBV-specific line item—recorded 0% implementation.	Fast-track SARC construction and add line items for shelters, emergency response, and survivor rehabilitation. Implement quarterly monitoring to reverse execution decline and ensure spending matches allocation levels.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



Benue State

Food Basket of the Nation

Benue Economy Statue

Benue State

Population: 7,299,277

50.6% Female | Male 49.4%

Overall Grade 54.2%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,057)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

72.4% | 27.6%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

54.3% | 45.7%

AGE

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

5.5% | 39.6% | 29.3% | 15.2% | 7.6% | 2.8%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

5.8% | 94.2%

SARCs: 1

Shelters: 2

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦4.09bn

(This accounts for **0.7%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦586.28m

(This accounts for **14.3%** of total allocation to the ministry)

14.3%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ Others ■ (Actual spend)

18.4% | 46.9% | 17.5% | 17.2%

Per Capita Spending

₦158.86

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	62.5%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	25.0%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

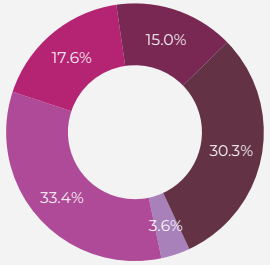
33.1% | 66.9%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

83.6% | 31.1% | 20.9% | 9.8% | 7.6%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

48.4% | 55.0% | 29.6% | 50.1% | 21.1% | 7.2%

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

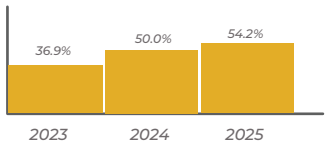
Where did you or the person first seek help?

37.5% | 27.7% | 8.8% | 8.8% | 5.9% | 6.8% | 3.1% | 1.4%

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

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
21%	15%

18%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 48.3%	LP 50.0%	LP 58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	AJL 56.3%	AJL 62.5%
Support Services	SS 25.0%	+1 ▲ SS 50.0%	SS 62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA 25.0%	+1 ▲ IA 56.3%	IA 62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 33.0%	-1 ▼ BS 25.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Benue established its first Sexual Assault Referral Centre in January 2025, providing one-stop medical, legal, and psycho-social support for survivors.
- All police station now has a Gender Unit, and all government agencies have Gender Desk Officers to guide survivors.
- The IOM Directory was launched in 2024, strengthening coordination among service providers through clear referral pathways.

Areas of Concern

- Public awareness of GBV laws increased from 26% in 2023 to 45.6% in 2025, while trust in customary systems rose from 17% to 68.4%.
- Knowledge of GBV convictions fell from 47.5% in 2024 to just 24.3% in 2025.
- Awareness of legal aid services declined from 47% in 2024 to 26% in 2025.
- Public awareness of GBV information programs dropped from 53% in 2024 to 29.3% in 2025 after NGO-funded campaigns ended.
- Willingness to testify in GBV cases fell from 75.6% in 2023 to 53% in 2025, with residents citing lack of witness protection as the primary concern.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Benue State initiated a review of the VAPP law with assistance from Lawyers Alert NGO to create a legal framework for Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs).
- Amendments were proposed to removed consent signature requirements on forms and redefine rape ingredients, including recognition of marital rape

Access to Legal Justice

- Gender Units were established in every police station across the state to receive and process GBV reports.
- Gender Desk Officers were appointed in all government agencies, including at IDP camps, to provide guidance and referral support to survivors seeking justice.

Support Services

- The state government established Benue's first Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) at the Benue State University Teaching Hospital in January 2025, providing medical, legal, and psycho-social support.
- The IOM Directory (Referral Pathway) was launched in 2024 through collaboration between the Ministry of Women Affairs and SEMA, mapping service providers and their contacts across all sectors

Information and Awareness

- The Side-by-Side Movement was established by Centre LSD, bringing together religious leaders, traditional rulers, and the Ministry of Justice for regular advocacy and sensitization sessions across communities.
- Structured engagements were organized with Wives of Local Government Chairmen to extend GBV awareness efforts across all local government areas.
- The Disability Bill was passed at the State House of Assembly in 2025 to guarantee inclusion of persons with disabilities in all GBV awareness and response efforts.

Change Spotlight

In 2024, the Ministry of Women Affairs, in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), launched a GBV Referral Pathway Directory. This directory outlined civil society organizations and service providers, detailing their services and contact information. It was distributed to police stations, health facilities, NGOs, and community organizations to improve service coordination for GBV survivors.

Now, when a GBV case is reported, service providers can quickly connect survivors with appropriate support, such as medical care, legal aid, and counseling. Police refer cases directly to the SARC, and SEMA helps connect survivors in IDP camps to necessary services. This initiative has led to increased awareness of police reporting, rising from 44.8% in 2023 to 65.8% in 2025, and improved case follow-through. While there are still gaps in public awareness of healthcare and legal options, the directory has created a more efficient GBV response system, ensuring survivors receive timely support.

Benue State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 54.2%

LAWS AND POLICIES

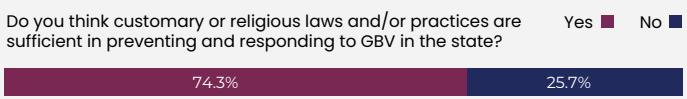
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?

Yes ■ No ■



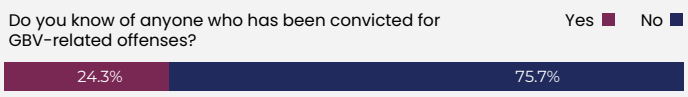
Do you think customary or religious laws and/or practices are sufficient in preventing and responding to GBV in the state?

Yes ■ No ■



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

Yes ■ No ■



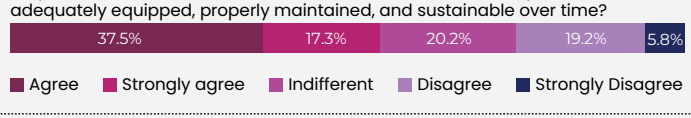
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

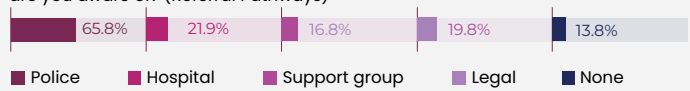
Yes ■ No ■



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)



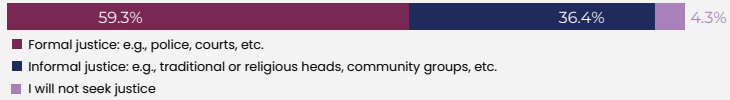
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

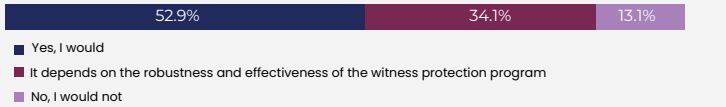


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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?

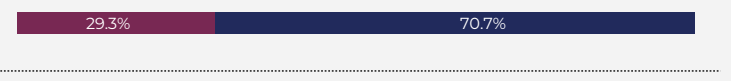
Yes ■ No ■



INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

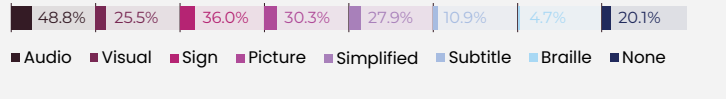
Yes ■ No ■



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



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



Benue State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 54.2%

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



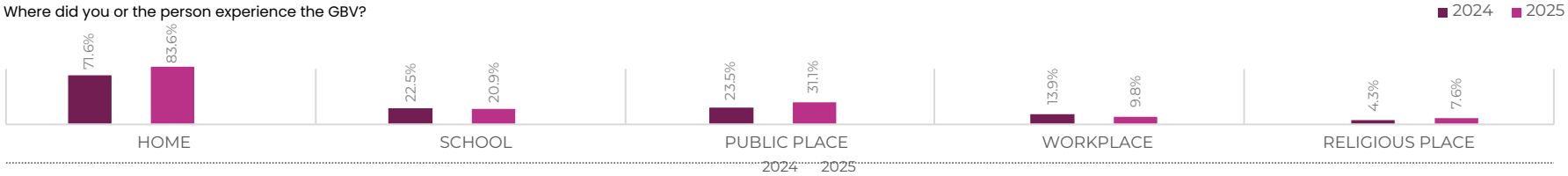
66.9%

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

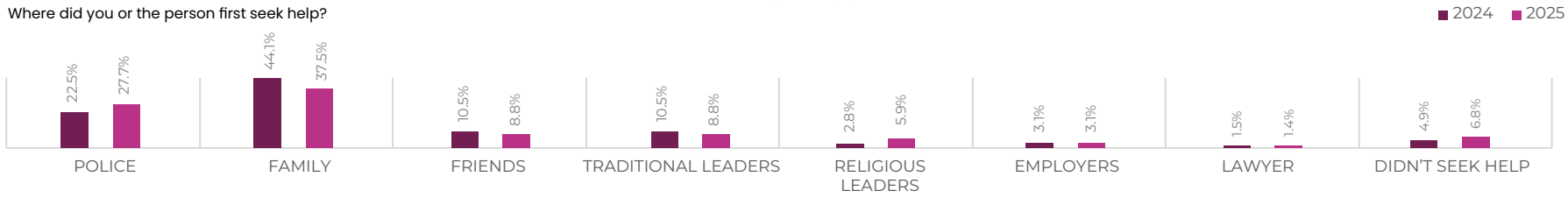
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



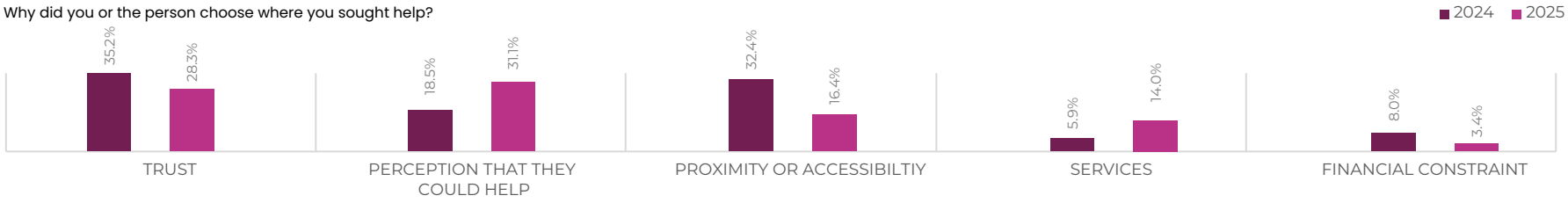
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

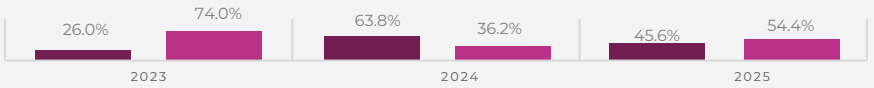


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

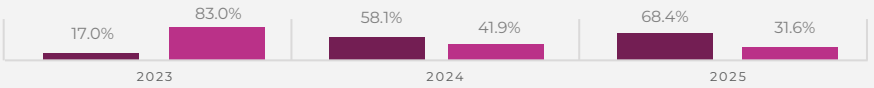
Overall Grade 54.2%

LAWS AND POLICIES

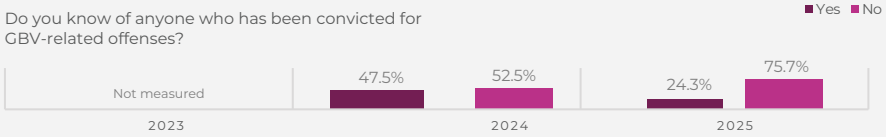
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

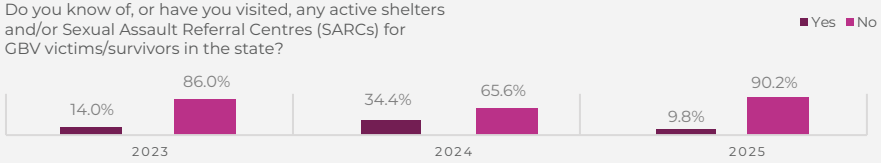


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

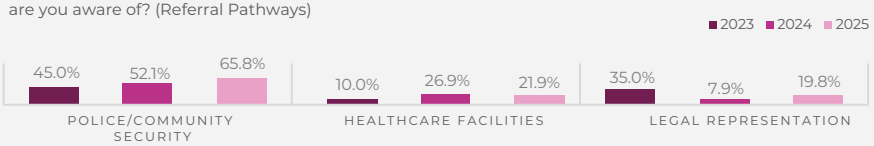


SUPPORT SERVICES

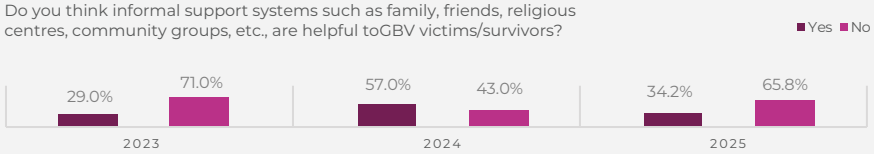
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

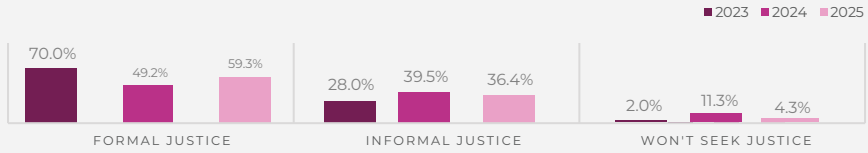


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

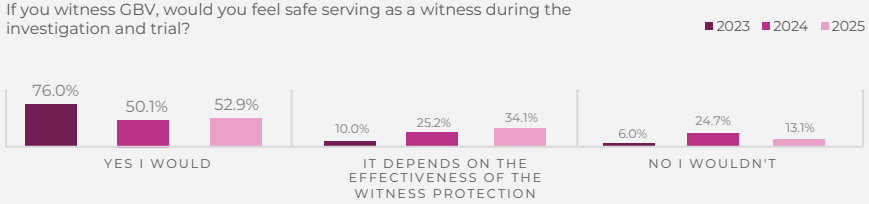


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

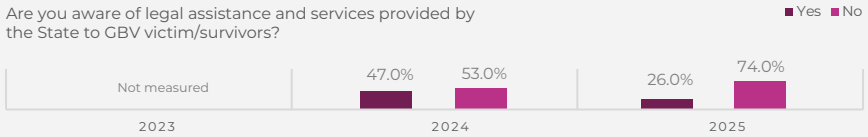
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

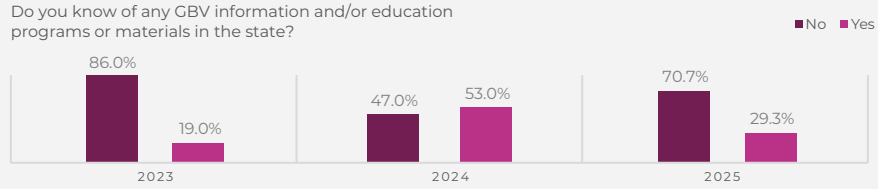


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

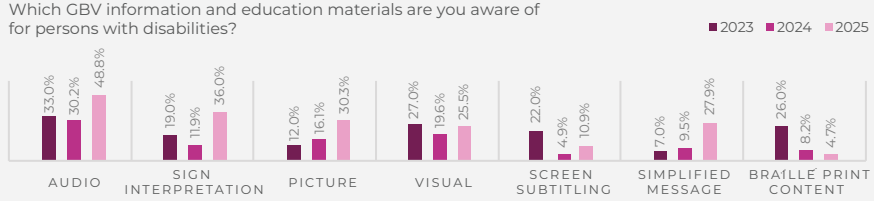


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

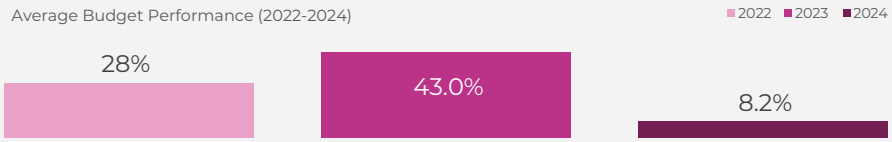


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

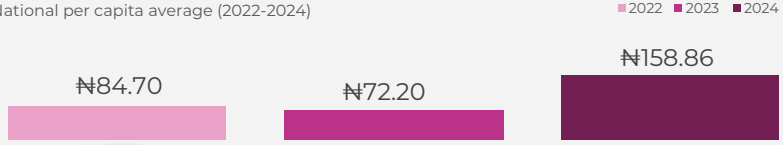


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Benue State has domesticated the federal VAPP Act of 2015 with minimal changes. While stakeholders agree that the law is adequate, they highlight weak implementation as the main challenge. Efforts to improve public awareness have included strategic partnerships, such as the Side-by-Side Movement, which engages traditional and religious leaders to help spread key messages within communities. Despite these efforts, public awareness remains average: only 45.6% of residents know that GBV laws exist. This gap between stakeholder engagement and community-level awareness suggests that outreach efforts, though promising, are not yet reaching a wide audience or translating into broad public understanding.

Despite low awareness, most residents (67%) believe that the laws are effective. However, very few have seen them in action: only 24.3% of residents knew of any GBV-related conviction. Officials could not provide specific conviction figures and attributed the poor performance to a six-month judiciary strike followed by vacation, resulting in conviction rates "quite lower than the previous year."

Customary and religious systems are very influential in Benue State, with many residents (68.4%) viewing them as helpful for resolving GBV. But these systems can undermine formal justice. According to the Legal Aid Council, harmful norms such as spousal battery and child marriage are still socially accepted in many communities, though awareness is slowly improving. The Ministry of Justice highlighted the harmful practice of saa akough, where survivors are forced to marry their abusers. Religious teachings also create barriers, as some leaders discourage legal action to protect marriages, with doctrines like "Till Death Do Us Part" making it harder to pursue prosecution

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Over the years, there was a significant increase in public awareness of formal laws addressing GBV, from 26% in 2023 to 64% in 2024, and further to 45.6% in 2025. During the same period, more residents began to see customary and religious systems as effective in addressing GBV, with support for these approaches rising from 17% to 58.1% and 68.4%, respectively. This shift suggests growing trust in informal mechanisms but also signals a weakening connection between the public and the formal justice system.

Further deepening this disconnect is the declining visibility of formal enforcement. In 2024, over half of residents (47.5%) knew someone convicted for GBV-related offenses, but by 2025, this dropped to just 24%. Stakeholders noted that conviction rates have remained consistently low over the years, with delays continuing to hinder progress. When people no longer see justice being served, they may turn instead to familiar community systems. While such systems may provide some support, they often lack the structure needed for accountability and long-term protection.

These trends raise concern that weakened enforcement and low visibility of legal outcomes are driving the public away from formal mechanisms, making it harder to implement GBV policies effectively. Officials acknowledged these challenges but emphasized that ongoing review processes including recommendations to remove consent signature requirements and redefine rape ingredients, signal commitment to strengthening the legal environment.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

The GBV reporting and prosecution process in Benue State involves multiple actors, including the Ministry of Justice, law enforcement, civil society, and the Legal Aid Council. While coordination has improved, ensuring more cases now reach prosecution rather than ending with the police, enforcement challenges persist. Family interference, funding gaps, limited public awareness, and systemic delays such as the judiciary strike in 2025 continue to obstruct justice.

These weaknesses in the system affect public trust. While 59.3% of residents said they would seek help through the police or courts, 55.9% still believe traditional or community systems are more effective. This overlap suggests that public confidence in the formal justice system remains fragile, and that informal mechanisms still play a major role in how people respond to GBV.

Over half (52.9%) of residents said they were willing to testify in GBV cases, but many (34.1%) added that they would only do so if there was reliable witness protection. This reflects continued concerns about safety and fear of retaliation, which weaken participation in the justice process.

Awareness of legal aid services remains low, with only 26% of residents aware of such support. Combined with strong reliance on informal systems, this lack of information limits access to formal justice and reduces public confidence in institutional responses. The Legal Aid Council was originally supposed to operate in three senatorial zones with a zonal office in Katsina-Ala. However, due to past crises and government instructions, operations were pulled back and now only function from

Makurdi. Current efforts rely on letters and phone calls, which officials described as ineffective. They noted that while FIDA Benue follows up on survivor cases, the overall coverage has not expanded in the past year.

On a positive note, every police station now has a Gender Unit, and all government agencies have Gender Desk Officers who ensure victims know where to go for help, including at IDP camps. The state has also attempted to establish a Family Court, though this is still in progress, and plans exist to establish a Sexual Violence Unit, though funding constraints have prevented actualization despite completed architectural designations.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, preference for formal justice systems declined from 70% in 2023 to 49% in 2024, before rising slightly to 59.3% in 2025, while preference for informal systems rose from 28% to 40% between 2023 and 2024, then dropped slightly to 36.4% in 2025. This shift points to declining trust in formal institutions and increased reliance on community-led mechanisms, especially where formal options seem less accessible or reliable. Confidence in participating as a witness also dropped, from 75.6% in 2023 to 50% in 2024 and 52.9% in 2025. An increasing number of residents now say their willingness depends on the availability of witness protection. This shows that strengthening protection measures could help rebuild trust and encourage more public cooperation.

Similarly, awareness of legal aid services fell from 47% in 2024 to 26% in 2025, suggesting weak institutional outreach. This decline coincides with the operational pullback of the Legal Aid Council from three senatorial zones to only Makurdi, significantly reducing physical presence and accessibility across local government areas. Without clear and consistent information, survivors may not know where to turn for help, making legal protections harder to access in practice.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Benue State currently operates one SARC, located at the Benue State University Teaching Hospital. The centre only became operational in January 2025, and officials confirmed that the centre is not fully equipped and receives no direct funding from the state government, as there is no dedicated budget line for its operations. As a result, the facility relies entirely on support from international partners. The state government does not own any shelters. Instead, the Ministry of Women Affairs collaborates with two CSO-owned shelters in Makurdi: London Shelter and Second Voice Shelter at Nyiman. Plans exist to expand SARC services to all local government areas through Primary Healthcare Centres, but these have not materialized. All local government areas remain underserved.

Uneven service coverage, the absence of state-funded shelters, and low public awareness of available services further limit access to survivors. In 2025, only 9.8% of residents reported knowing about or visiting a SARC or shelter. Awareness of broader services such as medical, psychosocial, and legal support is slightly better at 31.6%. However, these services are mostly delivered by NGOs, not by the government.

Stakeholders reported a strengthened referral pathway following the launch of a formal directory to improve coordination among service providers. While this structure supports referrals from police, NGOs, and IDP camps to SARCs, many survivors still struggle to navigate the system due to limited awareness. Knowledge of referral options beyond the police (65.8%) remains low: only 21.9% for hospitals, 19.8% for legal aid, and 16.8% for support groups. Community-based alternatives like suggestion boxes and lending groups provide informal entry points but cannot replace a clear, accessible formal system.

In the absence of accessible formal services, these gaps are currently being filled by informal support mechanisms such as family, friends, religious institutions, and community groups. Over one-third of residents (34.2%) believe these informal options are more effective than formal services, reinforcing the need to strengthen and publicize formal support options across the state.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public engagement with formal GBV support services such as shelters and SARCs remained low throughout the three-year period, with awareness and visitation falling from 14.3% in 2023 and 34% in 2024 to just 9.8% in 2025. This suggests declining visibility and possibly limited access to these services. During the same period, the perception that informal support systems are more effective than formal ones rose from 29% in 2023 to 57% in 2024, followed by a drop to 34.2% in 2025. This shift raises concerns about public confidence in formal care and highlights the urgent need to strengthen and promote professional support services.

Awareness of referral pathways showed some improvement overall, particularly for police reporting, which increased from 44.8% in 2023 to 52.1% in 2024 and further to 65.8% in 2025. This improvement aligns with officials' reports that every police station now has a Gender Unit, and that awareness campaigns have emphasized police as the primary reporting channel. However, knowledge of healthcare (21.9%) and legal (19.8%) referral options remained inconsistent and relatively low. These gaps suggest weak coordination in public education efforts and the need for more targeted communication across sectors.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

The state educates the public through periodic stakeholder engagements, school sensitizations, and organized activities. IEC materials, billboards, and placards are shared during engagements and distributed to local government areas. Officials also use translations of GBV themes into local languages, sensitization in communities with cultural barriers, and interpersonal communication. However, no new GBV IEC materials were developed or distributed within the past year, limiting the robustness and currency of available information.

In 2025, only 29.3% of respondents reported knowing of any GBV information and awareness programs. Stakeholders confirmed the limited reach of existing efforts, noting that "More trainings, engagements, and continuous sensitization are needed until awareness reaches a broader audience and effectively closes knowledge gaps."

Public support for school-based GBV education is strong, with 95.4% of residents agreeing that

GBV and child sexual-abuse education should be taught at all levels. However, findings show a lack of standardized curriculum. GBV and child sexual abuse topics are introduced informally, mainly through school clubs rather than as part of the formal education system. Most school-based awareness efforts are led by NGOs, while the Ministry of Education provides access and limited oversight. Although these initiatives are effective in the short term, their sustainability is weak due to inconsistent funding and poor follow-up. Once NGO support ends, many school programs and clubs struggle to continue, reducing their long-term impact on students and school communities.

Stakeholders confirmed efforts to include persons with disabilities (PWDs) in GBV awareness activities through verbal communication, collaboration with disability groups, and the use of accessible formats such as audio, audio-visual, and pictorial materials. However, these efforts remain basic and lack consistent follow-up. While nearly half (48.8%) of residents were aware of audio or spoken content and 36% knew of sign language interpretation, fewer were aware of picture-based materials (30.3%). Awareness was lowest for screen-subtitled content (10.9%) and braille (4.7%), highlighting the need for more inclusive and diverse communication strategies. The recent passage of the Disability Bill by the State House of Assembly presents an opportunity to improve inclusion, but sustained engagement and clearer implementation strategies are needed to ensure PWDs can fully understand and benefit from awareness programs

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of GBV information and education programs in Benue State increased from 18.5% in 2023 to 53% in 2024 but then dropped to 29.3% in 2025. The decline in 2025 coincided with the end of several NGO-funded campaigns. Officials acknowledged this over-reliance on external support, noting that while such programs are effective in delivering messages, sustainability and follow-up remain major challenges. Without consistent funding, the impact of these initiatives tends to fade quickly.

To address this, stakeholders reported ongoing efforts to institutionalize awareness beyond donor project cycles. The establishment of the Side-by-Side Movement, which engages religious and traditional leaders, has created a more sustainable platform for continued sensitization. In addition, increased use of radio talk shows has improved community awareness, especially around harmful practices. However, without state budgetary commitment, the overall trend remains concerning, with public awareness heavily dependent on unpredictable external funding.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Benue State did not have a specific GBV budget line in 2024, but ₦4.09 billion was allocated to the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare, representing 1.26% of its total state budget. Of the allocated amount, only ₦586.28 million was actually spent, achieving an 8.2% performance rate. This means 91.8% of the budgeted resources remained unutilized by the end of the fiscal year. On a per capita basis, the ministry spent approximately ₦158.86 on GBV-related issues.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Across the last three years of the Womanity Index, Benue State has consistently recorded no GBV-specific line items in its approved budgets for 2022, 2023, and 2024. Funding for the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare has experienced significant fluctuation and decline. In 2022, the ministry received an allocation of ₦1.05 billion, with an actual budget performance of 28% (₦294.36 million). The allocation decreased to ₦600.19 million in 2023, with a performance of 43.1% (₦258.60 million). Although the allocation rose substantially to ₦4.09 billion in 2024, actual performance fell to a concerning 8.2% (₦586.27 million). Per capita spending on GBV-related issues was ₦158.86 in 2024, ₦72.20 in 2023, and ₦84.70 in 2022, with 2024 marking the highest figure in the three-year period. Although 2024 shows notable improvement, the fluctuations across the years indicate inconsistent prioritization.

Human Angle Stories

A young woman in Benue reported a case of abuse to the SARC but withdrew it two weeks later. Community leaders told her that if she exposed the matter, nobody would marry her. The official handling the case explained that this is common, as survivors are discouraged with remarks like “Who will marry you?” These pressures reflect how stigma and fear of social rejection override courage. Survivors who initially seek justice are pushed back into silence, leaving perpetrators unpunished and the cycle of abuse unbroken.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	Public awareness of GBV laws increased from 26% in 2023 to 45.6% in 2025, while trust in customary and religious systems rose from 17% to 68.4%, indicating a weakening connection between the public and formal justice systems.	Launch a state-funded public awareness campaign that clarifies what the VAPP Act covers, how it protects survivors, and where to report cases. Use radio, community dialogues, social media, and local languages to reach a wide audience.
	Only 24.3% of residents know of any GBV-related conviction in 2025, down from 47.5% in 2024. Officials could not provide specific conviction figures, citing a six-month judiciary strike.	Establish a case tracking system to monitor GBV cases from reporting through conviction. Publish anonymized quarterly reports showing prosecution outcomes to increase public visibility of enforcement.
	Harmful customary practices such as saa akough (forcing survivors to marry perpetrators), child marriages and spousal battery persist despite increased sensitization.	Strengthen the Side-by-Side Movement by expanding training to more traditional and religious leaders across all local government areas. Develop clear community-level sanctions for harmful practices that contradict the VAPP Act.
 Access to Legal Justice	Preference for formal justice systems declined from 70% in 2023 to 59.3% in 2025, while willingness to testify dropped from 75.6% to 53%, with many residents citing lack of witness protection as the primary concern.	Establish a formal witness protection program with clear protocols, safe houses, and legal guarantees. Publicize the program through radio, community meetings, and Gender Desk Officers to rebuild public confidence in testifying as witnesses.
	Awareness of legal aid services fell from 47% in 2024 to 26% in 2025. The Legal Aid Council pulled back operations from three senatorial zones to only Makurdi due to past crises, relying on ineffective letters and phone calls.	Restore Legal Aid Council operations to all three senatorial zones. Provide mobile legal aid clinics that visit local government areas on scheduled days. Partner with FIDA, Gender Desk Officers, and community leaders to identify and reach survivors.
	Every police station now has a Gender Unit, but funding for capacity building remains a core challenge. Family Courts are in progress but not yet operational, and the planned Sexual Violence Unit lacks funding despite completed architectural plans.	Allocate dedicated budget lines for capacity building of Gender Units and Gender Desk Officers. Fast-track the establishment of Family Courts and the Sexual Violence Unit by securing state or donor funding to operationalize existing infrastructure.
 Support Services	Benue operates one SARC with no state funding and no state-owned shelters. All 23 local government areas remain underserved.	Create a dedicated state budget line for the SARC to cover operational costs and expand SARC services to at least three additional local government areas within the next year.
	Perception that informal support systems are more effective than formal services rose from 29% in 2023 to 34.2% in 2025. Over one-third of residents prefer informal options due to limited access to formal services.	Strengthen formal support services by establishing at least one state-owned shelter with trained staff. Deploy mobile support units that provide medical, psycho-social, and legal services in underserved local government areas on a rotating schedule.
	Knowledge of referral pathways beyond police is low: only 21.9% for hospitals, 19.8% for legal aid, and 16.8% for support groups. The IOM Directory was launched in 2024 to improve coordination, but awareness remains limited.	Distribute the IOM Directory widely through police stations, CSOs/NGOs, health facilities, schools, churches, mosques, and community centres. Train all frontline service providers (police, health workers, teachers) on referral pathways and ensure they can guide survivors effectively.
 Information and Awareness	Public awareness of GBV information programs rose from 18.5% in 2023 to 53% in 2024 but dropped to 29.3% in 2025 after NGO-funded campaigns ended.	Allocate a dedicated annual budget for GBV awareness programs within the Ministry of Women Affairs. Develop a sustainable three-year awareness strategy that continues beyond donor project cycles, including consistent radio programming and community outreach.
	While 95.4% of residents support school-based GBV education, there is no state-developed curriculum. GBV topics are taught informally through NGO-led school clubs. Inadequate teacher capacity poses risks as some teachers may themselves be perpetrators.	Work with the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council to integrate comprehensive GBV and child sexual abuse education into the state curriculum. Train teachers specifically on GBV topics and establish safeguarding protocols to ensure educator accountability.
 Budget and Spending	Benue State lacks a specific GBV budget line and demonstrates critically poor budget implementation, with only 8.2% of allocated GBV funds actually spent in 2024,despite the state's documented GBV challenges.	Establish a dedicated GBV budget line within the state budget and strengthen the financial management capacity of the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare to improve fund absorption. This should include quarterly budget performance reviews and accountability mechanisms to ensure at least 70% implementation rate by the next budget cycle.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



Borno State

Home of Peace

Shehu Palace Maiduguri

Borno State

Population: 7,691,999

49.6% Female | Male 50.4%

Overall Grade 67.2%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,012)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

70.3% | 29.7%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

61.0% | 39.0%

AGE

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

5.7% | 36.6% | 32.2% | 17.3% | 6.6% | 1.6%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

6.2% | 93.8%

SARCs: 3

Shelters: 2

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦9.49bn
(This accounts for **2.3%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦3.71bn
(This accounts for **39.1%** of total allocation to the ministry)

39.1%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

94.7% | 4.2% | 1.1%

Per Capita Spending

₦972.56

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	62.5%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	68.6%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	56.3%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	75.0%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

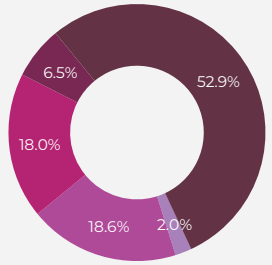
46.7% | 53.3%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

84.2% | 31.4% | 18.2% | 11.7% | 3.5%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

25.8% | 55.5% | 45.5% | 26.2% | 16.0% | 8.0%

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

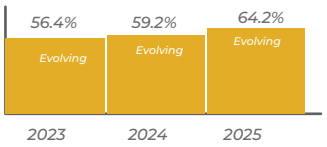
Where did you or the person first seek help?

38.6% | 33.0% | 5.8% | 13.4% | 5.4% | 2.0% | 0.6% | 1.3%

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

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
50%	45%

48%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 48.3%	+1 ▲ LP 75.0%	LP 75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 56.3%	ALJ 62.5%
Support Services	SS 86.3%	SS 75.0%	-1 ▼ SS 68.8%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3%	IA 56.3%	IA 56.3%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 33.3%	+1 ▲ BS 75.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- GBV cases are now concluded within 6-8 weeks, significantly reducing delays and improving survivor confidence in justice delivery.
- Survivors are trained in vocational skills such as tailoring, cap-making, and small business management to rebuild livelihoods post-crisis.
- Survivors can report through police, hospitals, community leaders, or 24/7 toll-free lines, ensuring broad accessibility.

Areas of Concern

- Only 43.5% of residents know about GBV laws, with limited publicity of the 34 recorded convictions.
- Female genital mutilation and child marriage remain widespread, with legal loopholes allowing marriage under 18.
- Only 53.3% feel safe testifying, while just 26.6% know free legal aid exists, and staffing is unsustainable post-donor projects.
- Only 23% of residents know SARCs or shelters exist, especially in rural and conflict-affected LGAs.
- Awareness of GBV programs dropped from 71% in 2024 to 42.6% in 2025, as campaigns remain donor-funded and concentrated during the 16 Days of Activism.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Borno State enacted and amended multiple GBV laws including the Penal Code (amended 2023), VAPP Law (2021), and Child Protection Law (2021), with harmonized provisions criminalizing FGM and child marriage

Access to Legal Justice

- The state provides free legal representation to both GBV survivors and offenders through the Ministry of Justice, with lawyers reimbursed after case conclusion to ensure fair representation.
- FIDA has trained community and religious leaders, Civilian Joint Task Force, health workers, paralegals, new legal aid practitioners, police officers, and judicial officers to handle and report GBV cases, and toll-free lines are available for 24/7 reporting.
- A GBV desk officer has been placed in each hospital to make support and referral services more accessible.

Support Services

- Two functional Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) operate in the Central and Southern zones, providing comprehensive medical, psychosocial, legal, and forensic services to survivors.
- The state established two “one-stop” shelters in Budum (Maiduguri) and Kakusala (Bama) offering holistic GBV support services including medical, psychosocial, and economic assistance.

Information and Awareness

- The Ministry of Women Affairs disseminates GBV information through radio programs on Dandal Kura and Borno Radio, quarterly sensitization campaigns, and IEC materials in multiple formats including braille for visually impaired persons.

Change Spotlight

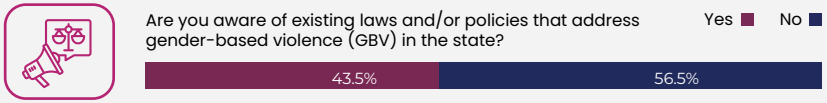
Borno State has achieved a remarkable transformation in GBV prosecution efficiency through the implementation of accelerated trial procedures. A Ministry of Justice official emphasized that “you can finish your case within two months, within six weeks. It depends on the availability of your witnesses,” highlighting a justice system that now operates with unprecedented speed compared to national standards. This efficiency, combined with strict adjournment limits where cases cannot be postponed for more than two weeks, has enabled the state to secure 41 GBV convictions in 2024 and 34 by October 2025.

Borno State GBV Assessment Survey

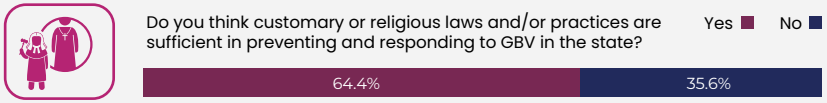
Overall Grade 67.2%

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

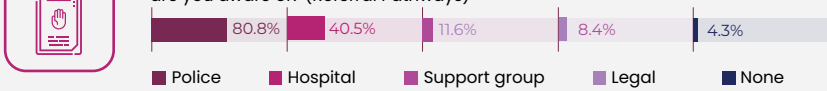
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state? Yes No



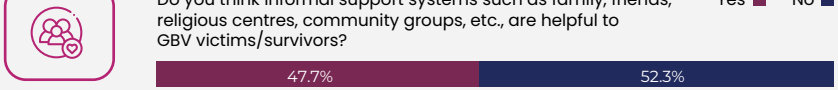
Do you believe that these shelters and/or SARCs are effectively functional, adequately equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable over time?



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



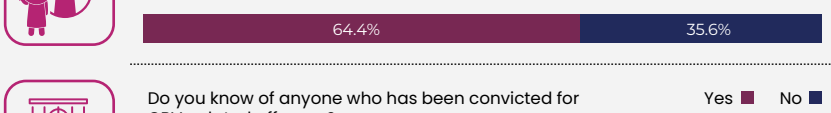
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors? Yes No



ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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

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



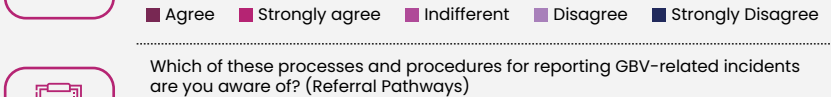
Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors? Yes No



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?

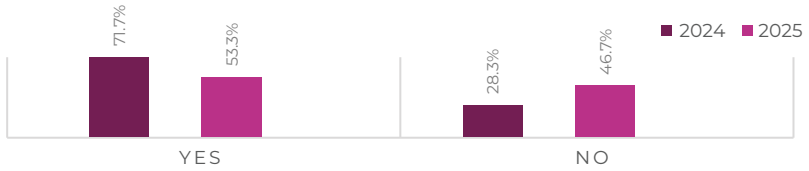


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

Borno State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 67.2%

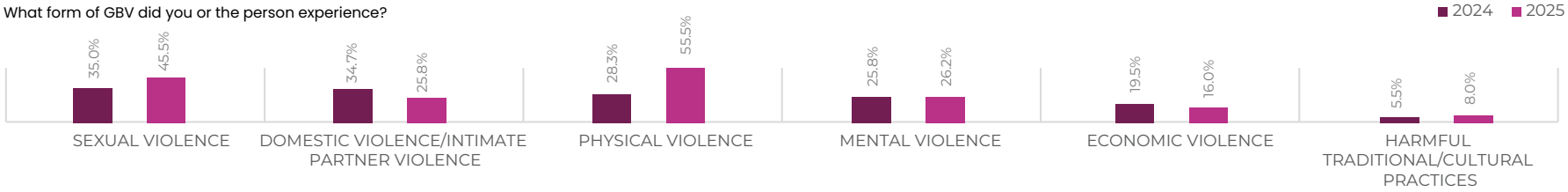
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



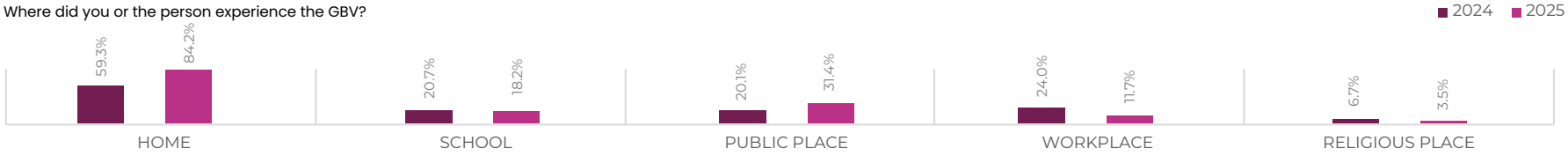
53.3%

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

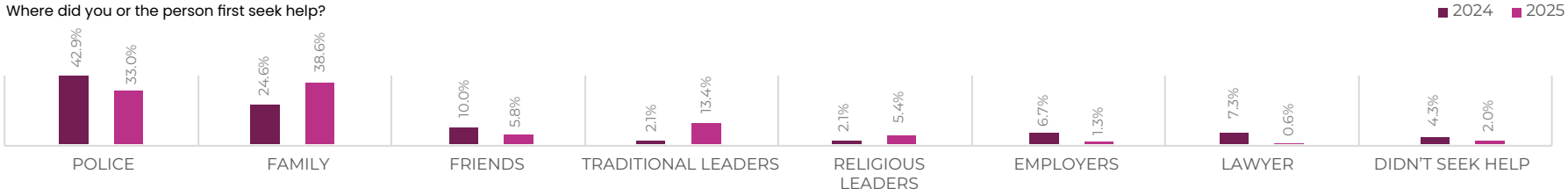
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



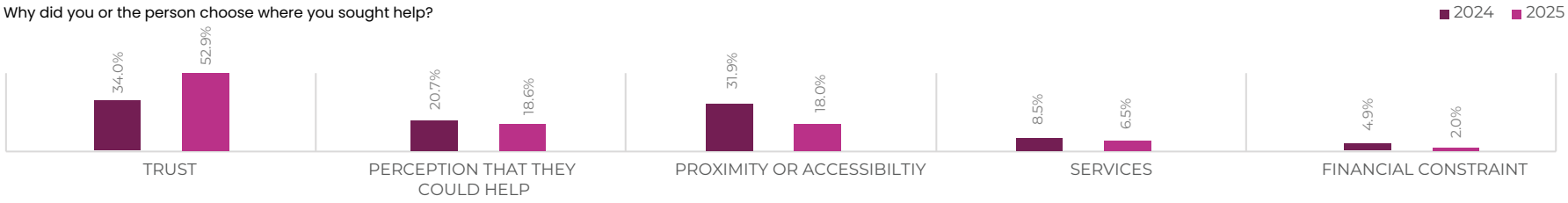
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?

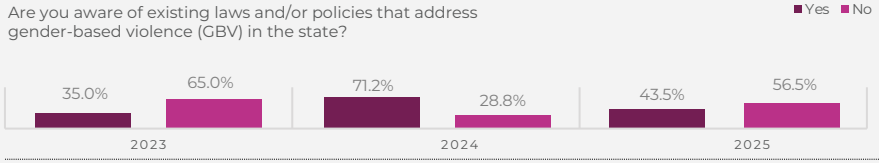


Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?

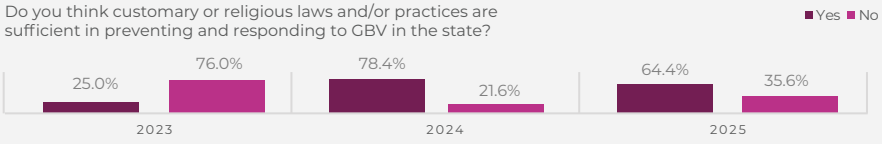


LAWS AND POLICIES

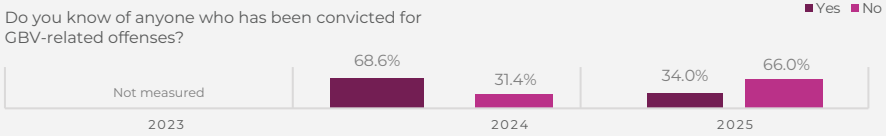
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

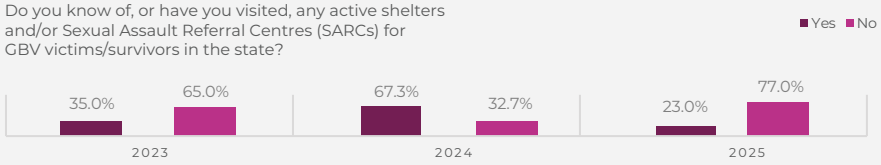


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

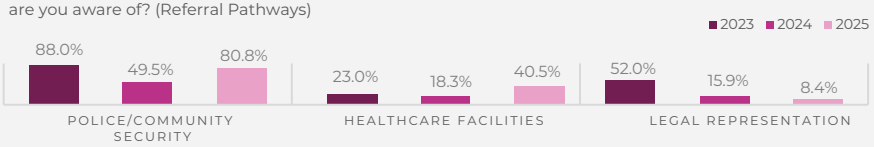


SUPPORT SERVICES

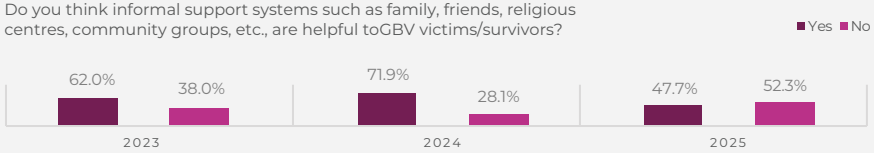
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

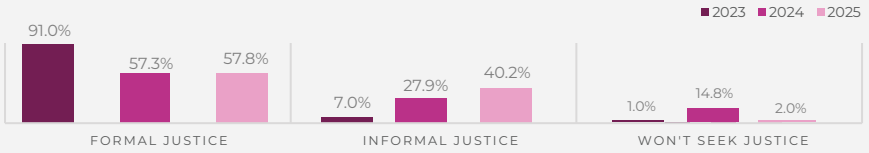


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

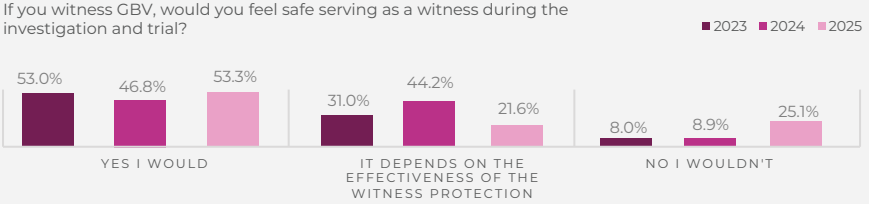


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

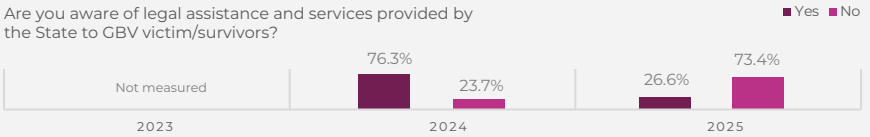
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

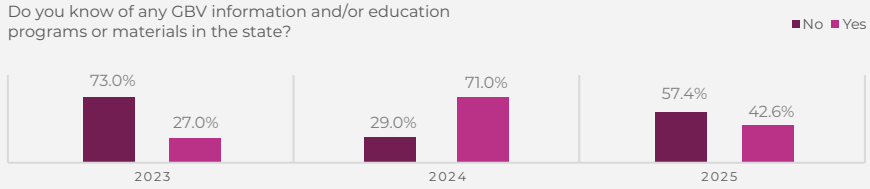


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

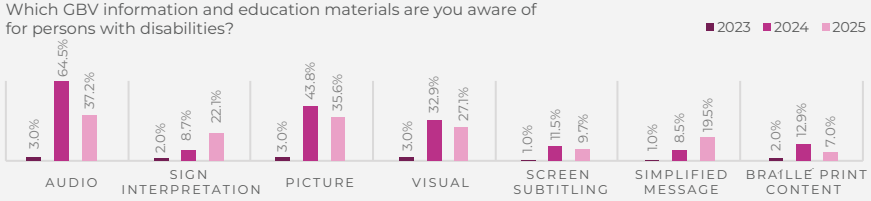


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

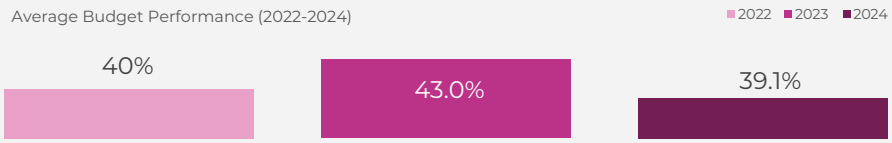


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

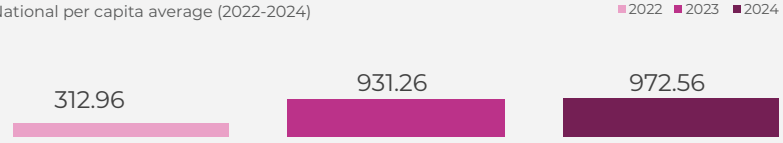


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Borno State has established a comprehensive legal framework addressing GBV through multiple interconnected laws. The state operates under three primary statutes: the Penal Code Law (originally enacted 1994, amended 2023), the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) (VAPP) Law (domesticated 2021), and the Child Protection Law (2021). Stakeholders explained that the laws were adapted from federal laws with modifications to contextualize them to suit local needs. This contextualization resulted in a harmonized legal system where provisions from all three laws addressed specific GBV forms. It was also noted that the laws were harmonized to include provisions against FGM and child marriage, making them punishable offenses under state law. The state's prosecution record reflects strong enforcement capacity, with 41 convictions secured in 2024 and 34 convictions by October 2025 across all GBV-related laws.

Despite this strong legal foundation, public awareness remains limited. Only 43.5% of respondents are aware of existing GBV laws, with NGOs/CSOs serving as the primary information source (59.1%), followed by radio (39.5%) and social media (31.8%). Furthermore, only 34% of respondents know someone convicted for GBV offenses despite the high conviction rates, indicating a significant gap between institutional performance and public knowledge.

Significant challenges persist regarding customary and religious practices, with harmful traditions like female genital mutilation (FGM) and early child marriage continuing despite sensitization efforts. The Shuwa tribe predominantly practices FGM, and cultural preservation remains a powerful barrier to eradication. Parental consent also undermines protection against child marriage, allowing marriages below age 18. Efforts to combat FGM have led to medicalization, with practitioners using modern tools to reduce infection risks, indicating that communities are adapting rather than eliminating the practice. Stakeholders emphasize that these practices persist due to deep-rooted cultural beliefs, with some community members viewing FGM as an integral part of their identity.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

From 2023 to 2025, Borno State demonstrated mixed progress in legal awareness and enforcement. Public awareness of GBV laws increased modestly from 35% in 2023 to 71% in 2024, before declining to 43.5% in 2025. This fluctuation suggests that awareness gains from intensive campaigns in 2024 were not sustained into 2025, possibly due to reduced outreach activities or donor project cycles ending.

Perceptions of formal law effectiveness improved significantly, rising from 24.8% in 2023 to 69% in 2024, before settling at 51.3% in 2025. This pattern indicates growing confidence in statutory systems, though recent declines suggest ongoing challenges in maintaining public trust. Conversely, awareness of convictions dropped dramatically from 68.8% in 2024 to 34% in 2025, despite actual conviction numbers remaining high. This disconnect between institutional performance and public knowledge highlights inadequate communication of justice outcomes to communities.

The persistence of harmful cultural practices despite legal prohibitions indicates that while Borno has strengthened its statutory framework, effective implementation requires more than legislative action. Traditional and religious norms continue to shape community behavior, necessitating deeper engagement with cultural leaders and more sustained sensitization efforts.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Borno State has established multiple pathways for reporting and prosecuting GBV cases, though their effectiveness differs across regions. Survivors can report incidents through community leaders, the police, hospitals, the Civilian Joint Task Force, or family members. These multiple entry points ensure that survivors have options that align with their comfort and circumstances. The prosecution process follows a structured pathway, involving police investigation, medical assessments for both victim and accused, and subsequent prosecution.

GBV cases are handled across 13 High Courts in Maiduguri, six of which specialize in GBV, alongside four Magistrate Courts. Trials are often concluded within six weeks to two months due to a strict adjournment policy, a measure that has contributed to Borno's relatively high conviction rates and improved justice delivery speed.

However, insecurity remains a major challenge, particularly in the northern senatorial zones where courts are non-functional due to insurgency. As a result, cases from these areas are transferred to Maiduguri, increasing the burden on urban courts and limiting local access to justice. Legal aid services also face sustainability challenges, with limited permanent staff and reliance on donor-funded projects that end without continuity, despite cases being reported from all local government areas.

Police officers across divisions have received GBV-specific training and are supported by desk officers and toll-free hotlines. However, implementation remains inconsistent, and witness protection mechanisms are inadequate. Only 53.3% of respondents said they would feel safe testifying, while 25.1% would not. Awareness of legal assistance services is also low at 26.6%, mostly accessed through NGOs or CSOs (62.1%). Although 57.8% of respondents prefer formal justice systems, 40.2% still rely on informal mechanisms, and 2% would not seek justice at all—largely due to fear, stigma, and religious or cultural beliefs

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

There has been a notable increase in preference for formal justice systems from 61% in 2023 to 65.6% in 2025, suggesting rising confidence in formal legal institutions. The proportion relying on informal justice declined from 34% in 2023 to 31.3% in 2025, indicating a gradual shift toward formal legal channels. However, the percentage of respondents who would feel safe serving as witnesses declined from 48.5% in 2023 to 42.2% in 2025 (a 6.3 percentage point drop). Those who said their willingness depends on witness protection effectiveness increased from 27.2% in 2023 to 36.6% in 2025, reflecting growing awareness of the importance of institutional protection.

Awareness of legal services dropped from 59% in 2024 to 48.8% in 2025. This reversal suggests poor publicity and accessibility of legal aid programs, possibly linked to reduced sensitization campaigns following the death of the Commissioner of Women Affairs

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Borno State provides GBV support through a dual system comprising SARCs and dedicated shelters. There are three SARCs, one in each senatorial district — South, Central, and North — but only those in the South and Central zones are fully functional due to insecurity in the North. The active centres, located at Umar Shehu Ultra-Modern Hospital in Bullukuntu and General Hospital Biu, offer essential medical, legal, and psychosocial services to survivors. These SARCs deliver comprehensive survivor care that includes medical treatment, trauma counselling, and empowerment support. Survivors also receive vocational training in tailoring, cap-making, and small-scale businesses, often facilitated through NGO partnerships.

In addition to SARCs, the state operates two “one-stop” shelters, one in Budum (Maiduguri) and another in Kakusala (Bama), which provide safe accommodation and holistic support for survivors unable to return to their homes or communities. NGOs across several local government areas complement these efforts by running smaller safe spaces and shelters to expand local access to protection and recovery services.

The referral system in Borno follows a dual pathway through community leaders and health facilities. Trained community members, including Civilian Joint Task Force representatives, report GBV cases, while health workers escalate incidents through designated GBV desk officers in hospitals. This connects survivors quickly to medical and legal assistance, supported by close collaboration between the Ministry of Women Affairs, the police, and legal aid organizations such as FIDA.

Awareness and access, however, remain limited. Only 23% of respondents know of or have visited SARCs or shelters, and 32.6% are aware of available support services. Among those aware, 52.4% believe the facilities are effective and adequately equipped. Police pathways are the most recognized (80.8%), followed by hospitals (40.5%), but awareness of support groups (11.6%) and legal aid (8.4%) remain very low. Nearly half of respondents (47.7%) consider informal support systems more reliable than formal ones, highlighting the need to strengthen collaboration between community-based and institutional mechanisms for GBV response.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Support service awareness fluctuated dramatically between 2023 and 2025. Knowledge of SARCs or shelters rose from 35% in 2023 to 67% in 2024, before plummeting to 23% in 2025. Awareness of specific referral pathways showed mixed trends. Police pathway recognition surged from 28.2% (2023) to 49.5% (2024) to 80.8% (2025), demonstrating successful sensitization on law enforcement channels. Healthcare pathway awareness also increased from 23.1% to 40.5%, though it peaked at 18.3% in 2024, suggesting fluctuating outreach intensity. Legal representation awareness remained consistently low, declining from 7.7% to 15.9% to 8.4%, indicating persistent gaps in legal literacy.

Confidence in informal support systems increased from 61.5% (2023) to 72% (2024) before dropping sharply to 47.7% (2025). This reduction may reflect growing trust in formal mechanisms, though the 2025 figure still represents nearly half the population, indicating informal systems retain significant influence. The proportion believing SARCs are effective remained stable between 2024 (50%) and 2025 (52.4%), suggesting that among those who know about these facilities, confidence in their effectiveness has held steady. However, the severe drop in overall awareness means fewer people can access these services, effectively reducing their population-level impact despite operational stability.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Borno State adopts a multi-channel approach to GBV awareness, combining print, digital, and broadcast media to reach diverse audiences. The state produces IEC materials in multiple formats which are distributed mainly during the annual 16 Days of Activism campaign. This demonstrates a growing commitment to inclusive communication that caters to different literacy levels and abilities across communities.

Radio remains the most effective outreach channel, with GBV programs airing on Dandal Kura and Borno Radio through discussions, jingles, and recorded sessions broadcast immediately after news bulletins to maximize audience reach. These efforts are reinforced by quarterly sensitization campaigns supported by local and international NGOs, ensuring that awareness activities occur consistently throughout the year rather than being limited to special events.

The state has also taken concrete steps to promote disability inclusion in GBV awareness. The Ministry’s Social Welfare Department implements a Disability Inclusion Accessibility Framework,

which includes structural improvements such as ramps at agency offices and production of materials in audio, braille, visual, and picture-based formats. These initiatives aim to ensure equitable access to GBV information for persons with disabilities.

Despite these initiatives, public awareness remains limited. Only 42.6% of respondents are aware of any GBV information or education programs. NGOs and CSOs are the main information sources (63.1%), followed by radio (45.9%) and social media (31.6%), while newspapers (11.6%) and religious centres (12.3%) have minimal impact. Among those aware, 56.6% rated the materials as "mostly useful" and 24.8% as "completely useful," suggesting that the quality of content is strong, but outreach is uneven.

GBV awareness showed volatile patterns from 2023 to 2025. Knowledge of information programs increased from 27.4% in 2023 to 71% in 2024, before declining to 42.6% in 2025. The perceived usefulness of materials improved over time. The proportion finding content "completely useful" rose from 18.8% (2023) to 12% (2024) to 24.8% (2025), while "mostly useful" increased from unmeasured in 2023 to 54% (2024) to 56% (2025). This suggests that while fewer people encountered awareness materials in 2025, those who did found them more valuable, indicating improved content quality even as dissemination contracted.

Use of disability-inclusive materials peaked in 2024 before declining in 2025. The proportion of respondents using audio or spoken content rose from 3.4% in 2023 to 64.5% in 2024 but dropped to 37.2% in 2025. Similarly, the use of visual content increased from 2.6% in 2023 to 32.9% in 2024 before falling to 27.1% in 2025, while braille usage rose modestly from 1.7% to 12.85% and then declined to 7% in 2025. These patterns suggest that 2024 represented an exceptional year for inclusive awareness campaigns, likely supported by donor funding or special initiatives, with 2025 reverting closer to baseline levels though still above 2023 figures.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

mprovement in Borno State's budget and spending domain is largely attributable to progress in the inclusion of GBV-specific line items and increased allocations. Allocations rose from ₦2.81 billion in 2022 to ₦7.89 billion in 2023 and ₦9.49 billion in 2024. Actual expenditure followed a similar pattern, increasing from ₦1.11 billion in 2022 to ₦3.43 billion in 2023 and ₦3.71 billion in 2024. The state's budget performance in these three years stood at 40.0%, 43.0%, and 39.1% respectively.

The state had no GBV-specific line items in its 2022 and 2023 budgets. In 2024, it included a single GBV-specific item: "Specialized GBV Courts/Judges, Prosecution of GBV Cases, and Legal Aid Services for GBV," with an allocation of ₦5 million. This allocation, however, was not implemented. Per capita spending increased steadily, with ₦972.56 in 2024, ₦931.26 in 2023, and ₦312.96 in 2022. The large jumps between years, particularly from 2022 to 2023, reflect substantial scaling of investment during the assessment period.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Borno State demonstrated a substantial commitment to addressing GBV in 2024, allocating ₦9.49 billion to GBV interventions, representing 2.26% of the state's total budget, the highest proportional allocation among all states. However, the state achieved a budget execution rate of 39.1%, disbursing ₦3.71 billion in actual GBV spending, which accounted for 2.02% of total state expenditure. This translated to a per capita GBV spend of ₦972.56 on the female population.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Bayelsa State's GBV-related allocations was ₦1.27 billion in 2022, ₦2.80 billion in 2023, and ₦3.94 billion in 2024. Actual budget performance, however, fluctuated. Bayelsa achieved 69.0% in 2022, declined to 53.0% in 2023, and improved again to 62.4% in 2024. While the state did not include any GBV-specific line items in its 2022 or 2023 budgets, an allocation of ₦109 million was introduced in 2024 for the "Construction of Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) and Construction of Correctional Facilities." Despite this positive step, no actual spending was recorded for the project. Per capita spending stood at ₦1,716.00 in 2024, ₦1,068.62 in 2023, and ₦651.17 in 2022. The consistent upward movement across all three years demonstrates sustained and strengthening commitment to GBV-related prevention and response.

Human Angle Stories

24-year-old and one of the five wives in a polygamous home, she was beaten to a stupor for asking her husband for money to buy food. And the abuse continued from there.

She once heard messages about violence on the radio, but the words were too big, too complicated. They didn't tell her what to do or who to call. She wishes there was a free helpline number she could've called in secret.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Despite 41 convictions in 2024 and 34 by October 2025, only 34% of respondents know anyone convicted for GBV offenses, indicating poor communication of justice outcomes.	Launch a systematic conviction publicity campaign through radio, social media, and community fora to demonstrate that GBV perpetrators face consequences, deterring future violations and building public confidence in the justice system.
	Female genital mutilation continues particularly among the Shuwa tribe, with practitioners adapting by using "modern tools" rather than eliminating the practice.	Implement culturally sensitive dialogue programs led by respected Shuwa community members, religious leaders, and health professionals who can reframe FGM abandonment as cultural evolution rather than cultural loss, while providing alternative rites of passage ceremonies.
	The state's flexible provisions on child marriage allow parental consent for marriage below age 18, undermining child protection despite legal frameworks criminalizing early marriage.	Harmonize legal provisions to eliminate conflicting interpretations, close consent loopholes, and establish 18 as the absolute minimum marriage age without exceptions, aligning state law with federal VAPP Act standards and international commitments.
Access to Legal Justice	Only 53.3% would feel safe serving as witnesses in GBV cases, with 25.1% explicitly refusing due to fear of retaliation or stigma.	Develop and publicize a formal witness protection program that includes safe houses, relocation assistance where necessary, and protective orders, while raising awareness of existing provisions for virtual testimony under state law.
	Traditional leaders often fail to escalate GBV cases to formal authorities despite training. Stakeholders noted that underreporting has been a major issue and most rulers do not report the issue to relevant authorities when they receive the complaint.	Establish accountability mechanisms for traditional leaders, including monthly reporting requirements to Ministry of Justice on GBV cases received and referred, with recognition awards for high-performing leaders and sanctions for persistent underreporting.
	Establish accountability mechanisms for traditional leaders, including monthly reporting requirements to Ministry of Justice on GBV cases received and referred, with recognition awards for high-performing leaders and sanctions for persistent underreporting.	Launch targeted awareness campaigns specifically focused on legal aid availability, using multiple channels including church and mosque announcements, market sensitizations, and community radio programs to reach diverse populations.
Support Services	Only two of three SARCs are functional due to insecurity in the Northern part of the state, leaving an entire senatorial district without local services.	Explore alternative service delivery models for northern zone, including mobile SARC teams that can operate in temporarily secured areas, partner with humanitarian organizations active in those zones, and telemedicine consultations for psychosocial support.
	Only 23% of respondents know of or have visited SARCs or shelters, despite two functional SARCs and two one-stop shelters operating in the state.	Intensify community-level SARC awareness campaigns through trained community health workers, women's groups, and youth organizations who can conduct door-to-door sensitization and distribute location-specific referral information.
	Each hospital has a GBV desk officer, but coordination between police and SARCs can be inconsistent, with some police preferring their own medical facilities over SARC forensic services.	Formalize inter-agency protocols through a signed Memorandum of Understanding between all MDAs – specifying roles, standardizing evidence collection procedures, and mandating SARCs as the primary forensic examination point.
	47.7% still believe informal support systems are better than formal ones, indicating either distrust or strong community preference.	Adopt a hybrid support model that formally integrates trained community support persons into the referral pathway, recognizing their trusted status while ensuring they channel survivors to comprehensive formal services rather than replacing them.
Information and Awareness	GBV program awareness dropped sharply from 71% in 2024 to 42.6% in 2025, reflecting un-sustained campaign momentum likely tied to donor project cycles ending.	Institutionalize GBV awareness as a permanent government function with dedicated staff responsible for year-round campaigns, not dependent on external funding or short-term projects.
	Despite 90.4% support for teaching GBV in schools, no existing curriculum or standardized educational program for GBV and Child Sexual Abuse prevention.	Develop and implement a comprehensive GBV curriculum for all education levels through the Ministry of Education, training teachers as facilitators and integrating age-appropriate content into existing subjects like Social Studies, Civic Education, and Health Education.
	Braille materials exist but only 7% are aware of them, and screen subtitling awareness is just 9.7%, despite government commitment to disability inclusion.	Expand targeted dissemination strategies for disability-specific materials, working directly with disability organizations, special schools, and PWD community groups to ensure materials reach intended audiences through appropriate channels.
Budget and Spending	Despite high GBV budget allocations, the state consistently achieves low budget execution rates over the three years: 40.0% in 2022, 43.0% in 2023, and 39.1% in 2024.	Prioritize timely release of GBV funds to achieve at least a 70% execution rate in the next budget cycle. Conduct a rapid assessment to identify and address execution bottlenecks such as delays or administrative challenges, etc.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



Cross River State

The People's Paradise

Agbokim Waterfall

Cross River State

Population: 4,875,828

50.1% Female | Male 49.9%

Overall Grade 68.8%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,120)*

GENDER — Female ■ Male ■

71.5% | 28.5%

AREA — Rural ■ Urban ■

40.6% | 59.4%

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

3.1% | 17.0% | 42.4% | 20.1% | 11.3% | 6.1%

DISABILITY STATUS — Yes ■ No ■

10.8% | 89.2%

SARCs: 0

Shelters: 0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦931.37m

(This accounts for **0.2%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦125.12m

(This accounts for **13.4%** of total allocation to the ministry)

13.4%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

22.8% | 43.2% | 33.8%

Per Capita Spending

₦51.23

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	81.3%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	75.0%
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 ■

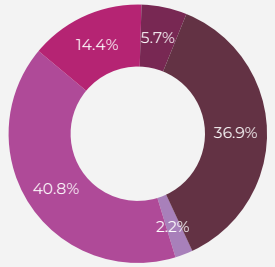
53.7% | 46.3%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

81.7% | 34.7% | 22.2% | 20.4% | 6.6%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

45.3% | 67.6% | 28.5% | 59.9% | 27.0% | 6.6%

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

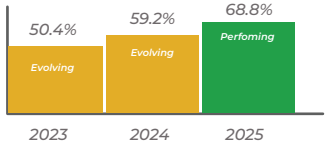
Where did you or the person first seek help?

34.1% | 27.0% | 13.3% | 10.2% | 6.7% | 5.0% | 2.9% | 0.8%

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

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
39%	33%

37%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	-1 ▼ LP 58.3%	+1 ▲ LP 75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 25.0%	+2 ▲ ALJ 81.3%	ALJ 81.3%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	SS 56.3%	+1 ▲ SS 75.0%
Information and Awareness	IA 65.5%	IA 50.0%	IA 62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 50.0%	BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- GBV conviction now include life imprisonment sentences and victim compensation for the first time.
- Legal aid services now available in 12 out of 18 LGAs.
- Family courts increased from one to three designated courts (two high courts and one magistrate court), improving speed of case handling.
- Public preference shifted toward formal support services, with 90.7% of residents now favouring professional care over informal family and community support (up from 13% in 2023).

Areas of Concern

- Even with increased engagement with formal mechanisms, residents viewing customary laws as sufficient more than doubled, from 30% in 2023 to 69% in 2025.
- Awareness of legal assistance services stagnated at 47%, despite service availability.
- Knowledge of SARCs and shelters remained critically low (11.2%).
- Reliance on witness protection nearly doubled, from 15% in 2023 to 28% in 2025, while the framework remains weak.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Amended the Child Rights Law in 2023 to strengthen protections for children.
- Neighbourhood Care-Well Foundation simplified the VAPP Law for secondary schools and communities

Access to Legal Justice

- The Centre for Citizens' Rights was upgraded from a department within the Ministry of Justice to a standalone agency, expanding legal aid services to GBV survivors..
- Designated High Court 12 as an additional family court in 2024, bringing the total to three specialized courts.
- Expanded gender units to all 36 police stations and six area commands across the state, supported by UNICEF and NGOs with training on GBV case handling.

Support Services

- Expanded SARCs to include five run by Heartland Alliance (Calabar, Ugep, Ikom, Ogoja, Bakassi) and one One-Stop Centre at General Hospital Calabar supported by UNFPA.
- Created a GBV Technical Working Group led by the Ministry of Women Affairs, including state actors, NGOs, religious leaders, and traditional rulers

Information and Awareness

- Developed a curriculum on sexual violence in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, UNICEF, and Girls' Power Initiative.
- Established a Safe Schools Department within the Ministry of Education to ensure conducive school environments.
- Launched the "Orange Show" on HITfm as a weekly radio program to create GBV awareness.

Change Spotlight

Convictions for gender-based violence in Cross River State have risen significantly due to improved collaboration among justice actors and civil society. In 2025, the Family Court secured five to ten convictions, while the Legal Aid Council and Centre for Citizens' Rights also achieved notable results. The Police Gender Unit effectively tracked cases from initial reports to prosecution.

A major factor in this progress is the "escort referral system" led by civil society organizations, which assists survivors with transportation and case follow-up from hospitals to police and courts. This support has enabled survivors in remote areas, like Obanliku and Yala, to pursue justice effectively. A judiciary stakeholder emphasized that without NGO support, many cases would falter at the police station, but with their help, more cases are reaching conviction.

Cross River State GBV Assessment Survey

LAWS AND POLICIES

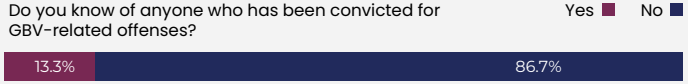
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

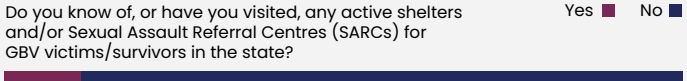


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

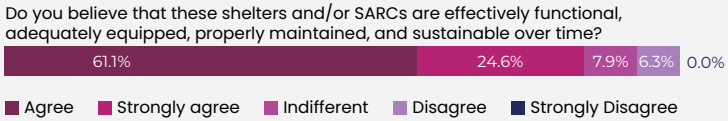


SUPPORT SERVICES

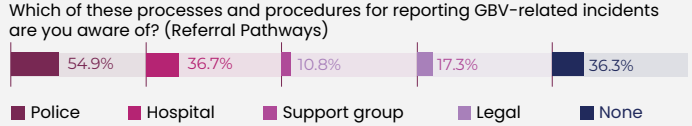
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



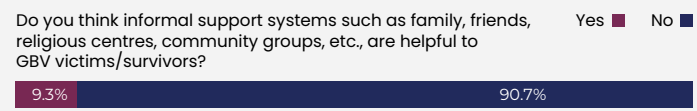
Do you believe that these shelters and/or SARCs are effectively functional, adequately equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable over time?



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?

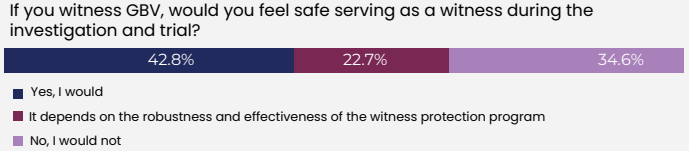


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

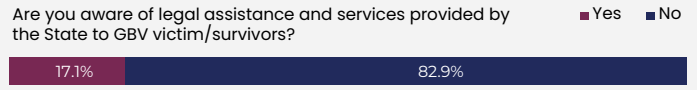
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

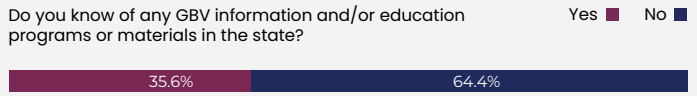


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

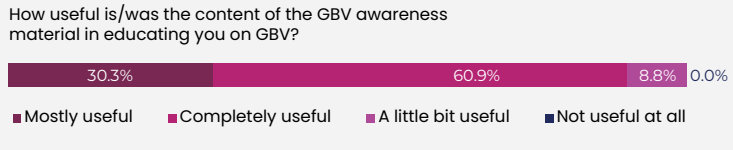


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

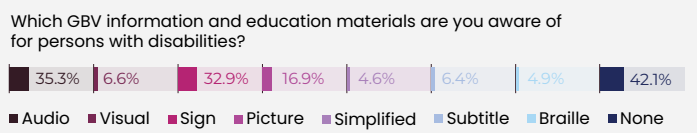
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?



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



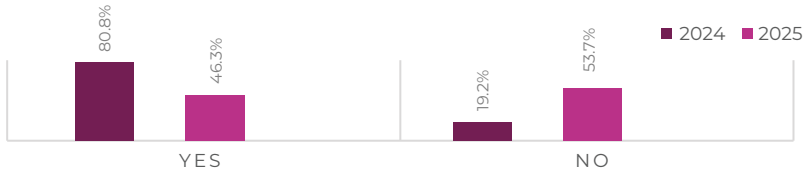
Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Cross River State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 68.8%

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



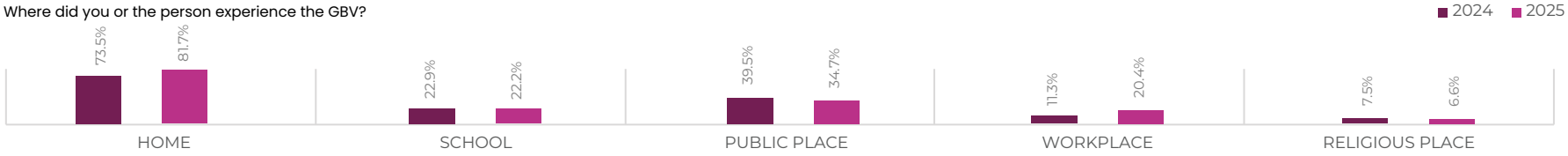
46.3%

of Cross River State population have either experienced GBV or knows someone who have experienced GBV

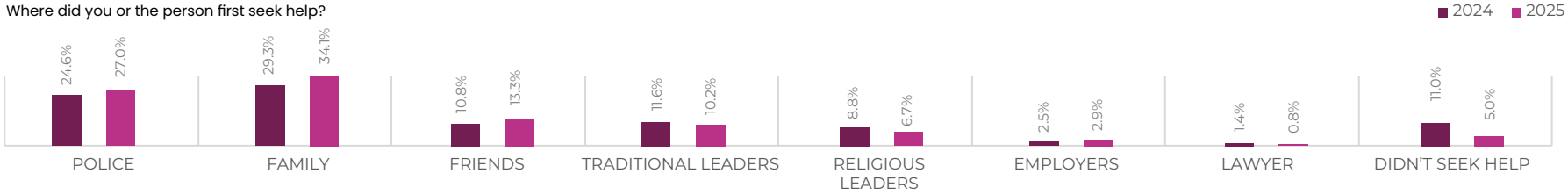
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



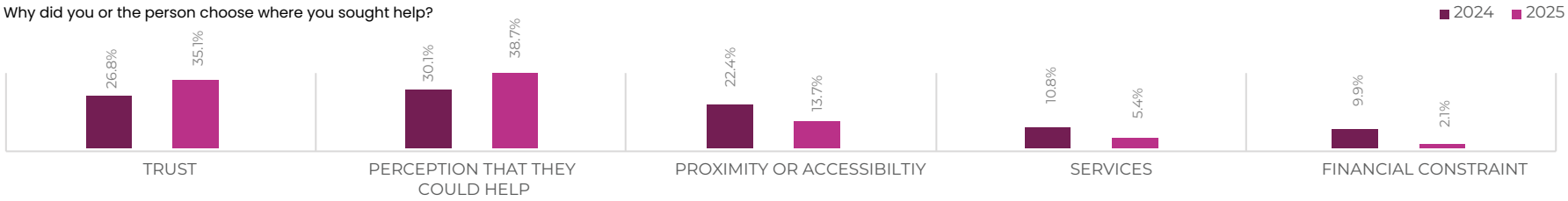
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

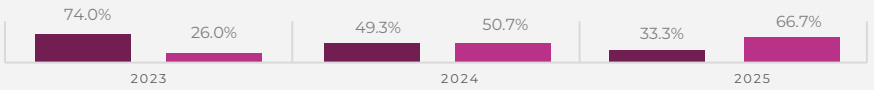


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

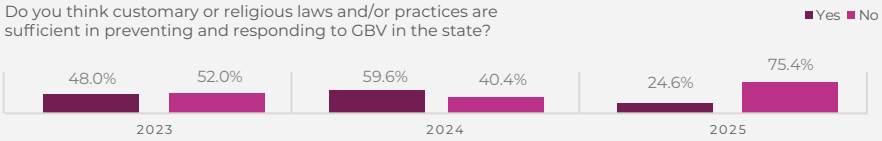
Overall Grade 68.8%

LAWS AND POLICIES

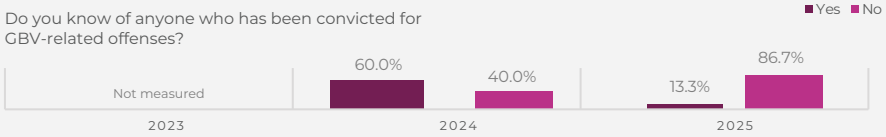
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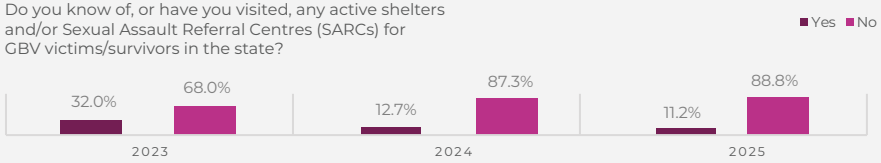


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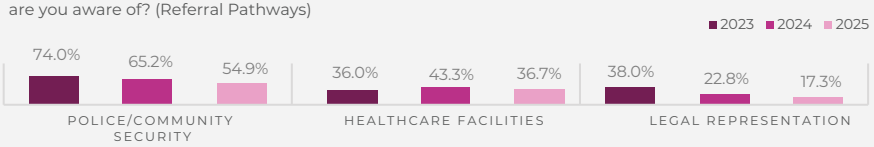


SUPPORT SERVICES

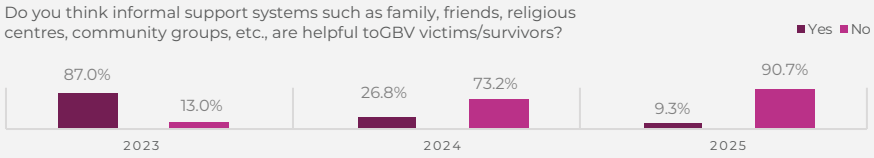
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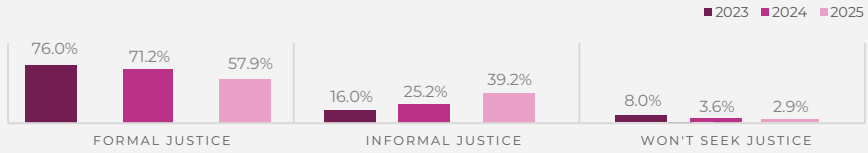


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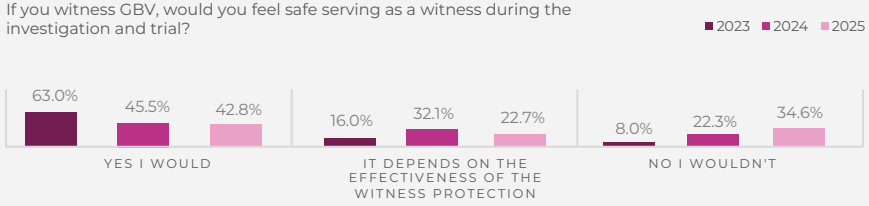


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

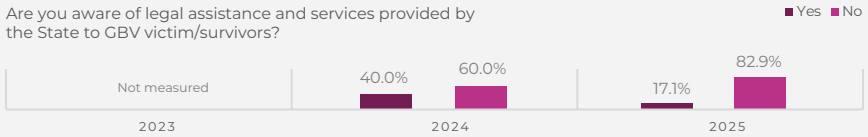
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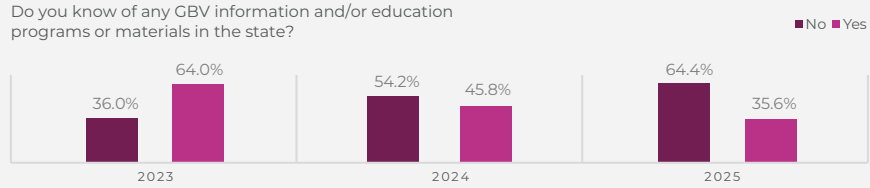


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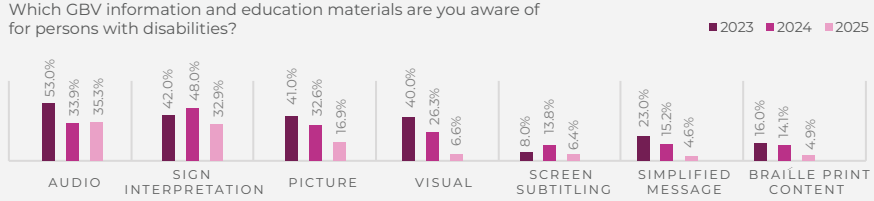


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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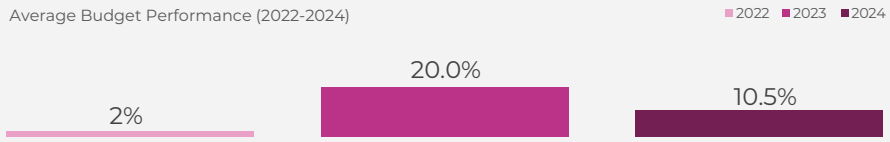


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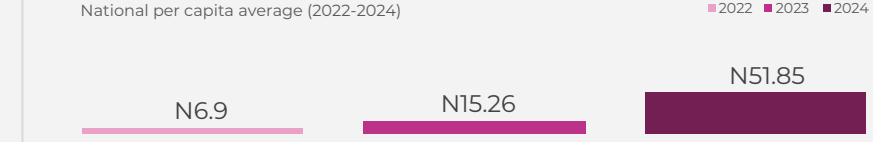


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Cross River State has adopted several laws to address GBV, including the VAPP Law, the Child Rights Law, and statutes on inheritance, widowhood practices, female genital mutilation, and child marriage. Together, these laws provide a strong legal foundation for GBV prevention and response. Recent updates, such as the provision for co-ownership of property in marriages contracted under native law and customs, and provisions against forceful eviction, reflect progress. However, important gaps remain, including weak penalties for rape and the lack of legal recognition for spousal rape.

Stakeholders note that while simplified versions of the laws exist, they are not easily accessible to most people. Only 33.3% of residents are familiar with GBV-related laws. This is especially true in rural areas, where language differences and cultural diversity make dissemination difficult.

In 2025, stakeholders from the judiciary reported between five and ten GBV convictions at the time of assessment, while civil society organizations documented eight convictions and 39 ongoing legal cases. Penalties ranged from life imprisonment to fines and, notably, for the first time, included compensation for victims. According to the Ministry of Justice, this marks a shift from previous years, signaling growing attention to survivor-centered justice. However, these enforcement outcomes are not well communicated to the public. Despite the progress, only 13.3% of residents were aware of any GBV-related convictions in the state. This gap in public awareness may weaken trust in the justice system and highlights the need for better visibility of legal outcomes to reinforce deterrence and accountability.

Customary and religious laws related to GBV are widely seen as ineffective. A significant majority of residents (75.4%) believe that these traditional systems do not adequately prevent or respond to GBV in the state. This perception persists despite ongoing sensitization efforts targeting traditional and religious leaders, including paralegal training and the formation of an interfaith coalition forum.

In many communities, traditional institutions continue to handle GBV cases informally, imposing customary fines such as goats, palm wine, or money, instead of referring cases to formal justice systems. While advocacy has led to notable progress, including a sharp decline in female genital mutilation, low-level practices such as child marriage and discreet FGM still occur in some areas. These challenges indicates that enforcement remains a work in progress.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, Cross River State experienced a steady decline across key indicators related to laws and policies. Public awareness of GBV-related laws dropped significantly from 74% in 2023 to just 33.3% in 2025. Similarly, awareness of GBV-related convictions fell from 60% in 2024 to 13.3% in 2025. This decline could be partly attributed to the conclusion of the Spotlight Initiative project, which lasted five years and significantly increased reporting and awareness. Following the project's end and the withdrawal of funding from ActionAid and Global Affairs Canada in June 2024, many organizations have scaled back their community engagement activities.

Confidence in customary and religious laws as tools for preventing and responding to GBV also declined. While opinions were nearly split in 2023, by 2025, three-quarters (75%) of residents expressed doubt about the usefulness of these traditional systems. This shift indicates growing public recognition that informal mechanisms may not provide adequate protection or justice for survivors.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Although more than half of residents (57.9%) say they would seek justice through formal systems for GBV cases, a considerable portion (39.2%) still prefer informal channels. This reflects modest confidence in formal mechanisms and shows that informal systems remain influential, even though public trust in them is relatively low (26.7%). Stakeholders have raised concerns that these informal systems sometimes protect perpetrators, especially when they are related to community leaders. Economic hardship further undermines accountability, as some families choose informal settlements over formal legal action.

Legal aid services have expanded to 12 out of 18 local government areas, provided primarily through the Centre for Citizens' Rights and Office of the Public Defender (recently upgraded from a department within the Ministry of Justice to a standalone agency) alongside the Legal Aid Council of Nigeria, FIDA, and private lawyers offering pro bono services. The judiciary now has three designated family courts: two at the high court level (High Court 3 and High Court 12, with the latter designated in 2024) and one magistrate family court. This has helped improve the speed of case handling.

All 36 police stations in the state now have gender units, previously known as Family Support Units.

Additionally, the state's Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has doubled its gender unit officers from five to ten. However, the frequent redeployment of trained personnel continues to undermine progress, as newly posted officers often lack the specialized knowledge to handle GBV cases effectively.

Despite these improvements, several challenges continue to hinder survivors' access to justice. Investigations are hampered by poor funding, with some police officers using personal funds to conduct arrests. Public awareness of available legal aid remains low, only 17.1% of residents are aware of these services. Witness participation is also limited; only 42.8% of residents said they would testify in court. Others would only participate if protective measures were in place (22.7%), while 34.6% would not participate at all. Survivor withdrawals are common and are often influenced by family pressure, fear of stigma, or direct intimidation.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public confidence in formal justice systems for GBV cases declined steadily, from 76% in 2023 to 57.9% in 2025. This shift suggests growing skepticism toward formal institutions and continued reliance on community-based mechanisms, despite concerns about their effectiveness. The decline in willingness to serve as a witness, from 63% to 42.8% further reinforces this skepticism. The rise in those unwilling to participate points to persistent fears around stigma, retaliation, and weak protection measures. These trends highlight the need for stronger safeguards and improved public trust in the justice process.

During the same period, awareness of legal aid services provided by the state dropped from 40% to just 17.1%. Without clear knowledge of available support, survivors may struggle to navigate the justice system or avoid reporting altogether. Strengthening public awareness and improving service visibility will be essential to helping survivors access the support they need, and may help rebuild confidence in formal justice mechanisms.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

There is strong public recognition that informal support services such as help from family, friends, religious centers, and community groups are limited in scope and effectiveness. Only 9.3% of residents expressed a preference for these informal options, while the vast majority (90.7%) favored formal support services. However, this preference for professional and structured care is not yet matched by adequate service availability, accessibility, or awareness.

Cross River State currently operates six functional SARCs: one state-run facility (the UNFPA-supported One-Stop Centre at General Hospital Calabar, managed by the Ministry of Women Affairs) and five facilities run by Heartland Alliance in Calabar, Ugep, Ikom, Ogoja, and Bakassi. While this marks progress, 13 out of 18 local government areas remain underserved. Awareness of these facilities is still low (11.2%), and broader awareness of support services including medical, psychosocial, and economic assistance is also limited (18.7%). The state currently has no operational shelters, a gap stakeholders identify as one of the most critical challenges in survivor support. Survivors rely heavily on NGO-run facilities, which are often overstretched. Even at the One-Stop Centre, services are limited, and survivors are required to pay for medical treatment, rather than receiving fully free services. This highlights an urgent need to expand and strengthen formal services across the state.

Stakeholders report improved coordination among service providers, with the Ministry of Women Affairs leading a GBV Technical Working Group that includes state actors, NGOs, religious leaders, and traditional rulers. This platform ensures smooth referrals playing central roles in linking survivors to psychosocial, medical, legal, and livelihood support. While over half of residents (54.9%) are aware of police reporting and referral pathways, fewer know about hospital-based reporting (36.7%), legal referral options (17.3%), or support groups (10.8%).

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

In 2023, most residents (87%) believed that help from family, friends, religious centers, and community groups was useful. By 2025, only 9.3% held that view. This change signals growing awareness of the limitations of informal care and increased trust in structured, professional support. Despite this shift in perception, the number of residents who knew of or had visited formal support facilities such as shelters and SARCs declined during the same period, from 32% to 11.2%. This trend suggests that while confidence in formal systems is rising, outreach and visibility of these services have not kept pace.

Knowledge of police and healthcare reporting options increased over the three years, while awareness of legal pathways remained consistently low, pointing to a need for sustained public education and stronger communication strategies to ensure survivors know where and how to seek help. Without consistent visibility and access, the growing trust in formal support systems may not translate into actual service use

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Multiple channels have been used to share GBV-related information, including IEC materials, radio jingles, social media, and public campaigns. Recent efforts such as the orange band initiative during the carnival and the 16 Days of Activism significantly improved public visibility. However, these efforts have mostly reached urban audiences, with rural communities remaining underserved. As of 2025, only 35.6% of respondents reported being aware of any GBV information materials. Among those who were aware, nearly all found the content useful. This suggests that when people have access to information, it is effective in raising awareness and empowering communities.

Stakeholders note that the state primarily develops IEC materials during annual campaigns (16 Days of Activism and International Day of the Girl Child), with distribution concentrated in the capital city, Calabar. NGOs such as Neighbourhood Care-Well Foundation, Girls' Power Initiative, and Basic Rights Council Initiative have filled gaps by developing materials specific to their intervention areas.

Sensitization efforts have reached schools in Ogoja, Ikom, and Calabar, with teachers at both primary and secondary levels trained on GBV, and student debates and quizzes organized to enhance understanding. The state has also developed a curriculum on sexual violence in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, UNICEF, and Girls' Power Initiative. However, implementation faces

challenges: trained teachers are often transferred to other schools or duties without replacement, and the regular academic curriculum leaves limited time for GBV education. Despite these challenges, there is strong public support for integrating GBV and child sexual abuse education into the school system. An overwhelming majority of residents (97.1%) expressed support for this initiative, highlighting a clear opportunity for policymakers to scale up and formalize GBV education within schools.

The Ministry of Education has demonstrated a commitment to inclusion through workshops for persons with disabilities and recommendations to improve accessibility, including the provision of sign language teachers and accessible facilities. Civil society organizations have also taken steps to integrate persons with disabilities into their mentoring platforms and workforce. However, communication formats remain limited, with a predominant reliance on sign language and audio materials, while Braille, subtitled content, and simplified messaging receive less attention. Complementing these efforts, the Ministry of Women Affairs conducts annual workshops during International Day of Persons with Disabilities to raise awareness on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). This year, the Ministry has planned a one-day symposium with the disability community to further promote awareness and prevention of SGBV and SRHR issues..

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Exposure to GBV information and awareness programs or materials in the Cross River State steadily decreased over three years, from 64% in 2023 to 35.6%. This decline coincides with the conclusion of major donor-funded projects, particularly the Spotlight Initiative (which ran for five years) and ActionAid/Global Affairs Canada funding (which ended in June 2024). These projects have significantly increased awareness creation, sensitization, and case follow-up through dedicated personnel and resources. Following their conclusion, many civil society organizations have reduced their outreach activities due to funding constraints, leaving the state government to carry forward efforts with limited resources and capacity. Stakeholders note that while training workshops continue, the frequency and reach of public sensitization campaigns have diminished.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Cross River State allocated ₦1.2 billion to GBV programs in 2024, representing 0.27% of its total state budget. The state spent only ₦126.6 million of the allocated amount, achieving a 10.5% implementation rate, which means nearly 90% of budgeted resources remained unutilized. The actual GBV expenditure constituted just 0.06% of the state's total spending. On a per capita basis, Cross River State spent approximately ₦51.85 per female population on GBV-related programs, one of the lowest among Nigerian states. While the state has established specific GBV budget lines within the Ministry of Women Affairs and relevant ministries, the substantial gap between allocation and expenditure indicates serious implementation challenges, which directly undermines the state's ability to effectively prevent and respond to GBV.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Over the last three years, budget allocations for GBV-related issues in Cross River State was ₦1.05 billion in 2022, ₦178.26 million in 2023, and ₦931.37 million in 2024. Actual spending amounted to ₦125.12 million, ₦36.20 million, and ₦15.89 million in 2022, 2023, and 2024 respectively. These figures translate to budget performance rates of 2%, 20%, and 10.5%. Two recurring line items appeared in both 2023 and 2024: "Training of Women Development Officers (WDOs) on Child Protection Issues" and "Gender-Based Violence Centre for Women and Children Advocacy, Monitoring and Sensitization Programme." Neither project recorded any implementation in either year. While the 2024 budget included more GBV-specific line items than previous years, significant implementation gaps persist. Per capita spending remained critically low, with ₦51.85 in 2024, ₦15.26 in 2023, and ₦6.90 in 2022, despite modest improvements over time. The gradual increases suggest some progress, though investment levels remain limited relative to population needs.

Human Angle Stories

In the Ediba community, a 15-year-old girl was abused by her father. Instead of going to the police, community elders tried to handle it "traditionally." They planned to fine the father with palm wine and meat and then marry the girl off to another man to "restore her dignity."

But a local chief, recently trained as a paralegal through a VAPP awareness program, refused to accept this settlement. He referred the case to the authorities, and it eventually reached Family Court. The father was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. This story shows how legal awareness and community education can protect victims and ensure justice is served.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	Only 33.3% of residents are familiar with GBV-related laws, down from 75% in 2023.	Strengthen and sustain public education and awareness campaigns through radio, community dialogues, and social media to improve understanding and reach underserved populations.
	Despite the state securing five to 10 convictions in 2025, just 13.3% of residents are aware of these GBV-related convictions.	Communicate GBV conviction outcomes and penalties through media and community platforms to reinforce accountability and strengthen public trust in the justice system.
	Traditional institutions continue to impose customary fines (goats, palm wine, money) instead of referring cases to formal justice systems.	Establish and enforce clear penalties for traditional rulers who obstruct formal justice processes or handle criminal GBV cases informally.
 Access to Legal Justice	Legal aid services expanded to 12 out of the 18 LGAs, however, only 17.1% of residents know about these legal aid services.	Launch targeted awareness campaigns highlighting free legal services through radio, posters, and community outreach. Distribute contact information through police stations, health facilities, and community leaders.
	Only 42.8% of residents would testify in court (down from 63% in 2023), and 34.6% would not participate at all. Families often withdraw cases due to pressure, stigma, or economic settlements.	Establish formal witness protection mechanisms including safe transportation, anonymity options, and psychosocial support throughout the trial process.
	GBV investigations face funding constraints, with state actors often relying on personal resources or NGO support due to limited government funding.	Establish a dedicated budget line for GBV-related law enforcement activities across the state to ensure consistent funding and reduce reliance on NGO support.
 Support Services	Only six SARCs serve the state's 18 LGAs, and there are no operational shelters. Public awareness of these facilities dropped from 32% in 2023 to just 11.2% in 2025.	Build at least one functional shelter in each senatorial district. Expand SARCs to underserve LGAs and launch awareness campaigns to inform residents about available facilities and services.
	Despite being designated as a support facility, survivors are required to pay for medical treatment at General Hospital Calabar, creating a financial barrier to accessing care.	Allocate budget to ensure all medical services at the One-Stop Centre and other SARCs are provided free of charge. This should include medical examinations, and forensic evidence collection.
 Information and Awareness	Awareness of GBV information materials dropped from 64% in 2023 to 35.6% in 2025. This decline coincides with the end of Spotlight Initiative and ActionAid/ Global Affairs Canada funding in June 2024.	Ensure sustainable, government-led funding and coordination of GBV awareness campaigns to prevent gaps caused by the end of donor support, and scale up the production and distribution of standardized IEC materials across all LGAs.
	The state has developed a curriculum with UNICEF and Girls' Power Initiative, but implementation is hindered by teacher transfers and limited curriculum time.	Train school administrators to ensure continuity when teachers are transferred. Expand the Safe Schools Department's mandate to include regular GBV sensitization in all schools across the 18 LGAs.
	While sign language (32.9%) and audio formats (35.3%) are used, other critical formats have low visibility: Braille, subtitled videos, and simplified messages are underutilized.	Develop GBV information in multiple formats including Braille, subtitled videos, and simplified picture-based messages. Train sign language interpreters specifically on GBV terminology and ensure their availability at all public sensitization events.
 Budget and Spending	Cross River State achieved only 10.5% budget performance, leaving nearly 90% of funds unused. Despite having GBV-specific line items, key projects recorded zero implementation, resulting in one of the lowest per capita GBV expenditures nationally.	Strengthen budget execution by improving fund release processes, ensuring active implementation of GBV-specific projects, and establishing monitoring mechanisms to track progress and prevent persistent underutilization of allocated funds.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | Invictus AFRICA



Delta State

The Big Heart

Mungo Park House

Delta State

Population: 7,315,664

50.2% Female 49.8% Male

Overall Grade 66.3%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,157)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

71.7% | 28.3%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

59.9% | 40.1%

AGE

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

3.4% | 31.4% | 37.1% | 16.5% | 9.5% | 2.2%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

5.7% | 94.3%

SARCs: 3

Shelters: 0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦1.71bn

(This accounts for **0.2%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦1.55bn

(This accounts for **90.9%** of total allocation to the ministry)

90.9%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ Others ■

48.1% | 21.3% | 26.2% | 4.4%

Per Capita Spending

₦422.61

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	56.3%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	56.3%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	68.8%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	75.0%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

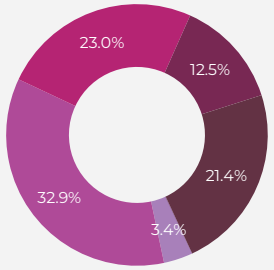
56.4% | 43.6%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

81.7% | 21.0% | 11.1% | 17.3% | 3.6%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

43.8% | 58.5% | 18.7% | 40.5% | 16.5% | 5.6%

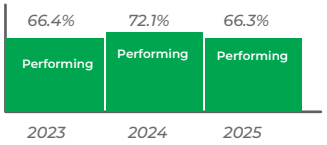
Domestic ■ Physical ■ Sexual ■ Mental ■ Economic ■ Cultural practices ■

44.8% | 12.1% | 20.4% | 7.7% | 4.0% | 6.7% | 0.6% | 3.6%

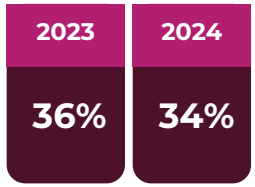
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ I did not seek help ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



35%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 48.3%	+1 ▲ LP 75.0%	LP 75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 86.3%	ALJ 81.3%	−1 ▼ ALJ 56.3%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	+1 ▲ SS 75.0%	−1 ▼ SS 56.3%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3%	IA 62.5%	IA 68.7%
Budget and Spending	BS 75.0%	BS 66.7%	BS 75.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Establishment of a confidential interrogatory room improved trauma-sensitive evidence collection.
- Families increasingly choose court action over private settlements, showing improved trust in formal systems.
- Guaranteed reimbursement for all survivor-related expenses and enhances service sustainability.

Areas of Concern

- Survivors continue to face police fees for statements and logistics, deterring justice-seeking behaviour.
- Lack of specialized GBV courts and untrained desk officers: Many police divisions lack consistent, trained GBV focal persons.
- No operational government shelter, despite budget allocation.
- Awareness programs remain concentrated in Asaba and Warri, neglecting rural and riverine areas.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The VAPP Law was simplified and translated into simple English and Pidgin English to make it easy for people to understand.

Access to Legal Justice

- The state through the Public Defender Department (PDD), FIDA, Legal Aid Council, and other CSOs continues to provide free legal representation to survivors.

Support Services

- The Delta State Government officially captured SARC funding in the state budget.
- SARCs continue to provide one-stop services (medical care, counselling, forensic evidence collection, and legal aid).

Information and Awareness

- The Ministry of Women Affairs rolls out radio jingles, market sensitizations, and IEC material distribution across the state. Posters and billboards were sighted in Asaba and Warri.

Change Spotlight

Delta State has made significant progress in gender-based violence (GBV) support by institutionalizing a dedicated state budget line for its Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs), marking a transformative milestone. Previously reliant on funding from the Nigeria Governors' Forum, many responders often bore costs out of pocket, transferring hidden expenses to survivors. However, by 2025, this was replaced by robust state budget allocations that now enable survivors to access completely free medical care, psychosocial support, forensic services, and legal aid. A SARC Director highlighted that all survivor needs at the SARC are fully covered, and all frontline expenses are reimbursed through this state budget provision. This financial commitment has empowered a notable surge in GBV convictions, with over 10 recorded within a single year.

Delta State GBV Assessment Survey

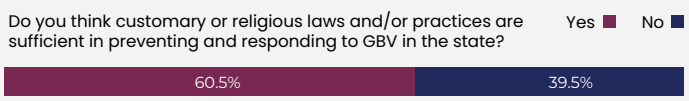
Overall Grade 66.3%

LAWS AND POLICIES

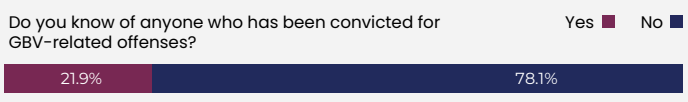
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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?

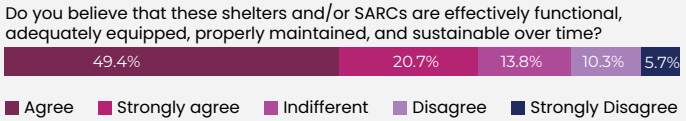


SUPPORT SERVICES

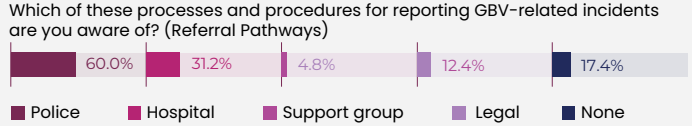
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



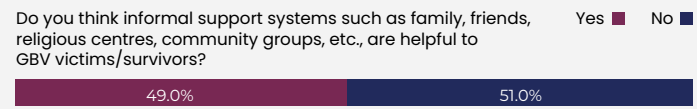
Do you believe that these shelters and/or SARCs are effectively functional, adequately equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable over time?



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

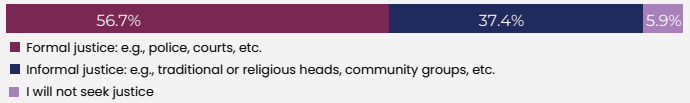


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

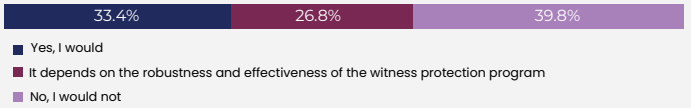


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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?

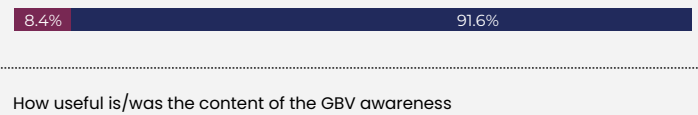


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?



INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

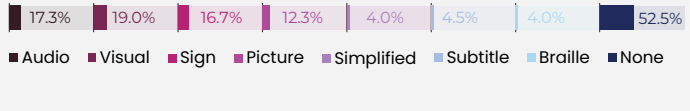
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?



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



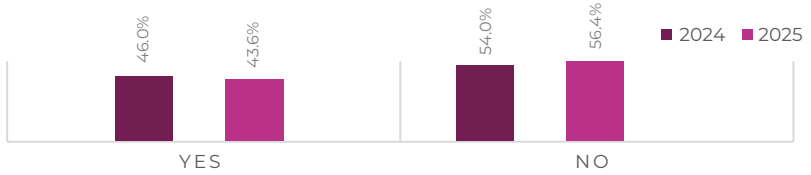
Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Delta State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 66.3%

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



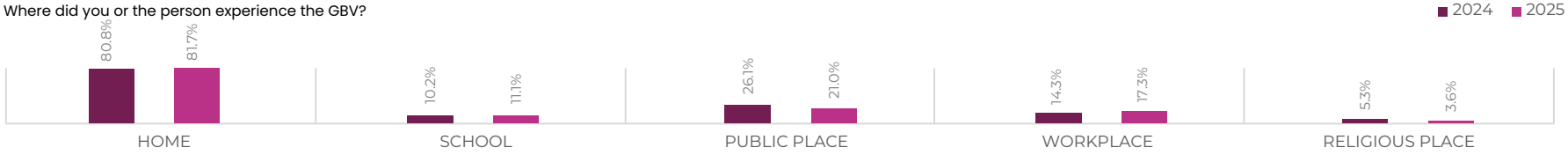
43.6%

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

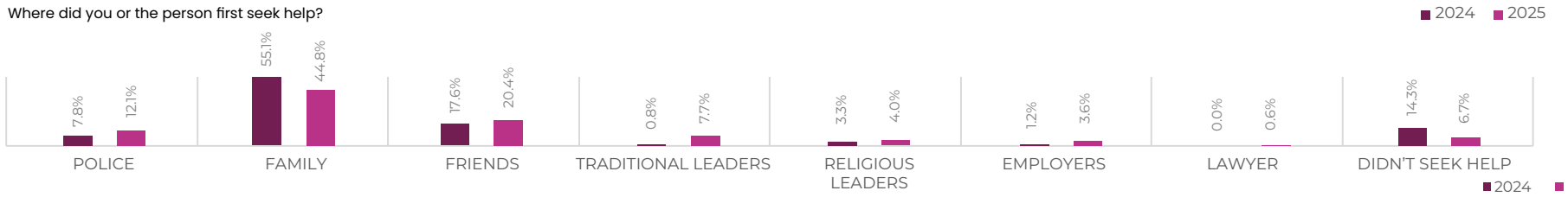
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



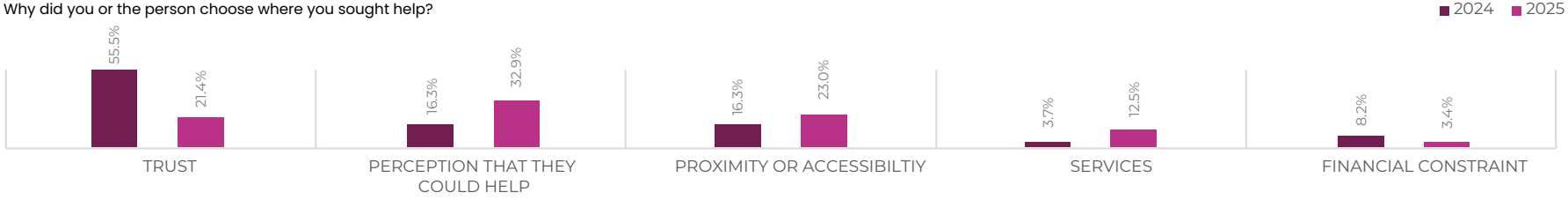
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

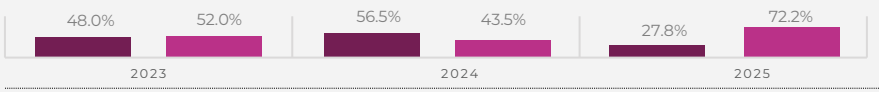


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

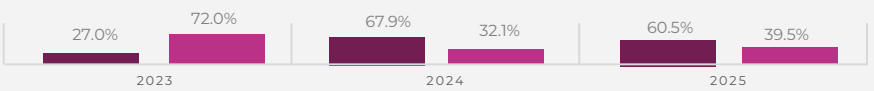
Overall Grade 66.3%

LAWS AND POLICIES

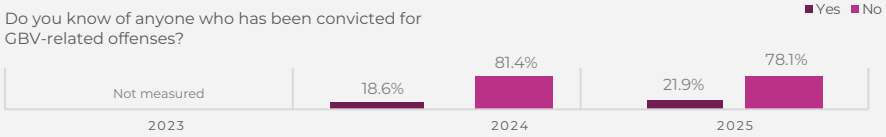
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

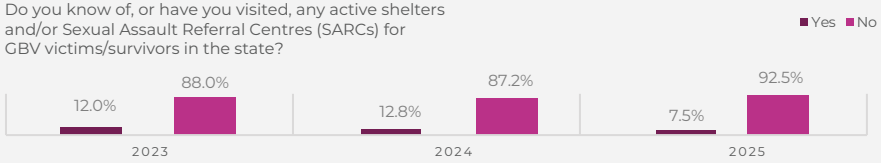


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

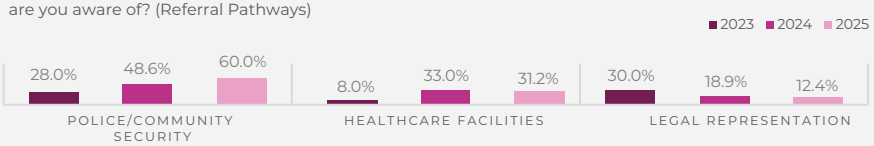


SUPPORT SERVICES

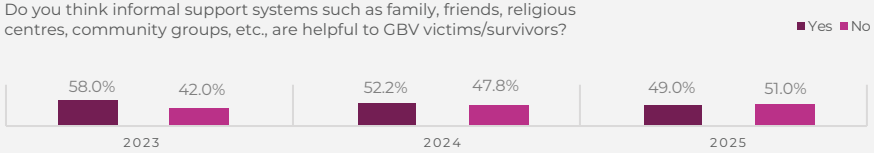
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

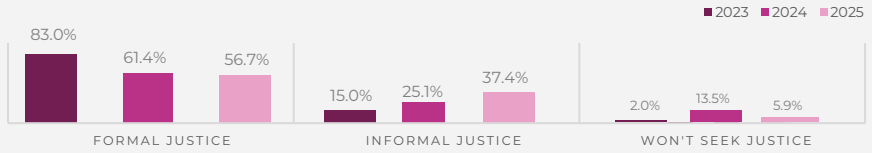


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

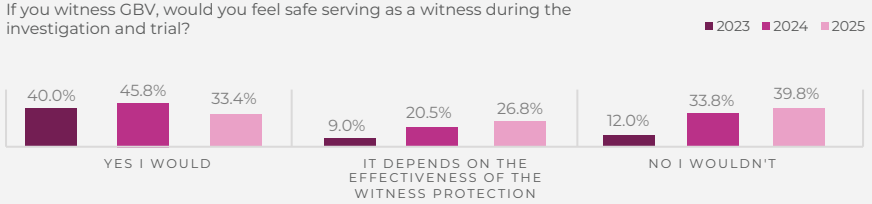


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

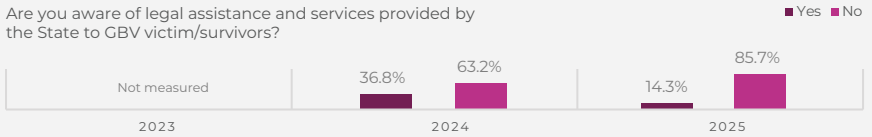
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

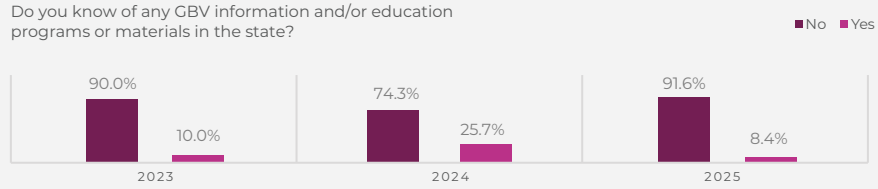


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

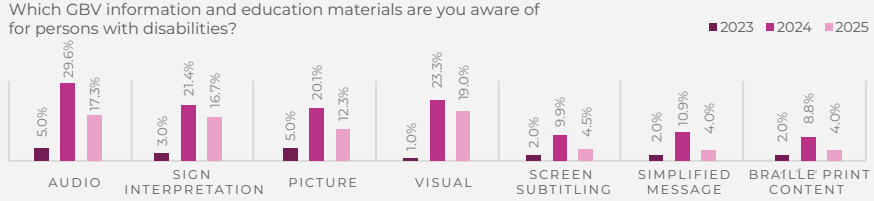


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

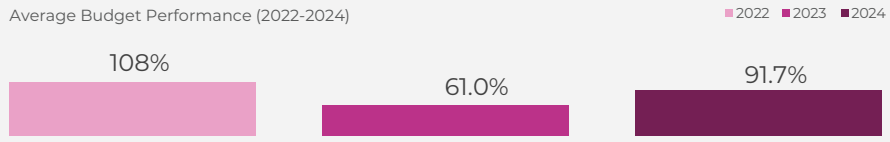


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

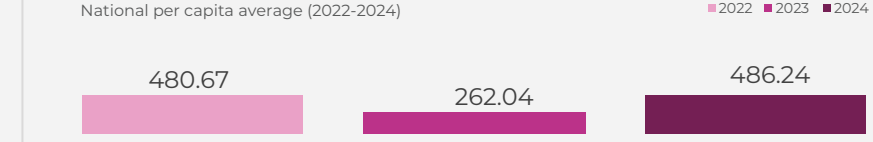


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Delta State has demonstrated commendable progress in strengthening its legal framework for addressing GBV. The state has enacted several laws including the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Law (2020), Child's Rights Law (2016), Administration of Criminal Justice Law, Domestic Help Law, and the new GBV Law (2024) that collectively criminalize various forms of abuse such as rape, domestic violence, cyberbullying, economic violence, and harmful traditional practices. To improve accessibility, the VAPP Law was simplified and translated into Pidgin English, a move described by a police officer as an effort "so the ordinary man can understand." Stakeholders also highlighted the introduction of plea bargaining as an alternative to family settlements, enabling survivors to receive compensation while discouraging out-of-court resolutions that perpetuate impunity.

Despite this strong legal foundation, public awareness and usage of these laws remain weak. Only 27.8% of respondents are aware of existing GBV-related laws, and just 21.9% know of any convictions, despite police and SARC reports confirming at least 30 convictions between mid-2024 and mid-2025. While 61.1% of respondents believe formal laws are effective, limited awareness undermines their impact. Customary and religious mechanisms continue to shape perceptions, with 39.5% aware of such systems and 60.5% believing they help prevent or respond to GBV. This underscores the need for stronger public sensitization, improved enforcement, and harmonization of statutory, customary, and religious laws and practices to ensure that Delta State's progressive legal frameworks translate into real protection for survivors.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

From 2023 to 2025, Delta State recorded both progress and setbacks in its GBV legal landscape. The period saw important policy gains, including the enactment of the 2024 GBV Law and the introduction of plea bargaining to discourage family settlements. However, these institutional advances contrast with a consistent decline in public awareness and confidence indicators. Awareness of GBV laws moved upward from 48.0% in 2023 to 56% in 2024, then decline to 27.8% in 2025. Although conviction rates reportedly improved, citizen awareness of these outcomes fell dramatically from 18.6% in 2024 to 21.9% in 2025.

Perceptions of customary and religious laws showed fluctuating confidence: 27% in 2023 believed such systems were sufficient to prevent or respond to GBV, increasing to 19% in 2024, before decreasing to 60% in 2025. This rebound suggests renewed community reliance on traditional mechanisms amid persistent gaps in awareness and accessibility of formal systems.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Delta State's GBV referral pathway provides a formal route from reporting to police or SARCs, through medical, psychosocial, and legal support, and finally to prosecution by the Ministry of Justice. While 56.7% of respondents indicated willingness to pursue justice through formal channels, a substantial 37.4% still preferred informal routes. The remaining 5.9% said they would not seek justice at all, primarily due to fear of stigmatization, disbelief, or financial constraints.

Awareness of legal aid and state-supported services for GBV survivors remains alarmingly low, with only 14.3% aware of such assistance. Most information comes through social media, friends, or television rather than through official or institutional channels. Stakeholders noted that free legal aid, though provided by CSOs such as FIDA and the Legal Aid Council, remains largely urban-focused, leaving rural survivors underserved. The justice system also struggles with operational bottlenecks, including the absence of specialized GBV Family Support Units, frequent rotation of officers or untrained desk officers, and slow court processes. According to a police representative, "Some divisions do not have functional GBV desks, and when cases come, we rely on CSOs to guide the process."

Furthermore, witness participation is weak; only a third (33.4%) of respondents said they would feel safe testifying in GBV cases, while many cited fear and inadequate protection despite the provisions of the Administration of Criminal Justice Law (ACJL) for virtual testimony. Also, courts are slow without dedicated GBV judges, causing discontinuity and case restarts on judge transfers or demise.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, Delta State recorded notable shifts in how survivors and citizens engage with justice systems for GBV cases. Use of formal justice mechanisms declined steadily from 82.6% in 2023 to 61% in 2024, and further to 56.7% in 2025 while reliance on informal systems almost doubled, rising from 14.5% to 37.4%. The proportion of individuals unwilling to seek justice fluctuated, peaking at 14% in 2024 before dropping to 5.9% in 2025. This trend signals declining trust in formal structures and a growing dependence on community-based mechanisms. Confidence in participating in the

justice process also weakened, as the share of those who felt safe serving as witnesses dropped from 40.0% in 2023 to 33.4% in 2025.

Awareness of legal assistance programs plummeted from 37% in 2024 to just 14.3% in 2025, suggesting that institutional outreach has not kept pace with program expansion. Nonetheless, operational improvements were evident: SARCs documented 132 reports, 101 charges, and 10 convictions in 2025, reflecting better case follow-up and prosecution. Families are increasingly willing to approach the courts rather than resorting to settlements, supported by new measures like plea bargaining and the establishment of confidential interrogatory rooms to reduce survivor trauma.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Delta State has made structural progress in survivor support through the establishment of three SARCs in Asaba, Warri, and Ughelli, each offering free medical, psychosocial, legal, and forensic services. A SARC Director emphasized that "everything a survivor needs are free at SARC, and whatever is spent is paid back to us through the state budget," while an official at the state's Ministry of Women Affairs confirmed the creation of a dedicated SARC budget line to sustain services. However, awareness and usage remain critically low as only 7.5% of respondents know of or have visited an active SARC or shelter, and just 13.8% are aware of any survivor support services.

Shelter availability remains a major gap, with no operational government-owned adult shelter despite budgetary provisions for one still under construction. Coordination challenges persist, police often distrust SARC forensic reports, preferring their own clinics, and survivors still report unofficial police fees during complaint filing and the Ministry of Health's lack of GBV trained desk officers further weakens health-sector referrals.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

From 2023 to 2025, Delta State made modest gains in GBV support services, though awareness and access remain limited. Awareness of SARCs stood at 12% in both 2023 and 12.8% 2024 before dropping to 7.5% in 2025, showing weak survivor engagement despite improved service delivery. Awareness of hospital referral pathways rose significantly from 8% in 2023 to 33% in 2024 but dropped slightly to 31.2% in 2025, while police pathway awareness also increased from 28% in 2023 to 48.6% in 2024 and 60% in 2025, suggesting progress in formal reporting channels. Conversely, awareness of legal aid services declined from 30% in 2023 to 18.9% in 2024 and further to 12.4% in 2025, indicating persistent gaps in legal accessibility. Meanwhile, the proportion of respondents who believed informal support systems were helpful rose from 58% in 2023 to 52% in 2024, settling at 49% in 2025.

Despite having three SARCs, the absence of operational shelters continues to hinder survivor protection. This was echoed by a FIDA representative who noted that, "With three SARCs, we should have shelters, but we don't have any." Nonetheless, SARCs handled 132 cases between July 2024 and June 2025, with 101 charges and 10 convictions, reflecting stronger institutional performance supported by dedicated state funding.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Public awareness of GBV in Delta State remains critically low, with only 8.4% familiar with any GBV awareness materials or programs in 2025. Although social media (27.8%), family and friends (22.7%), and healthcare workers or NGOs (18.6% each) serve as the most common information channels, traditional media such as radio and television still have limited penetration, especially in rural areas. As confirmed by the Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA), campaigns are largely urban-focused centered around Asaba and Warri with outreach through market flyers and radio jingles, leaving rural and riverine communities under-informed. The limited usefulness of existing materials where only 26.8% found them "mostly useful" and 52.6% described them as "a little bit useful" further highlights the need for simpler, more targeted communication strategies.

While some progress has been made integrating GBV education into school curricula through Social Studies and National Values, a standardized GBV curriculum is still under development. Awareness and inclusion for persons with disabilities remain notably weak, with less than 20% aware of visual, audio, or picture-based GBV materials, and only 4–4.5% aware of braille and subtitled formats. Although the MoWA employs sign interpreters, the ministry acknowledged that mixed-group trainings are ineffective and recommended segmenting PWDs by specific needs for better inclusion. These findings underscore that despite structured efforts, GBV awareness dissemination in Delta State remains uneven, urban-biased, and insufficiently inclusive.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

From 2023 to 2025, GBV information awareness in Delta State fluctuated without steady progress—rising from 10% in 2023 to 26% in 2024, then falling sharply to 8.4% in 2025. While more people found GBV information useful over time, over half (52.6%) in 2025 still described it as only "a little useful," showing that messages remain unclear and inaccessible. Awareness of disability-inclusive materials also declined after 2024, with sign interpretation falling from 21.4% in 2024 to 16.7% and other formats like audio and braille below 20%. Despite this, demand for school-based GBV in 2025 education remains high (94.9%), though, as a Ministry of Justice (MoJ) official noted, "a standardized GBV curriculum is still under development." highlighting the gap between institutional intentions and implementation.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Delta State presents a notable success story in GBV budget implementation for 2024. While the state's initial allocation of ₦1.71 billion represented a modest 0.2% of its total budget, Delta achieved an exceptional 91.7% execution rate, spending ₦1.79 billion on GBV programs. The near-complete utilization of allocated funds indicates strong administrative capacity and sustained commitment throughout the fiscal year, suggesting that Delta has established functional mechanisms for disbursing and implementing GBV programs without the bureaucratic delays that plague many

other states in the country. However, per capita spending remains relatively low at ₦486.24.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

In Delta State, actual spending on GBV-related interventions amounted to ₦1.66 billion in 2022, ₦931.99 million in 2023, and ₦1.55 billion in 2024. The state recorded a budget performance of 108.0% in 2022, which declined to 61.0% in 2023, before rising again to 91.7% in 2024. While there were no GBV-specific line items in the 2022 budget, several appeared in both the 2023 and 2024 budgets. Some of these items recurred across the two years, including the "Renovation of Transit Home for Disabled Persons in Asaba" and the "Construction of Shelter for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Survivors and Others." Notably, these projects were fully implemented in 2024. Delta State recorded ₦486.24 in 2024, ₦262.04 in 2023, and ₦480.67 in 2022. The pattern reflects relatively good but fluctuating investment, with 2024 representing a return to higher levels after a dip in 2023.

Human Angle Stories

Our key informant explained how the lack of shelter hindered a survivor from reaching a safe place. She recounted the story of a woman who, while running away from her abusive partner, called her at 11 p.m. According to the informant, there was nowhere for the woman to go, so she asked her to lock her indoors. "As big as this Asaba, no shelter home. We have just been talking, no shelter home," she said.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Awareness of GBV-related laws, including the VAPP and 2024 GBV Law, remains very low: only 27.8% of respondents know of these laws.	Strengthen public sensitization using avenues like community radio, social media, and local theatre to expand legal literacy and citizens' knowledge of GBV laws.
	There is no functional or well-defined witness protection mechanism, leading to fear of retaliation and witness withdrawal during GBV cases.	Establish a robust state-level witness protection framework and raise awareness on virtual testimony provisions under the ACJL to enhance survivor and witness safety.
Access to Legal Justice	Persistent court delays and case restarts following judge transfers or death slow down justice delivery despite ACJL provisions.	Create dedicated GBV courts or specialized judges to fast-track GBV-related cases, ensure continuity, and prevent prolonged adjournments.
	Survivors face hidden unofficial costs (fueling police vehicles, statement fees, logistics, etc), discouraging formal reporting and prosecution.	Establish a dedicated GBV response budget line to fund police and justice logistics, ensuring survivors are not required to pay for investigation or court processes.
	Inconsistent presence and low capacity of GBV Desk Officers across police divisions weaken survivor response and referral coordination.	Institutionalize mandatory training and retraining of police GBV Desk Officers and monitor compliance through periodic supervision.
Support Services	There is no operational government-owned adult shelter, and most NGO shelters are closed, leaving survivors, especially those in rural areas, without safe spaces.	Prioritize the completion and operationalization of the state shelter through the Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA) and partner with NGOs to provide temporary safe spaces in underserved LGAs.
	Public awareness of SARCs and shelters is very low (7.5%), limiting survivor access to free medical, psychosocial, and legal services.	Intensify state-wide awareness campaigns, leveraging schools, CSOs, and community gatekeepers to improve knowledge of available GBV support services.
	Weak coordination between police and SARCs, with distrust in forensic reports and duplication of evidence gathering.	Establish clear SARC–police referral protocols and a joint evidence management framework to strengthen inter-agency coordination and case tracking.
Information and Awareness	Over 91.6% of respondents have never seen GBV awareness materials or programs, with campaigns largely urban-centered (Asaba, Warri).	Implement consistent, rural-inclusive GBV campaigns, ensuring equitable reach to riverine and remote LGAs via radio, town criers, and market outreach.
	GBV education in schools is not standardized and remains largely CSO-driven, integrated sporadically into Social Studies or National Values.	Integrate comprehensive GBV education into school curricula through the Ministry of Education (MoE) and train teachers to deliver age-appropriate prevention and response content.
	Awareness of disability-accessible information materials (braille, audio, sign interpretation) remains low, averaging below 20%.	Develop and distribute disability-inclusive IEC materials (audio, visual, braille, subtitled) and establish a disability commission to ensure equitable information access for all groups.
Budget and Spending	Delta's per capita GBV spending in 2024 was ₦422.61, which remains relatively low compared to the recommended benchmark of ₦1000, indicating that the total allocation is still insufficient to meet the scale of GBV needs in the state.	Increase per capita investment in GBV interventions by expanding overall budget allocations and scaling up funding for prevention, response, and survivor support services to better match population needs.



Ebonyi State

Salt of the Nation

Edda Culture and Art Centre

Ebonyi State

Population: 3,603,564

52.5% Female | Male 47.5%

Overall Grade 65.8%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,094)*

GENDER — Female ■ Male ■

69.7% | 30.3%

AREA — Rural ■ Urban ■

44.8% | 55.2%

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

3.1% | 33.4% | 37.5% | 15.3% | 7.8% | 2.8%

DISABILITY STATUS — Yes ■ No ■

4.8% | 95.2%

SARCs: 1

Shelters: 1

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦1.09bn

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

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦255.57m

(This accounts for **23.5%** of total allocation to the ministry)

23.5%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ (Actual spend)

45.2% | 50.2% | 4.6%

Per Capita Spending

₦134.97

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	81.3%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	50.0%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	81.3%
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 ■

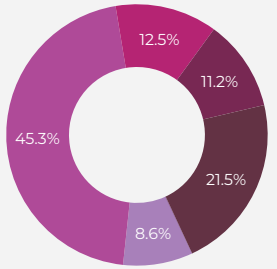
58.4% | 41.6%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

91.2% | 51.2% | 27.0% | 56.0% | 24.4%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

67.9% | 79.3% | 61.3% | 58.9% | 55.4% | 40.9%

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

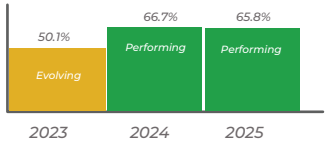
Where did you or the person first seek help?

26.8% | 34.5% | 4.6% | 14.7% | 3.5% | 0.9% | 4.0% | 11.0%

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

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
37%	25%

38%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 50.0%	LP 58.3%	+1 ▲ LP 66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 43.8%	+2 ▲ ALJ 81.3%	ALJ 81.3%
Support Services	SS 62.5%	SS 56.3%	SS 50.0%
Information and Awareness	IA 62.5%	IA 62.5%	+1 ▲ IA 81.3%
Budget and Spending	BS 31.5%	+2 ▲ BS 75.0%	−1 ▼ BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Awareness of police reporting pathways more than doubled, from 29.0 in 2023 to 66.4 in 2025.
- Preference for formal justice systems increased from 58.0% in 2023 to 65.7% in 2025.
- Awareness of formal support services grew significantly, rising from 4.6% in 2023 to 28.1% in 2025.
- Trust in informal support systems declined from 65.0% in 2023 to 38.8% in 2025, suggesting greater confidence in formal support services.

Areas of Concern

- Awareness of legal aid services dropped from 55.3 in 2024 to 27.4 in 2025.
- Awareness of GBV educational programs declined from 72.0 in 2023 to 29.5 in 2025, largely due to funding challenges.
- While engagement with formal justice mechanisms is expanding, gaps in awareness have led to a rise in the number of residents viewing customary systems as helpful, from 18.0 in 2023 to 67.6 in 2025.
- The end of free medical services following the closure of the IHP project created new financial barriers for survivors seeking care.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The state government amended the VAPP law to include survivor-focused provisions such as temporary shelter and empowerment support.

Access to Legal Justice

- Specialized GBV courts were established at magistrate and high court levels across all three senatorial districts, staffed by trained judicial officers.
- A dedicated GBV Response Team was institutionalized, comprising the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Women Affairs, and key partners.
- The Ministry of Justice created the Department of Sexual Assault and Violence Response to handle GBV cases more effectively.
- In 2025, police adopted standard operating procedures for GBV case handling, covering medical referral, suspect arrest, incident documentation, and case tracking.

Support Services

- Survivor support services were strengthened with UNFPA support, including a six-month livelihood empowerment scheme reaching 20 survivors monthly (2025).
- Referral pathways were standardized by the Ministries of Women Affairs and Health, improving coordination across health facilities, police, and social services compared to 2023.
- Free psychosocial and legal services continued through the Ministry of Justice and the State GBV Response Team, even after donor-funded medical services ended.

Information and Awareness

- GBV and child sexual abuse prevention were integrated into school curricula by the Ministry of Education, with support from UNFPA and UNESCO.
- The Disability Bill, passed in March 2025, strengthened inclusive communication and service delivery frameworks.

Change Spotlight

Ebonyi State improved access to justice for GBV survivors by setting up specialized courts in all its three senatorial districts. Led by the Ministry of Justice, this reform reduced travel time and costs for survivors, who previously had to go to Abakaliki for legal proceedings. With trained judicial officers in place, survivors could seek justice more easily. This change led to real results. Convictions under the VAPP law rose from 9 in 2024 to 12 in 2025, showing stronger prosecution and increased survivor trust. FIDA Ebonyi also reported that more survivors chose formal legal action instead of informal settlements.

Ebonyi State GBV Assessment Survey

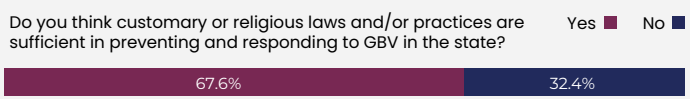
Overall Grade 65.8%

LAWS AND POLICIES

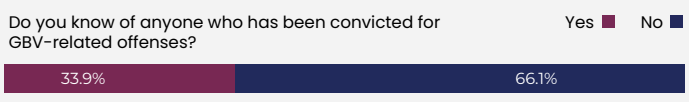
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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?

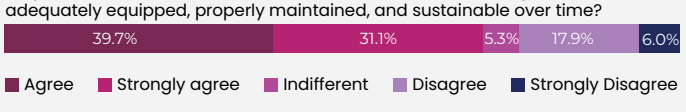


SUPPORT SERVICES

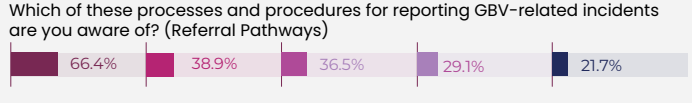
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



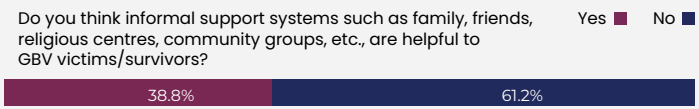
Do you believe that these shelters and/or SARCs are effectively functional, adequately equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable over time?



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

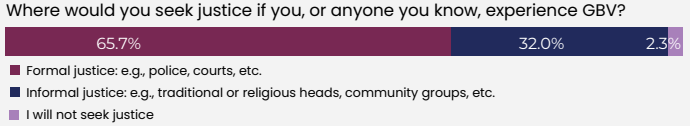


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

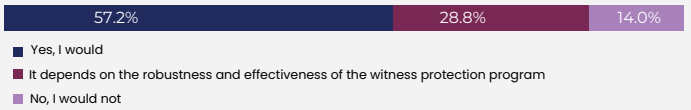


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

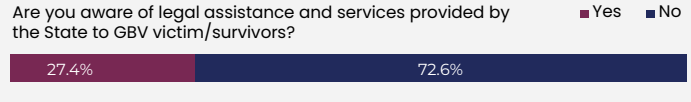
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

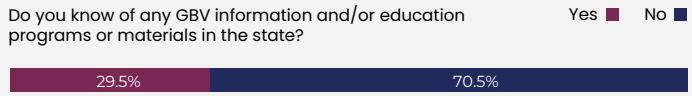


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

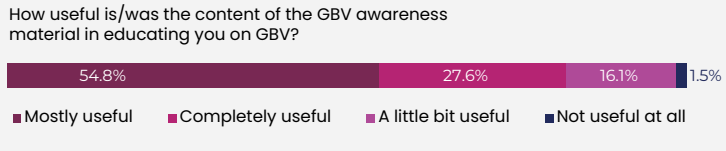


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

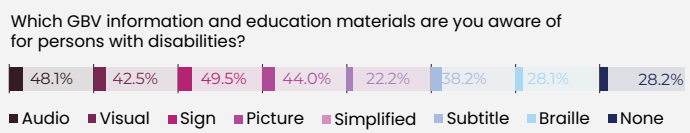
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?



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



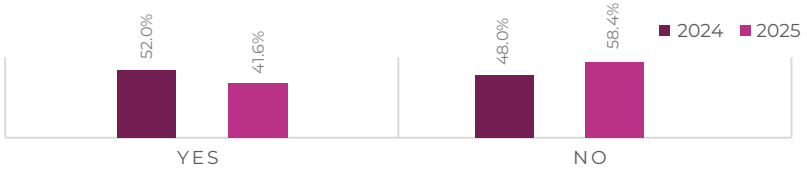
Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Ebonyi State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 65.8%

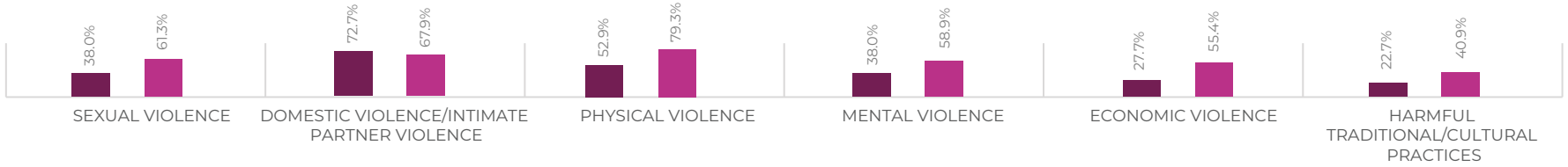
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



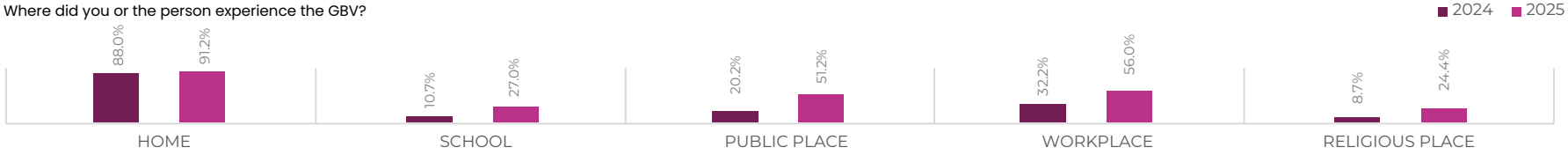
41.6%

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

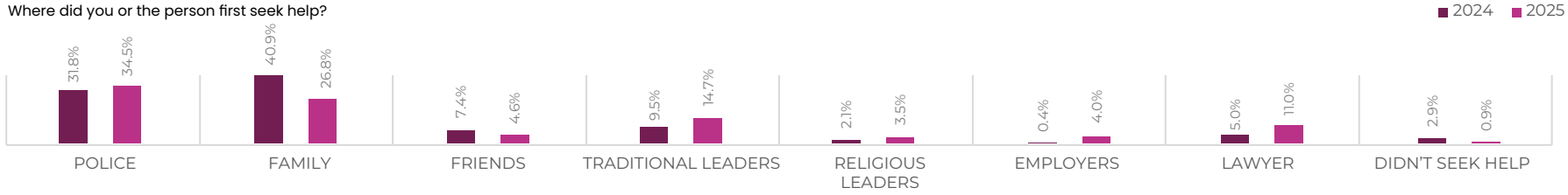
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



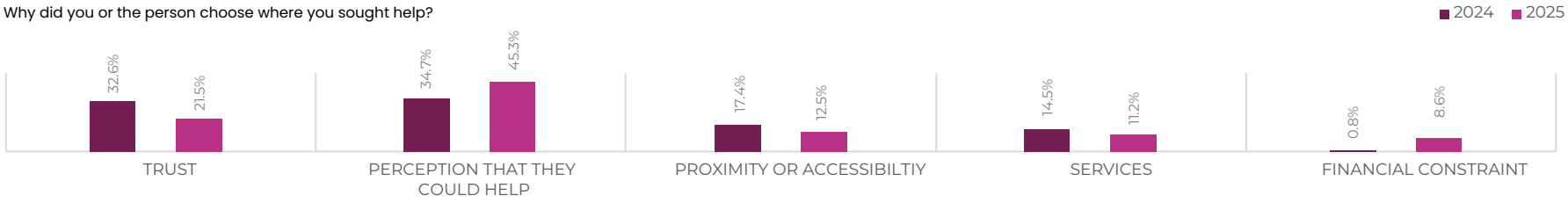
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

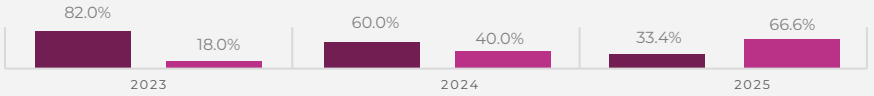


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

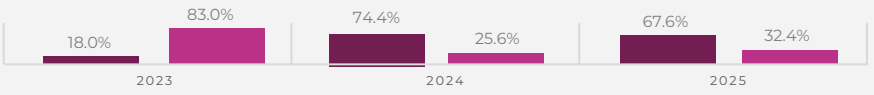
Overall Grade 65.8%

LAWS AND POLICIES

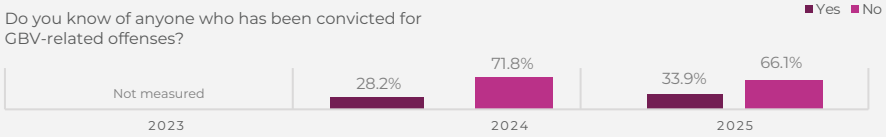
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

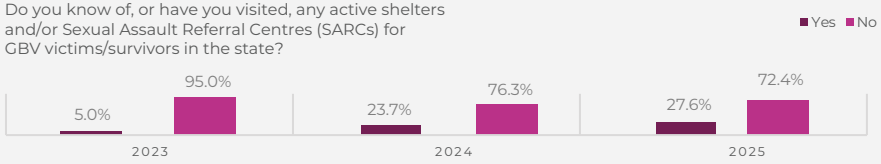


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

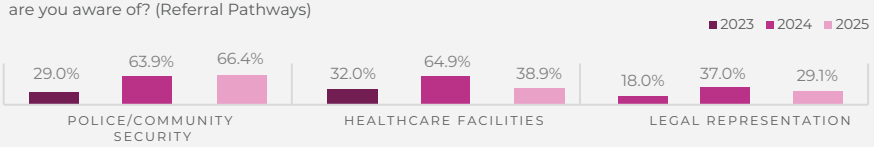


SUPPORT SERVICES

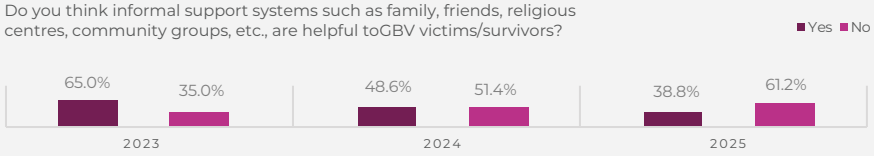
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

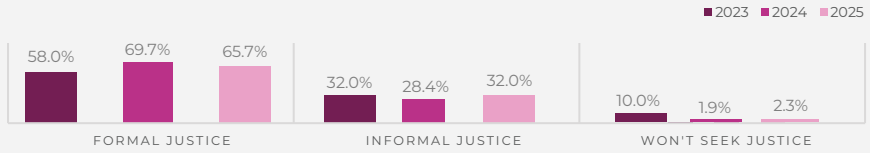


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

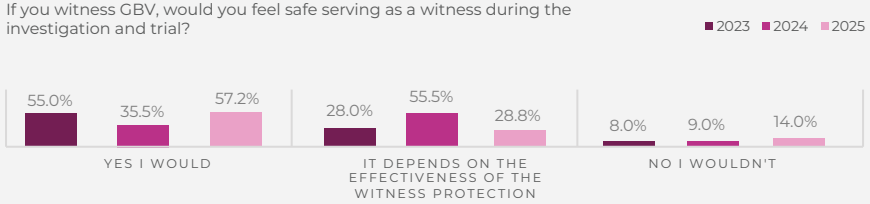


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

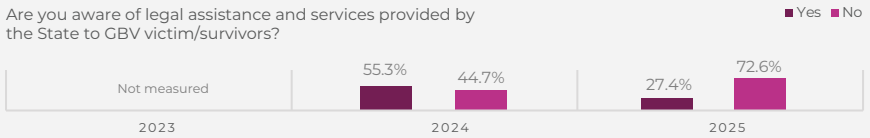
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

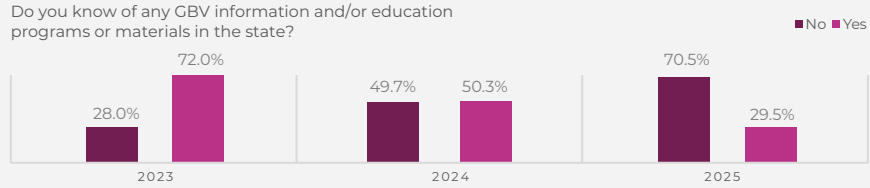


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

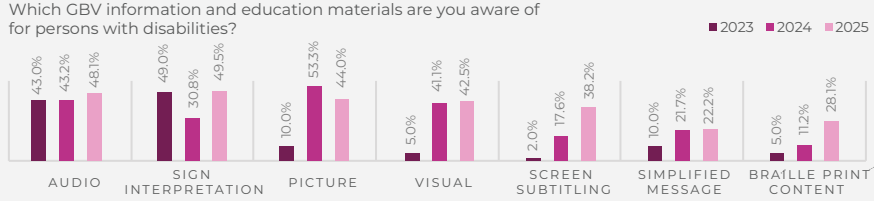


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

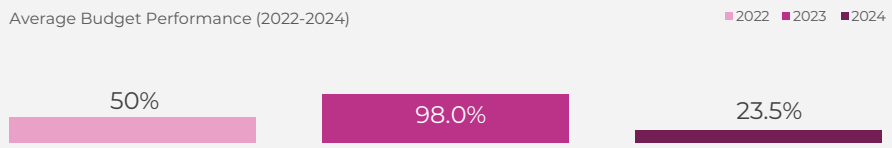


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

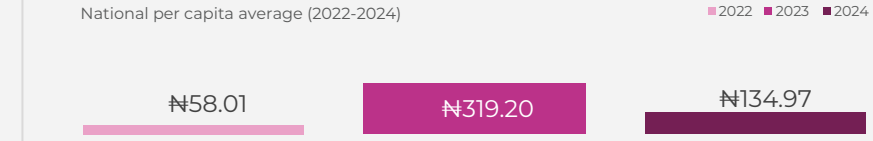


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Ebonyi State domesticated the VAPP law in 2018 and reviewed it in 2022 with support from UNFPA. The revised law added new provisions for survivor support but has not been published as a single document, making it hard to access.

Survey results show a gap between public awareness and trust in GBV laws. Only 33.4% of people in the state know about the laws, and nearly 70% believe they were effective. This suggests that public trust may be based more on perception than direct knowledge.

Legal reforms have led to more convictions, rising from 9 to 12 in the past year. The Ministry of Justice credits this to better training of prosecutors and the setup of specialized GBV courts in the three senatorial districts.

Traditional and religious practices still shape community responses to GBV, with 40% aware of their existence and 67.6% viewing customary systems as helpful. Harmful widowhood practices remain rife, however, the Ministry of Women Affairs, FIDA, and community leaders have intensified efforts through training and sensitization across all LGAs. FIDA notes that these harmful traditional practices are gradually reducing.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of GBV laws dropped significantly from 82.0% in 2023 to 33.4% in 2025, despite major legal reforms. Stakeholders from the Ministry of Justice and FIDA confirmed that these reforms improved accountability and led to more convictions, yet they also warned that without consistent sensitization, the gap between policy and public knowledge will remain.

In contrast, belief in the effectiveness of customary and religious practices grew significantly. In 2023, only 18.0% of respondents saw these practices as sufficient for addressing GBV; by 2025, that number rose to 67.6%. This shift reflects a growing reliance on traditional systems, possibly due to their accessibility or perceived fairness. Meanwhile, awareness of GBV convictions dropped from 28.2% in 2024 to 33.9% in 2025, raising concerns about visibility and public confidence in formal prosecution. Together, these trends point to a widening gap between statutory reforms and community-level engagement, with poor funding and cultural resistance identified as key barriers.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Many residents are willing to engage with the justice system. About 65.7% said they would seek justice through formal channels such as the police or courts if they or someone they know experienced GBV. In addition, 57.2% said they would feel safe serving as witnesses in GBV cases. However, this growing trust is still affected by strong reliance on community-based systems: 32% of respondents said they prefer informal justice systems over formal, as 58.4% believe these community-based systems help survivors get justice. Stakeholders noted that while formal systems are expanding, informal justice remains easier to access in some areas, especially where cultural norms discourage reporting to formal authorities.

Legal aid coverage is comprehensive. Multiple providers, including the newly created Office of Public Defender, FIDA, Legal Aid Council, and NGOs like HELP Foundation and I-Prevob, offer free services across all 13 LGAs. According to the Ministry of Justice, “No area of the state is underserved.”

However, only 27.4% of respondents are aware of government-provided legal support services. This low awareness continues even though free legal aid is available in all LGAs. Stakeholders from state MDAs confirmed that poor dissemination and limited public engagement are key reasons why many people remain unaware of these services. The Ministry of Justice emphasized that while the ministry is committed to providing comprehensive legal aid, weak communication channels limit public knowledge of these resources.

Specialized GBV infrastructure exists but is incomplete. While the state has no Family Support Units, Human Rights Desk Officers are present across all LGAs in police commands and divisions. The state has also established designated GBV courts called “special courts” with one at the magistrate level and one at the high court level in each of the three senatorial districts. Judicial officers have received GBV training in the past year, strengthening their capacity to handle cases sensitively and effectively.

A major concern identified by stakeholders is the role of informal justice systems. The Ministry of Justice reported that traditional leaders both support and obstruct formal justice processes due to inadequate training and information about GBV. While some trained leaders appropriately refer cases to the GBV Response Team, many mediate for extended periods before referring cases,

delaying justice in critical matters like rape, land disputes, and inheritance.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, access to legal justice in Ebonyi State showed both progress and setbacks. Public preference for formal justice systems rose from 58.0 in 2023 to 69.7 in 2024. However, this figure declined slightly to 65.7% in 2025, suggesting that initial enthusiasm may have been difficult to sustain without continued outreach and support. Confidence in serving as a witness fluctuated, with no significant improvement between 2023 (55.0%) and 2025 (57.2%). Many respondents emphasized that their engagement is conditioned on the strong witness protection programs.

Awareness of legal aid services, however, declined sharply from 55.3% in 2024 to just 44.7% in 2025. Stakeholders from the Ministry of Justice confirmed that while legal support is available in all LGAs through multiple providers, poor funding and weak communication have limited its reach. The recent creation of the Office of Public Defender represents an effort to expand services, but without improved public awareness campaigns, these resources remain underutilized.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Ebonyi State operates one Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) at Alex Ekwueme Federal University Teaching Hospital (formerly FETHA 1) and one shelter under the Ministry of Women Affairs. According to the Ministry of Health, the SARC is functional, but the Shelter is not. The Ministry of Women Affairs confirmed that the state government provides minimal support for operations, and with NGO support having closed out, there is no separate budget to run the Shelter. Neither facility is distributed across the state's 13 LGAs, as both serve the entire state from single locations. Only a small portion of residents (27.6%) have visited or are aware of the SARC, among whom (23.9%) question whether these services are functional or sustainable.

The state's referral pathway operates flexibly, though stakeholders note it needs improvement. According to the Ministry of Health, survivors sometimes come directly to hospitals before going to police, while others report to police first and are then referred for medical care. The Ministry of Justice acknowledged that while pathways are effective, they require review to ensure placement at all MDAs, LGAs, and facilities that engage with GBV issues.

Support services such as medical, legal, psychosocial, and economic support exist but are incomplete and limited. Many people (67%) are unaware of these services. Legal services remain free through the Ministry of Justice, and the GBV Response Team provides free psychosocial support. However, a major gap emerged: medical services are no longer free. According to both the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Women Affairs, the Integrated Health Program (IHP) project that previously funded free medical care for GBV survivors has closed out, leaving survivors to pay for services even at the SARC. This creates a significant financial barrier, particularly since most victims are indigent. Because of this gap, survivors often turn to informal support systems like family, religious centres, and community groups. These are seen by many (38.8%) as more reliable, even though they may not offer the full range of help survivors need.

On a more positive note, awareness of formal reporting routes has grown. Most people now know how to report cases through the police (66.4%), though fewer are familiar with hospitals (38.9%) or support group channels (36.5%).

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, more people in Ebonyi State became aware of formal support services for GBV survivors: 5.0% in 2023 to 27.6% in 2025. While this marks progress, it still reflects low overall engagement with these services.

Police reporting channels saw the most progress, with awareness more than doubling over the period: 29.0% in 2023 to 66.4% in 2025. In contrast, healthcare-based reporting became less visible. Meanwhile, trust in informal support systems declined sharply. In 2023, 65.0% of respondents viewed them as helpful, but by 2025, this had dropped to 38.8%. This shift may reflect a growing understanding that informal support is not as comprehensive as what the formal system offers. However, engagement with the formal system is still limited due to low visibility and limited access..

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Findings from 2025 reveal that most residents (70.5%) in the state remain unaware of GBV awareness programs. Despite these gaps, those who have encountered awareness materials generally find them useful. This shows that the problem lies more in access than in content quality. At the institutional level, awareness materials and programs do exist but face distribution challenges. According to the Ministry of Education, the state uses jingles on radio and television, fliers, billboards, and megaphones during road walks to disseminate information across all LGAs. However, the Ministry of Women Affairs revealed that no new IEC materials have been developed or distributed in the past year, and fliers are currently unavailable due to lack of funding. The ministry noted that they previously received NGO support for production, but these organizations have since closed out their programs, leaving the office without materials.

There is also strong public support for integrating GBV and child sexual abuse education into school curricula. The state has made significant progress in this area. The Ministry of Education confirmed that GBV and child sexual abuse prevention education has been included in the curriculum for primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions, with support from UNFPA and UNESCO.

Regarding disability inclusion, both the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Women Affairs confirmed that the state uses audio/spoken content, visual content, screen subtitling, sign interpretation, picture-based messages, and simplified messages to communicate with persons with disabilities – only braille print is not currently used. The Ministry of Women Affairs noted that the state "has done so well on this," citing the passage of the Disability Bill in March 2025, though implementation is still pending. Survey data indicates that while sign language (49.5%) and audio content (48.1%) are gaining visibility, other formats like braille (28.5%) and simplified messages (22.2%) remain poorly known.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Ebonyi State has made progress in improving the quality and inclusiveness of GBV awareness programs, especially for persons with disabilities. However, these improvements have not led to stronger public engagement. Awareness dropped sharply from 72.0% in 2023 to 29.5% in 2025, suggesting that outreach efforts weakened or failed to reach new audiences. This decline aligns with stakeholder reports of funding constraints. With NGO support ending and no new IEC materials produced in the past year, the state has struggled to maintain the momentum of previous awareness campaigns. Without better visibility and consistent communication, even well-designed materials may not create the impact needed.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Ebonyi State's GBV budget performance in 2024 reveals concerning implementation challenges despite having designated funding. With ₦1.08 billion allocated (0.28% of the state budget), only ₦255.57 million was actually spent, representing a mere 23.5% execution rate. The resulting per capita spend of ₦134.97, suggesting that three-quarters of the intended GBV funding failed to reach its programmatic targets. This underperformance points to potential systemic issues in fund release, project execution, or absorption capacity within the state's GBV response infrastructure, ultimately limiting the scope and impact of interventions meant to address gender-based violence in the state.
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Changes Over Time (2022 to 2024)

In 2024, Ebonyi State's Ministry of Women Affairs received an allocation of ₦1.08 billion, yet actual spending amounted to only ₦255.56 million, reflecting a performance of 23.5%. This marks a substantial decline from the state's exceptional 98% performance in 2023. Allocations increased steadily from ₦3.5 million in 2022 to ₦10 million in 2023 and rose significantly to ₦166.50 million in 2024. However, execution rates for these line items remained at 0% in all three years. Per capita spending was ₦134.97 in 2024, ₦319.20 in 2023, and ₦58.01 in 2022. The sharp increase in 2023 followed by a notable drop in 2024 indicates irregular investment patterns rather than sustained prioritization.

Human Angle Stories

22-year-old Glory was sexually assaulted by a family friend, an experience that left her deeply traumatized. Although the man was arrested, his relatives came pleading, and Glory's family insisted that the matter should not go beyond them, citing friendship and the man's drunkenness at the time of the crime.

Her story reveals the deep hold of informal justice systems over survivors in Ebonyi. Despite existing laws and specialized courts, family and community pressures still prevent cases from reaching formal systems.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	Public awareness of GBV laws dropped from 82.0% in 2023 to 33.4% in 2025, despite legal reforms.	Launch a state-wide legal literacy campaign through radio, schools, and community town halls to raise awareness from 33.6% to at least 60% in the next 12 months.
	The amended VAPP law (2022) has not been harmonized and published as a single document, limiting accessibility	Fast-track harmonization and publication of the amended VAPP law. Allocate dedicated funding for printing and distribution to all MDAs, LGAs, police stations, courts, and community-based centers.
	Growing reliance on traditional systems over formal legal framework, with 67.6% of residents viewing customary systems as helpful for addressing GBV.	Strengthen collaboration between the GBV Response Team and traditional leaders through structured training programs on harmful practices and formal referral pathways.
 Access to Legal Justice	While legal aid services are available in all 13 LGAs through multiple providers, only33.9% of residents are aware of these services.	Scale up Legal Aid outreach via radio programs, community announcements, and partnerships with religious and traditional leaders to reach underserved populations.
	Police enforcement faces critical funding gaps for mobility, investigation, and transporting witnesses to court.	Provide a dedicated budget line for police logistics (fuel, case documentation, survivor transport) to strengthen GBV investigations. Establish a transparent reimbursement system to ensure cases are not delayed due to lack of resources.
 Support Services	The state operates only one functional SARC and one non-functional shelter serving all 13 LGAs, with only 27.6% of residents aware of the SARC.	Activate the non-functional shelter and establish at least one additional SARC in each senatorial district. Allocate a separate, dedicated budget line for shelters and SARCs operations in the state budget.
	Medical services are no longer free for GBV survivors following the closure of the IHP project, creating significant financial barriers for indigent victims who must now pay for services even at the SARC.	Create and operationalize a state-funded Victims Support Fund to fully cover or subsidize forensic and medical care, and other support services for survivors.
 Information and Awareness	Public awareness of GBV programs dropped sharply from 72.0% in 2023 to 29.5% in 2025, even though the state conducts sensitization activities across all 13 LGAs.	Scale up community sensitization campaigns using traditional rulers, youth leaders, and women's associations to double awareness rates. Use parent-teacher meetings and school events to extend GBV awareness beyond students to families and communities.
	No new IEC materials have been developed or distributed in the past year, and fliers are currently unavailable due to lack of funding following the end of some NGO support.	Establish a budget line for IEC materials and leverage partnerships with UNFPA/UNESCO to produce low-cost, durable awareness tools.
	While the state uses multiple formats to reach persons with disabilities (audio, visual content, sign interpretation), braille print (28.1%) and simplified messages (22.5%) are uncommon.	Accelerate implementation of the Disability Bill (passed March 2025) and expand accessible communication formats to include braille print and simplified messages.
 Budget and Spending	Ebonyi State's GBV budget execution dropped sharply to 23.5% in 2024, with 0% execution of GBV-specific line items for three years and consistently low per capita spending, signalling major gaps in fund release and programme implementation.	Improve timely fund release and strengthen accountability mechanisms to ensure allocated GBV funds are fully utilised and translated into effective interventions.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | Invictus AFRICA



Edo State

Heartbeat of Nigeria

Ososo Torrist Centre

Edo State

Population: 5,256,806

49.9% Female | Male 50.1%

Overall Grade 66.3%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,079)*

GENDER — Female ■ Male ■

71.5% | 28.5%

AREA — Rural ■ Urban ■

40.6% | 59.4%

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

2.9% | 26.6% | 26.6% | 21.1% | 16.4% | 6.5%

DISABILITY STATUS — Yes ■ No ■

12.1% | 87.9%

SARCs: 1

Shelters: 1

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦440.93m

(This accounts for **0.1%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦291.00m

(This accounts for **66.0%** of total allocation to the ministry)

66.0%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

2.7% | 44.4% | 52.9%

Per Capita Spending

₦111.01

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	83.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	81.3%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	68.8%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	41.7%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

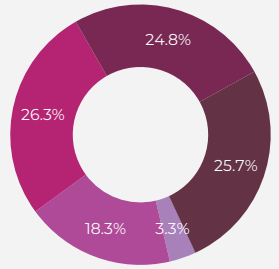
57.4% | 42.6%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

82.2% | 35.2% | 15.9% | 35.7% | 13.7%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

63.3% | 50.0% | 31.7% | 45.0% | 33.0% | 17.8%

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

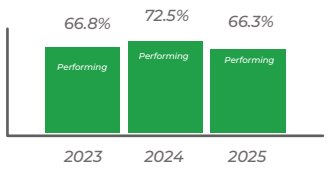
Where did you or the person first seek help?

27.0% | 28.5% | 11.1% | 18.7% | 6.1% | 4.1% | 2.8% | 1.7%

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 ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
32%	50%

41%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	+1 ▲ LP 100.0%	-1 ▼ LP 83.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 86.3%	ALJ 75.0%	ALJ 75.0%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	SS 56.3%	SS 62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA 86.3%	IA 81.3%	-1 ▼ IA 68.8%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 50.0%	BS 41.7%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Edo State has domesticated the VAPP law and established specialized courts to speed up GBV case hearings.
- Over 100 convictions under the VAPP law have been recorded recently, indicating improving prosecution efforts.
- Enhanced collaboration among MoJ, FIDA, NBA, and CSOs for GBV response, including joint case follow-up and survivor support.
- Increases in survivor willingness to report cases and seek justice, partly due to advocacy and awareness by NGOs and youth groups.

Areas of Concern

- Public awareness of GBV laws and legal aid services remains low, particularly in rural and marginalized communities.
- Informal customary and religious practices still impede justice by encouraging concealment of abuse and promoting family settlements.
- Victim and witness intimidation, family pressure, and financial inducements continue to undermine prosecution and conviction visibility.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The Ministry of Justice, FIDA, and NBA Edo Branch established a VAPP Law Monitoring Task Force.
- Two dedicated GBV and sexual offense courts were created.

Access to Legal Justice

- The Citizens' Rights Department (CRD), Ministry of Justice, strengthened its Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) platforms including the General Complaints Unit and Correctional/Custodial Centre Watch Unit.
- The Edo State Police Command established GBV Desks in all 18 LGAs.
- Free Legal Aid Clinics by FIDA, NBA, and CSOs offered pro bono legal services, while NGOs like BraveHeart Initiative (BHI) support survivors to ensure perpetrators are prosecuted.

Support Services

- With support from RULAAC, a new Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) is being equipped in Uromi, Edo Central.
- The Senator Daisy Danjuma Women Centre now operates a 100-bed facility, offering shelter, medical, legal, and psychosocial counselling for survivors of GBV, trafficking, and irregular migration.
- The Edo Specialist Hospital in Benin City serves as a one-stop GBV Response Centre.

Information and Awareness

- Community radio and television programs aired on Edo Broadcasting Service (EBS) and major FM stations on GBV related issues.
- The Edo State GBV Law was translated into Pidgin English and made available in audio format across social media and local platforms.
- Establishment of GBV Clubs in 65 secondary schools through the Ministry of Education/SUBEB.

Change Spotlight

In 2025, Edo State established two Gender-Based Violence Courts within the High Court system, supported by various organizations including the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Women Affairs. This initiative led to over 100 convictions under the VAPP Law and quicker case hearings.

The BraveHeart Initiative has contributed to seven convictions in 2025. Community engagement through radio programs, GBV clubs in 65 schools, and simplified VAPP Law materials reached over one million residents, including marginalized groups. This collaborative effort has renewed hope for survivors, transforming laws into tangible protection and ensuring justice for citizens across Edo State.

Edo State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 66.3%

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 ■



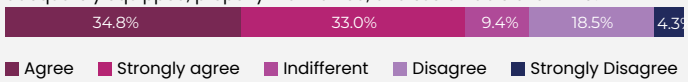
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

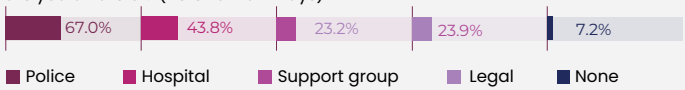
Yes ■ No ■



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)



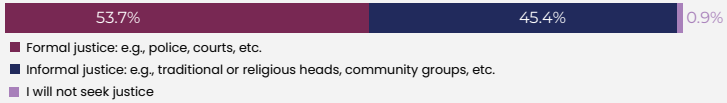
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

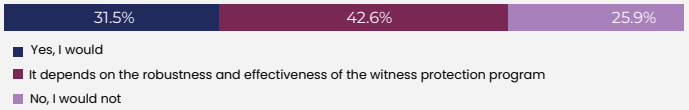


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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?

Yes ■ No ■



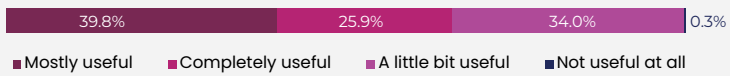
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

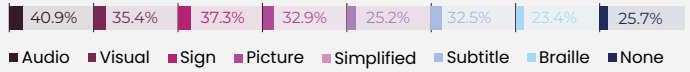
Yes ■ No ■



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



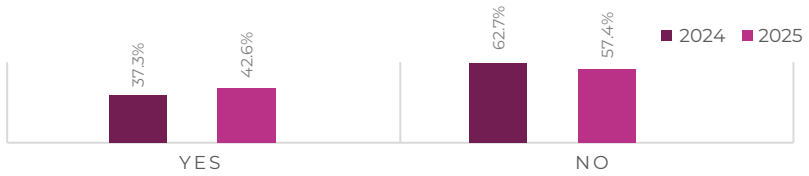
Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Edo State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 66.3%

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



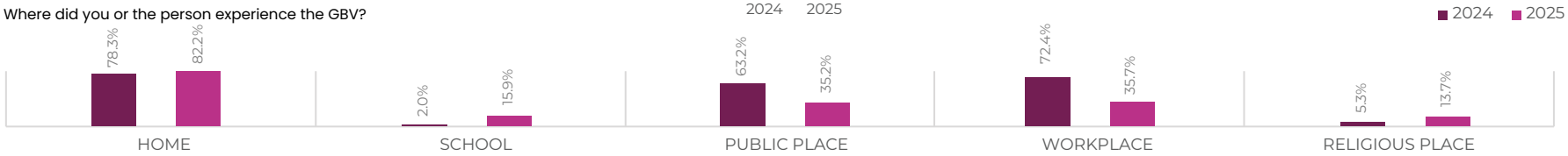
42.6%

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

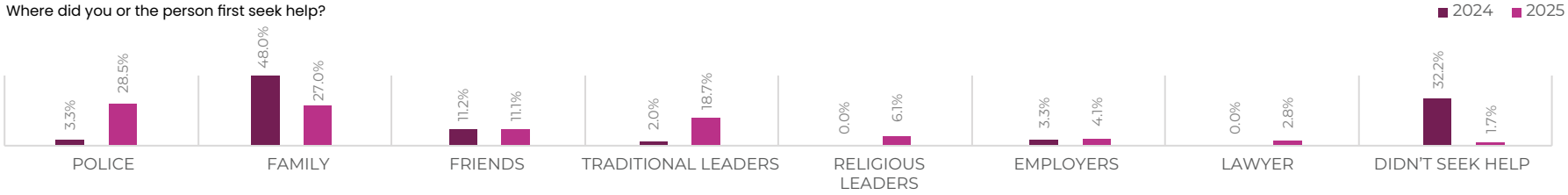
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



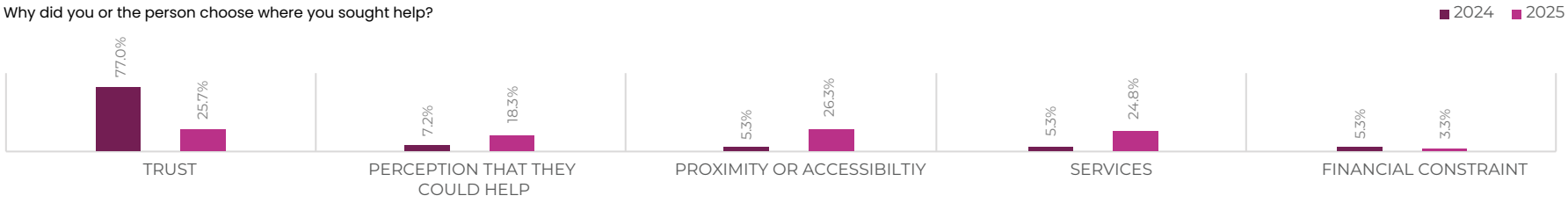
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

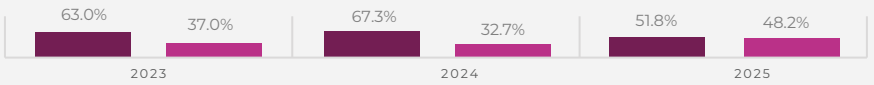


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

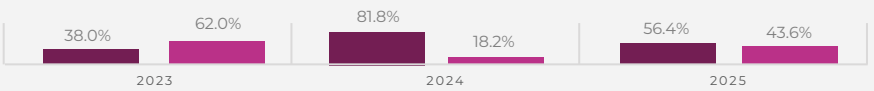
Overall Grade 66.3%

LAWS AND POLICIES

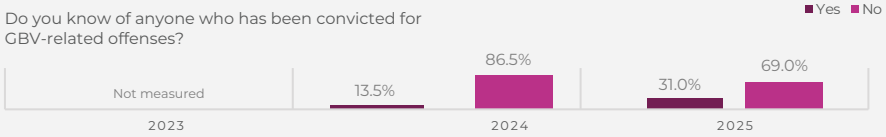
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

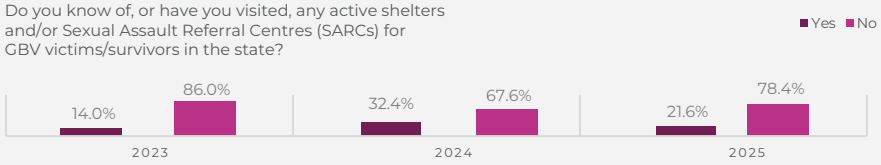


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

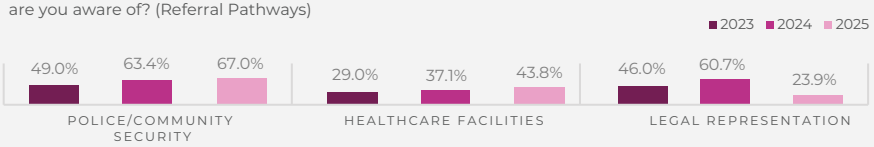


SUPPORT SERVICES

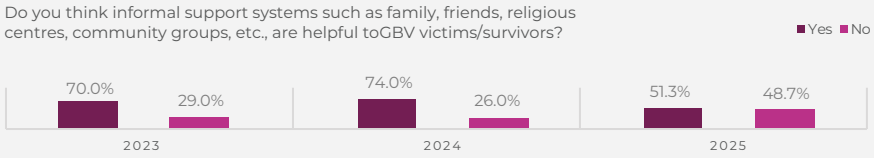
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

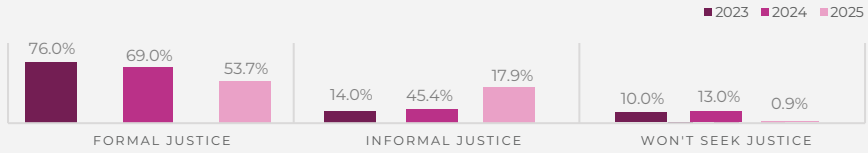


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

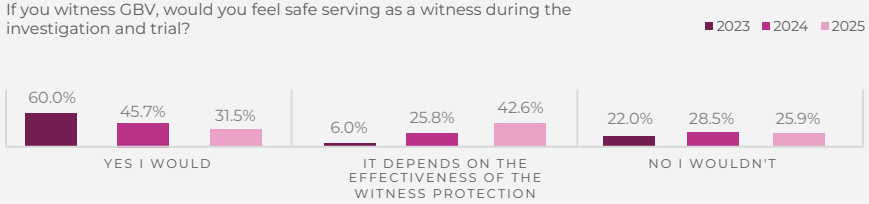


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

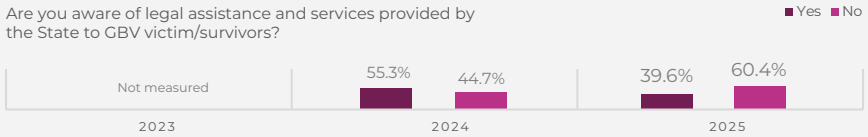
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

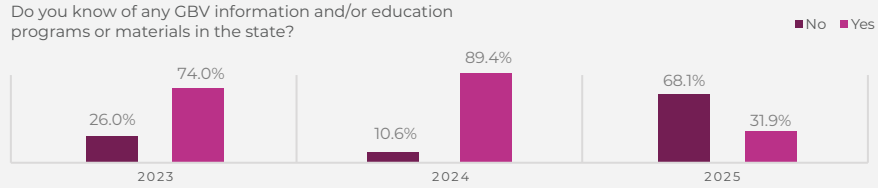


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

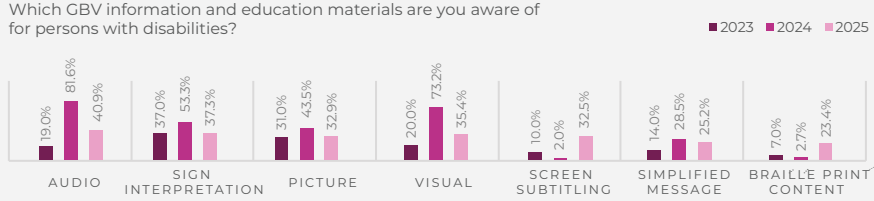


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

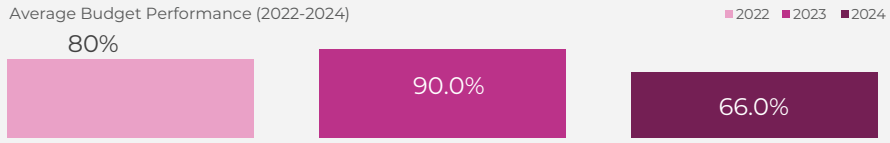


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Edo State's legal response to GBV is guided by the domesticated Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Law (VAPP Law, 2021), which mirrors the federal legislation but incorporates state-specific adaptations. The law covers both civil and criminal offences addressing inhuman treatment of widows, spousal battery, intimidation, child abandonment, and psychological abuse. FIDA added that it "includes offences such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and FGM, and sets out legal procedures, penalties, and survivor support mechanisms."

Despite this robust framework, public awareness shows that 51.8% of respondents are aware of GBV laws and policies. Confidence in the effectiveness of existing laws is moderate, with 54.6% of citizens considering them effective. However, enforcement indicators point to stronger institutional performance. The Ministry of Justice reported "over 100 convictions under the VAPP Law between December last year and September 2025". Nonetheless, awareness of actual convictions remains low (31%), limiting public perception of justice delivery.

Awareness of customary and religious laws addressing GBV is evenly split, with 50.9% of respondents aware and 49.1% unaware. While 56.4% believe these laws aid GBV prevention, stakeholders stress that traditional systems frequently obstruct justice. The Ministry of Justice noted, "When cases are reported to a Chief or community head, they often try to hide them and avoid involving the police." Similarly, FIDA stated that "most of these cases are handled within the family to cover up the offense," while the Nigerian Bar Association confirmed that "traditional institutions sometimes compromise justice by resolving GBV issues outside formal courts."

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, Edo State's GBV legal framework remained institutionally strong but suffered from declining public engagement and visibility. Awareness of GBV laws increased from 63% in 2023 to 67% in 2024, before dropping to 51.8% in 2025. A Ministry of Women Affairs official noted, "People know the law exists but don't see it being used effectively. Without visible justice, interest fades."

Perception of the effectiveness of customary and religious laws increased from 38% in 2023 to 81.8% in 2024 and then dropped to 54.6% in 2025. With expanded court capacity and high conviction rates, visibility increased sharply, with public awareness of convictions increased from 13.5% in 2024 to 31% in 2025. The Ministry of Justice attributed the earlier rise to "intensified activism and dedicated GBV courts," while the 2025 drop reflected "victim withdrawal, intimidation, and family pressure." Institutional coordination challenges persist. As FIDA explained, "Some victims are intimidated or pressured to withdraw," while a Police official cited "logistical challenges like duplication machines and stationery shortages" limit case handling efficiency.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Formal justice mechanisms in Edo State remain strong, with 53.7% of respondents preferring formal systems. Stakeholder insights reveal that specialized structures including two dedicated GBV courts (Criminal Courts 3 and 4), gender desks across police divisions, and formalized prosecution protocols have improved case handling and coordination.

The Ministry of Justice, Legal Aid Council, FIDA, the Nigerian Bar Association, and NGOs like BraveHeart Initiative (BHI) provide free legal representation and operate a coordinated referral system from initial reporting through prosecution, yet awareness of these state-provided legal assistance services remains limited at only 39.6%. Service accessibility remains uneven, with coverage strongest in Benin, Auchi, and Ubiaja judicial divisions but weaker in central LGAs like Ekpoma and Igueben, leaving many rural survivors unaware or unable to access formal support.

Witness protection mechanisms remain a critical barrier to justice delivery, with only 31.5% of respondents willing to serve as witnesses and 42.6% requiring guaranteed protection first—reflecting persistent concerns about intimidation, financial inducement, and inadequate security measures that frequently result in case withdrawals and collapsed prosecutions.

Confidence in informal justice systems remains notable, with 53.4% of respondents believing traditional structures help survivors, yet stakeholders caution that family-based settlements and community mediation often undermine formal prosecution, reinforce impunity, and lead survivors to withdraw cases due to stigma.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Edo State's access to legal justice landscape evolved through institutional strengthening but declining formal reliance. Preference for formal systems fell from 76% in 2023 to 53.7% in 2025, while

informal systems rose from 14% in 2023 to 45.4% in 2025. Stakeholders attributed this to accessibility challenges rather than rejection of formal justice. The Ministry of Justice explained that "many survivors begin cases formally but withdraw due to delays or intimidation, returning to community leaders who respond faster." FIDA added that "when processes drag, survivors go back to elders or pastors to avoid further stigma." Encouragingly, the proportion unwilling to seek justice at all increased from 0.9% in 2023 to 0.9% in 2025, suggesting decreasing awareness and willingness to pursue redress.

Willingness to serve as witnesses dropped from 60% in 2023 to 31.5% in 2025, while those whose participation depends on protection rose from 6% to 42.6%. Stakeholders observed that fear of retaliation, especially in rural areas, still prevents people from testifying. This underscores the need for a functional witness protection framework to sustain recent judicial reforms.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Edo State operates one active Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Benin with a second under development in Uromi, Esan North-East LGA. The state has one government-owned shelter located within the Senator Daisy Danjuma Women Center, and collaborates with other shelters, utilizing existing orphanage homes that are distributed across the 18 local government areas, with at least two or more shelters in each LGA. The SARC and partner shelters provide comprehensive free medical, psychosocial, legal, and economic empowerment support.

Despite this infrastructure, only 21.6% of respondents were aware of or had utilized these facilities, with just 34.8% of users perceiving them as effectively functional, adequately equipped, and sustainable, consistent with stakeholders' account of limited outreach, resource constraints, and prevailing stigma, particularly in rural areas. Survivors frequently seek informal support from family, friends, religious centres, and community leaders instead, with 51.3% perceiving informal systems as more effective than formal structures.

Formal referral pathways show uneven recognition: police pathways are most known (67% awareness), followed by hospitals (43.8%), while legal representation (23.9%) and support groups (23.2%) remain less visible. Overall awareness of comprehensive support services – medical, legal, psychosocial, and economic assistance — stands at only 36%. However, where accessible, services are holistic and delivered through partnerships between the Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Health, SARC, FIDA, and other stakeholders, covering medical examination, trauma-informed counselling, police support, vocational training, and shelter.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Despite existence of functional shelters and referral centres, awareness of SARCs and shelters has fluctuated significantly from 14% in 2023 to 32% in 2024, then declining to 21.6% in 2025. Stakeholders attribute this decline to inconsistent outreach, urban-rural disparities in service location, and limited community knowledge, with one official noting: "We have functional shelters and referral centres across the state, but many survivors, especially in rural areas, are not aware of them. Outreach is not as consistent as it should be."

Perception of SARC effectiveness has also declined from 49% in 2024 to 34.8% in 2025, reflecting operational pressures including limited funding, understaffing, delayed equipment upgrades, and overburdened facilities that affect service quality and sustainability. However, confidence in informal support systems appears to be evolving, with traditional rulers and faith-based organizations increasingly incorporating GBV awareness into their programs and receiving sensitization on state policies and laws to support survivors within communities. .

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

The Ministry of Women Affairs disseminates gender education materials through banners, pamphlets, flyers, and radio jingles, including a Pidgin English version of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) (VAPP) law, alongside GBV training manuals and standard operating procedures. The Ministry of Education has incorporated GBV topics into various subjects (Social Studies, Civic Education, Religious Studies) and established GBV clubs at primary and secondary school levels, complemented by awareness initiatives like School O'clock and the Edu Rescue Initiative covering all 18 LGAs.

However, public knowledge of GBV programs remains limited, with only 31.9% of respondents aware of active initiatives, while 68.1% remain uninformed. Television remains the dominant information source (50.9%), followed by NGOs/CSOs (47.4%) and radio (43.3%). Other channels; schools (20.1%), healthcare facilities (20.1%), religious centers (18.3%), traditional leaders (16.6%), and workplaces (9.3%) play relatively minor roles. Stakeholders confirmed these gaps are most pronounced in rural communities, with uneven media coverage, especially affecting remote areas despite radio and local TV outreach efforts.

Challenges such as parental influence, community interference, insufficient school counselors, and the absence of a dedicated GBV curriculum, with current content embedded within family life and HIV education programs persist in the state. Stakeholders also noted that awareness campaigns are often seasonal, concentrated around the 16 Days of Activism, rather than sustained year-round.

Encouragingly, among those aware, perceived usefulness shows mixed ratings: 25.9% rated materials as "completely useful," 39.8% as "mostly useful," and 34% as "a little useful," suggesting room for improvement in content quality and relevance. Inclusivity in information delivery remains weak; only 23.4% of respondents are familiar with braille materials, 25.2% with simplified content, and 40.9% aware of audio, visual (35.4%), picture-based (32.9%), screen subtitling (32.5%), and sign interpretation materials (37.3%). While the Ministry of Women Affairs uses pictorial materials, simplified messages, and collaborates with disability organizations through the GBV Management Committee, challenges persist including limited production and dissemination capacity and shortage of sign language interpreters.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Exposure to GBV programs over the three-year period increased from 74% in 2023 to 89% in 2024, then dropped sharply to 31.9% in 2025. Stakeholders attributed this decline to reduced donor support and funding constraints in 2025 that curtailed community outreach activities, logistics challenges

limiting institutional visibility, and weak inter-agency coordination that affected sustained advocacy and legal literacy programs. As one official explained: “In 2024, we were very visible in the communities because of donor support and active outreach programs. But in 2025, activities reduced due to funding constraints.”

However, perceptions of content quality show a complex pattern: “completely useful” ratings moved from 64% in 2023 to 83% in 2024, then declined to 25.9% in 2025, while “mostly useful” and “a little useful” ratings increased from 11% in 2023 to 39.8% and 8% in 2023 to 34% respectively in 2025. This suggests that while fewer people are being reached, there is growing emphasis on practical guidance that translates awareness into action, including clear information on survivors’ rights, legal options, and reporting pathways.

Awareness of disability-accessible materials remains limited and fluctuating throughout the period, indicating that inclusion efforts are often short-term and dependent on external funding rather than sustained state-driven continuity. Radio, television, and NGO-led community sensitization remain the dominant outreach methods, with gradual institutional progress seen through curriculum integration efforts, GBV clubs in schools including PWD institutions, and collaborative frameworks with disability advocacy organizations, though systematic monitoring and evaluation systems to track awareness effectiveness remain underdeveloped.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Edo State allocated ₦440.9 million to GBV programs in 2024, representing 0.09% of its total state budget. Of the allocated amount, ₦291 million was actually spent, achieving a 66% implementation rate. This means approximately one-third of the budgeted resources remained unutilized by the end of the fiscal year. The actual GBV expenditure constituted 0.07% of the state’s total spending, closely reflecting the budget allocation share. On a per capita basis, Edo State spent approximately ₦111.01 per female resident in the state on GBV-related programs. .

Changes Over Time (2022 to 2024)

Edo State’s average performance in the Womanity Index budget and spending domain over the last three years is linked to reductions in both budget performance and the absence of GBV-specific line items in recent years. The state recorded GBV-related budget allocations of ₦274.5 million in 2022, ₦207.8 million in 2023, and ₦440.9 million in 2024. Actual spending improved from 80% in 2022 to 90% in 2023 but dropped significantly to 66% in 2024. In 2022, the state included two GBV-specific line items in its budget. However, no GBV-specific line items were included in the 2023 and 2024 budgets, marking a regression in policy prioritization. Edo State’s per capita spending was ₦111.01 in 2024, ₦73.10 in 2023, and ₦88.14 in 2022. Although 2024 reflects an uptick, the uneven movement across the three years demonstrates inconsistent commitment to GBV-related expenditure.

Human Angle Stories

In search of greener pastures, 17-year-old Amina travelled to Benue State, where her caregiver subjected her to repeated physical assaults. One particularly violent incident left her with severe injuries, leading to her hospitalization. The case caught the attention of the Edo State Ministry of Women Affairs. The Commissioner immediately contacted her counterpart in Plateau State, and through this inter-state collaboration, Amina was safely repatriated to her home state.

Her story emphasizes the importance of responsive state-level leadership in addressing GBV cases, especially for survivors who are displaced or lack family support. It also shows how inter-state coordination can bridge service gaps, ensuring that survivors are not left stranded in unfamiliar environments.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	Awareness of GBV laws is moderate but declining; enforcement and community engagement are uneven.	Intensify public sensitization campaigns focused on GBV laws, including expanded school-based sexual education.
	Informal customary and religious laws often perpetuate GBV and obstruct formal justice pathways.	Strengthen collaborations with traditional and religious leaders to align their roles with statutory GBV frameworks.
	Perceived effectiveness of enforcement is hindered by victim intimidation and financial inducements.	Implement better victim and witness protection to reduce case withdrawals and enhance prosecution success.
 Access to Legal Justice	Preference for formal justice is growing but informal mediation remains widely used and sometimes obstructs justice.	Foster integration of informal justice actors into formal systems through training and guidelines.
	Awareness of legal aid services is low, especially in rural areas.	Expand and publicize legal aid awareness programs to improve coverage and visibility in underserved locations.
	Legal aid coverage concentrated in Benin Metropolis; fewer than 20% of rural survivors accessed legal aid services.	Expand Legal Aid Council coverage to all LGAs through mobile legal clinics in rural areas and implement state-funded fee waivers for all GBV-related cases to eliminate financial barriers to justice.
	Witness protection remains weak, causing fear and reluctance to testify.	Develop a robust, adequately funded witness protection program to encourage participation in GBV trials.
 Support Services	Limited availability and functionality of state-run services. Edo has two SARCs (Benin and Uromi), but only one is fully functional. Only one government shelter exists, serving mainly minors.	Establish at least one fully functional SARC per senatorial district within a year, ensure 24/7 operations through dedicated state budget lines, and strengthen service integration by linking SARCs with primary health facilities and co-managing shelters with NGOs for wider survivor reach and sustainability.
	Over-reliance on NGOs and faith-based organizations as first responders.	Strengthen survivor-centred referral systems and enhance community awareness of available support services.
	Informal support systems often help survivors but can also discourage formal justice seeking.	Build capacity in informal networks to support survivors while encouraging formal justice engagement.
 Information and Awareness	Low awareness of GBV rights and services in rural areas of Edo State. Less than 25% of respondents in Edo State could identify where to report GBV; majority only learn about services post-incident.	Run GBV awareness campaigns in all LGAs, especially rural areas, distribute IEC materials in local dialects, and deploy mobile teams to reach remote communities and promote reporting.
	Underutilized schools and GBV clubs in Edo State. Only 15% of respondents across Edo State cited schools as a source of GBV information; school-based clubs exist but not system-wide.	Integrate GBV education in all schools, equip GBV clubs for peer awareness, and link schools with SARCs for reporting and support.
	GBV education content needs enhancement in depth and clarity.	Revise and enrich educational materials to make them more comprehensive, survivor-focused, and easier to understand.
 Budget and Spending	The drop in budget execution from 90% in 2023 to 66% in 2024 indicates weakening implementation capacity, with ₦149.9 million left unspent. This suggests gaps in planning, coordination, or absorptive capacity within implementing agencies.	Establish quarterly budget performance reviews and improve coordination between the Ministry of Women Affairs and relevant line ministries to ensure full utilization of allocated funds and prevent year-end lapses.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | Invictus AFRICA



Ekiti State

Fountain of Knowledge

Olosunta Hill

Ekiti State

Population: 4,191,397

50.1% Female | Male 49.9%

Overall Grade 72.1%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,059)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

69.4% | 30.6%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

56.8% | 43.2%

AGE

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

6.3% | 23.8% | 29.3% | 22.8% | 11.6% | 6.2%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

6.4% | 93.6%

SARCs: 3

Shelters: 1

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦1.19bn

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

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦452.98m

(This accounts for **38.0%** of total allocation to the ministry)

38.0%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

28.7% | 26.9% | 44.4%

Per Capita Spending

₦215.74

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	83.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	81.3%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	75.0%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	58.3%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

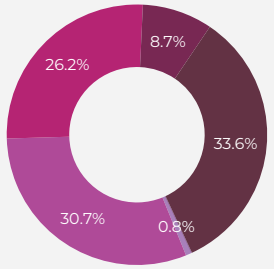
63.2% | 36.8%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

79.2% | 29.7% | 20.5% | 25.9% | 9.7%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

59.5% | 52.1% | 20.0% | 35.6% | 13.3% | 5.6%

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

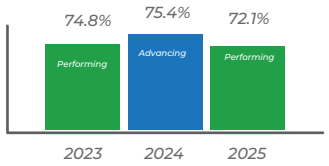
Where did you or the person first seek help?

28.7% | 44.1% | 12.1% | 4.1% | 3.6% | 3.1% | 3.1% | 1.3%

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

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
45%	52%

68%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 90.0%	LP 95.7%	−1 ▼ LP 83.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 86.3%	ALJ 62.5%	ALJ 81.3%
Support Services	SS 86.3%	SS 81.3%	−1 ▼ SS 62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA 86.3%	IA 75.0%	IA 75.0%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+2 ▲ BS 66.7%	−1 ▼ BS 58.3%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Residents unwilling to report GBV dropped from 3% (2023) to just 1.3% (2025), showing growing confidence to take action when violence occurs.
- Public perception that informal systems are more effective than formal support services fell from 88.0% in 2023 to just 51.9% in 2025, maintaining steady confidence in formal structures.
- Residents preferring formal justice systems increased from 85.0% in 2024 to 87.5% in 2025, demonstrating growing trust in institutional responses to GBV.

Areas of Concern

- Public awareness of GBV laws declined progressively from 86% in 2023 to 68% in 2024 and 58.5% in 2025, suggesting awareness campaigns need reinforcement despite strong implementation.
- Public awareness of GBV convictions plummeted from 51.9% in 2024 to just 33.2% in 2025, creating a critical visibility gap despite increasing actual prosecutions and conviction rates.
- Knowledge of GBV information and awareness programs declined from 70.0% in 2023 to 65% in 2024 and 43.3% in 2025, suggesting reduced reach of sensitization efforts.

Fewer residents now feel safe participating in GBV investigations and trials, with demand for witness protection increasing as security provisions remain inadequate.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Ekiti State has a comprehensive GBV legal framework, with its 2019 GBV (Prohibition) Law establishing family courts, SARCs, and a sex offenders' register.
- The state achieved between 20-30 GBV convictions in the last year, with prosecution timelines reduced from 2-3 years to 6-7 months.

Access to Legal Justice

- Ekiti established comprehensive legal aid coverage across all 16 LGAs, and trained paralegals in each senatorial district, ensuring access even in remote areas through technology and mobile services.
- The GBV Management Committee (GBVMC), chaired by the Wife of the Governor, was operationalized with diverse membership, meeting quarterly to oversee GBV interventions.

Support Services

- Three functional SARCs across Ekiti's senatorial districts, backed by a centralized shelter (Transit Home) providing accommodation, food, and education sponsorship.
- In 2024, Ekiti State supported 27 survivors' educational reintegration (23 secondary, four primary), graduated six with full sponsorship, and saw five become prefects, showcasing recovery and empowerment.

Information and Awareness

- The Ministry of Education implemented the AGILE programme nationwide, establishing anti-GBV clubs and integrating sexuality education and child abuse prevention into school curricula.
- Ekiti advanced disability-inclusive GBV programming by involving PWDs, providing sign language interpreters, and equipping special schools with assistive technologies through AGILE investments.

Change Spotlight

Ekiti state achieved remarkable reach through the AGILE programme, which systematically embedded GBV prevention into educational infrastructure. By 2025, weekly anti-GBV club meetings occurred across virtually all secondary schools statewide, with trained counsellors delivering curriculum-based sessions every Thursday. Primary schools implemented age-appropriate modules including the "Don't Touch My Bombom" programme, converting complex safeguarding concepts into accessible songs and activities.

Ekiti State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 72.1%

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 ■



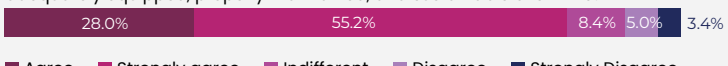
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

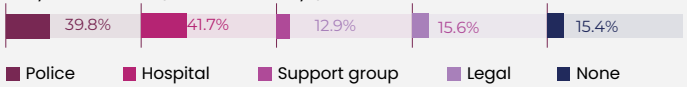
Yes ■ No ■



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)



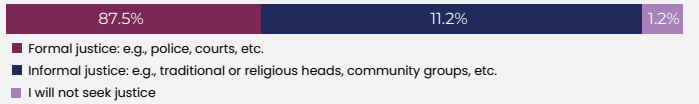
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

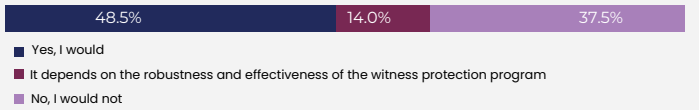


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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?

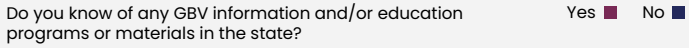
Yes ■ No ■



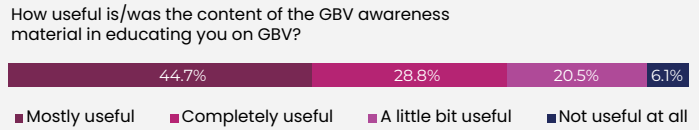
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

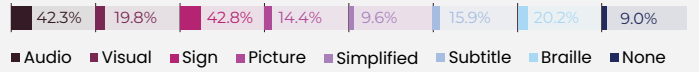
Yes ■ No ■



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



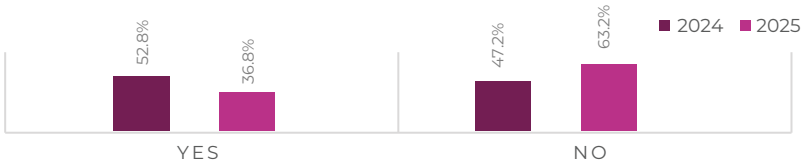
Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Ekiti State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 72.1%

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



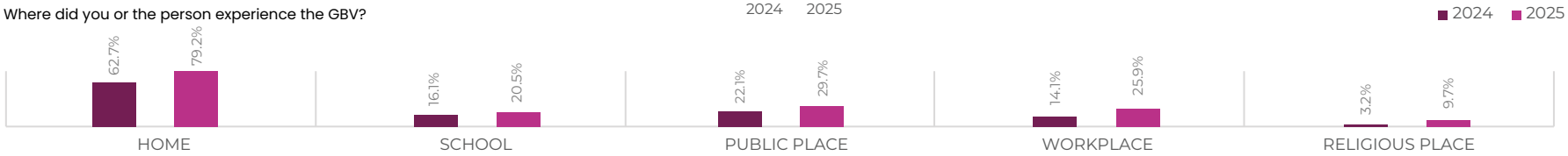
36.8%

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

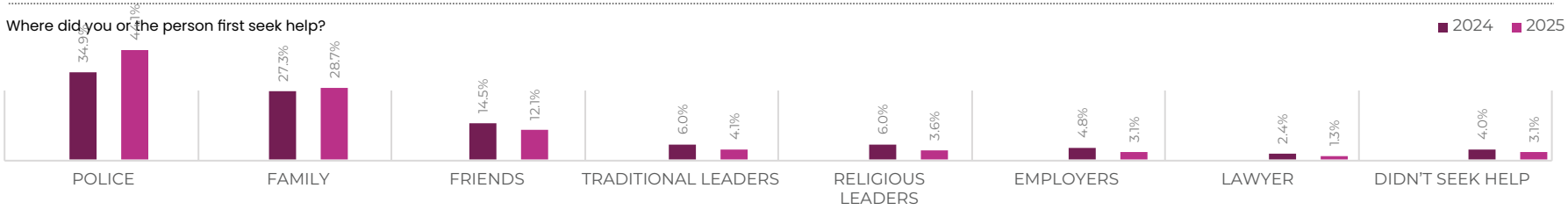
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



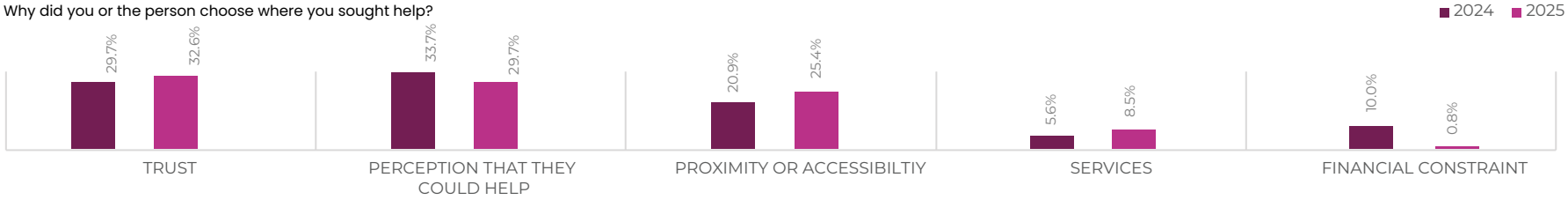
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

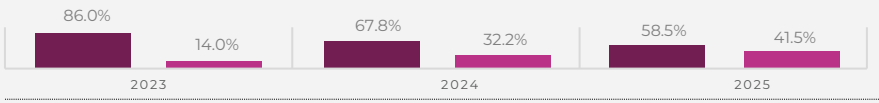


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

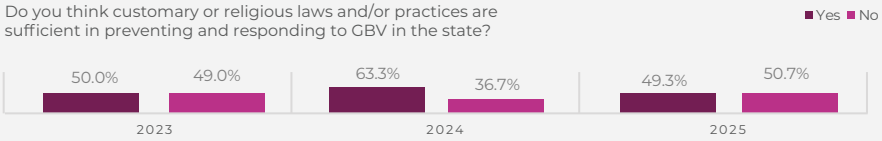
Overall Grade 72.1%

LAWS AND POLICIES

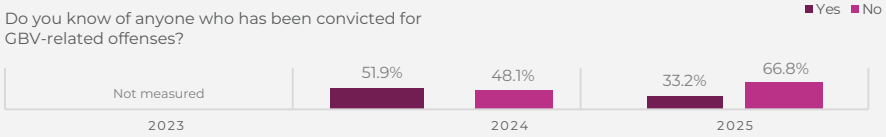
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

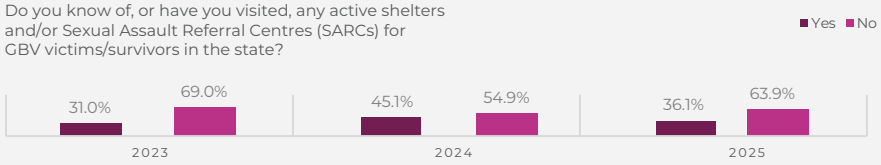


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

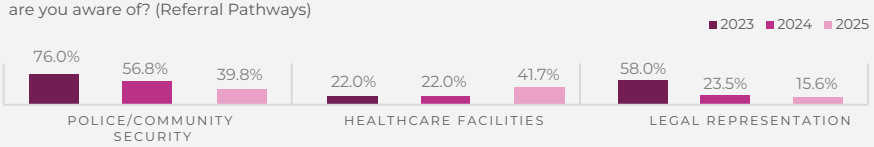


SUPPORT SERVICES

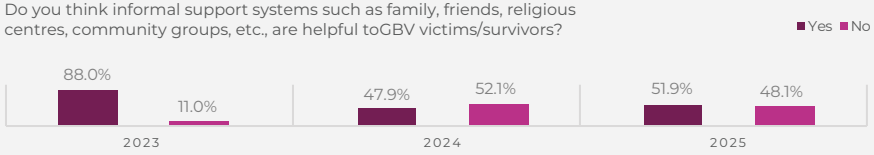
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Which of these processes and procedures for reporting GBV-related incidents are you aware of? (Referral Pathways)

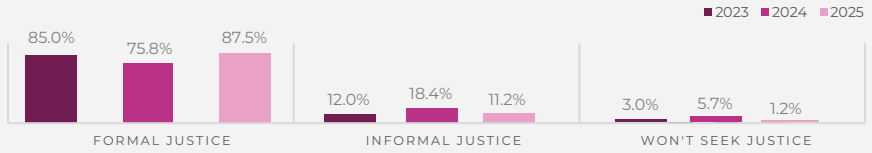


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

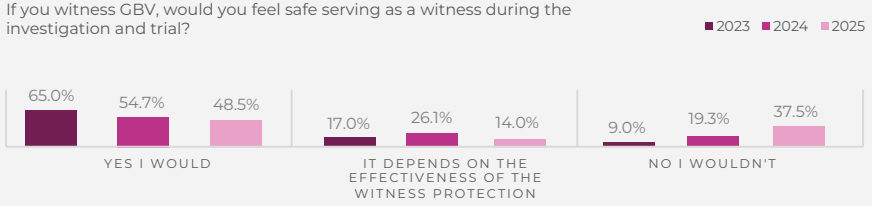


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

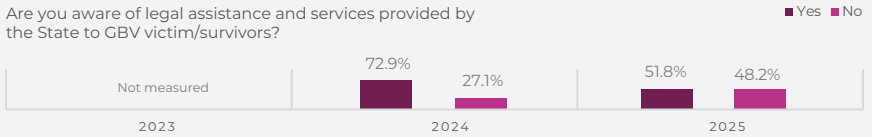
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

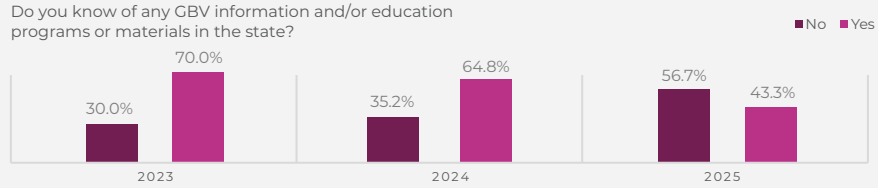


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

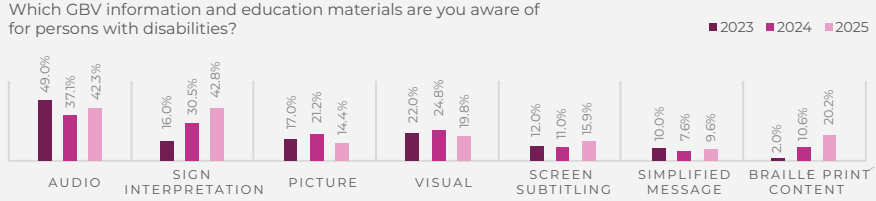


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

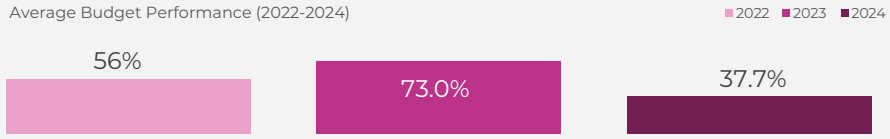


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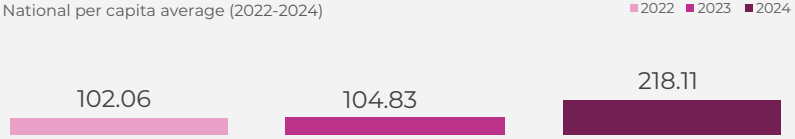


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Ekiti State's GBV (Prohibition) Law, 2019 represents a significant advancement beyond the federal VAPP Act of 2015, incorporating critical institutional mechanisms that strengthen both prevention and response. The law mandates establishment of SARCs with multi-disciplinary teams, creates specialized family courts at magistrate, customary, and high court levels, institutes a public sex offender registry, establishes the GBV Management Committee with statutory membership, and provides for compulsory treatment and care for child sexual violence survivors.

Public awareness of GBV laws stands at 58.5%, reflecting modest reach despite intensive government and civil society sensitization efforts. However, 50.7% of respondents believe formal laws and policies are effective and sufficient, indicating strong public confidence in the legal framework. The challenge lies not in the quality of legislation but in translating legal provisions into consistent enforcement and widespread public knowledge.

The conviction landscape reveals both progress and gaps. While exact numbers vary by source, evidence suggests 20-30 convictions in the past year, with cases now concluded in 3-6 months compared to 2-3 years previously. The Ministry of Justice has begun publicly releasing profiles of convicted sex offenders through social media, enhancing transparency and deterrence. However, public awareness of convictions declined sharply from 51.9% in 2024 to 33.2%, suggesting that judicial achievements are not effectively communicated to communities where deterrence is most needed.

Customary and religious dynamics present a mixed picture. While 51.2% of respondents are aware of customary and religious laws addressing GBV, only 49.3% believe these mechanisms help prevent or respond to GBV. Multiple stakeholders confirmed that traditional rulers and mainstream religious leaders now actively support formal prosecution, with the Owa Ajero of Ijero publicly declaring that his palace would not settle rape cases but refer them immediately to police. However, isolated harmful practices persist, particularly FGM in Ekiti Southwest LGA and religious justifications for domestic violence in some communities. The NAPTIP State Coordinator documented a case where a pastor regularly assaulted his wife over church attendance, illustrating that religious authority can still enable abuse.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

The quantitative trend data reveals concerning regression in public legal awareness. Awareness of GBV laws decreased from 86% (2023) to 68% (2024) to 58.5% (2025), representing a 27.5 percentage point decline over two years. This downward trajectory suggests either erosion of earlier sensitization gains or inadequate sustained communication efforts to reach new community members and maintain awareness among existing populations.

Public perception of customary and religious mechanisms fluctuated significantly, rising from 50% (2023) to 63.3% (2024) before declining to 49.3% (2025). This volatility may reflect community-level variations in how traditional and religious leaders handle GBV cases, with inconsistent messaging creating uncertainty about whether these informal systems support or undermine formal justice. The most drastic shift occurred in awareness of GBV convictions, which plummeted from 51.9% (2024) to 33.2% (2025).

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Ekiti State has developed robust institutional infrastructure for GBV justice delivery, though geographic and awareness barriers limit equitable access. The state demonstrates strong preference for formal justice mechanisms, with 87.5% of respondents indicating they would seek justice through police or courts, compared to just 11.2% preferring informal systems and 1.2% stating they would not seek justice at all. This overwhelming trust in formal institutions reflects both effective sensitization and tangible service delivery that has built community confidence.

Awareness of legal assistance and services stands at 51.8%, with radio (64.8%) and social media (39.7%) as primary information sources. Legal aid services are comprehensive and widely available through multiple providers: the Ministry of Justice's gender officers/advisers, Office of Public Defender (OPD), Legal Aid Council of Nigeria (LACON), FIDA (International Federation of Women Lawyers), GRIP (Gender Relevance Initiative Promotion), NBA Human Rights Committee, and specialized NGOs. The Ministry of Women Affairs Director explained: "Legal aid and support cut across the CSOs, NGOs and government institutions. There are gender officers located in the different 16 LGAs and 22 LCDAs to ensure legal services get to all citizens."

The state has established comprehensive specialized GBV infrastructure including Family Support Units at the State CID and four Area Commands, Juvenile Welfare Centre offices in each division

staffed by female officers, specialized family courts at magistrate, customary and high court levels with designated judges, gender desks in Police, NSCDC, and even Amotekun (state security network), and technical working groups at state and LGA levels. The GBVMC provides oversight and coordination across these entities, meeting quarterly to review progress and address systemic challenges.

Witness protection remains a critical vulnerability. While 48.5% of respondents felt safe serving as witnesses, 37.5% explicitly stated they would not, and 14% said their willingness depends on witness protection effectiveness. The state covers transportation allowances for witnesses and keeps some survivors in the Transit Home to limit perpetrator contact but lacks formalized witness protection protocols. Multiple stakeholders described cases where survivors withdrew cooperation due to threats, family pressure, or fear of community stigma.

Despite these challenges, prosecution has improved. Cases that previously took 2-3 years now conclude in 3-6 months, with some completed in as little as three months. The Police work directly with SARC to ensure medical evidence is properly documented and admissible. Magistrates have been mandated to handle GBV cases, and four high courts are specifically designated for serious sexual offenses, creating judicial specialization that enhances case quality.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Quantitative data reveals mixed progress in justice access indicators. Preference for formal justice systems increased from 85.1% (2023) to 87.5% (2025), though it temporarily dipped to 76% in 2024. Conversely, preference for informal justice fluctuated from 11.6% (2023) to 18.4% (2024) before returning to 11.2% (2025). The 2024 spike may reflect temporary disillusionment with formal system delays or effectiveness, subsequently corrected as prosecution speeds improved.

Willingness to serve as witnesses showed complex trends. In 2023, 65.3% were willing, 9.1% unwilling, and 16.5% said it depended on witness protection effectiveness. By 2024, willingness dropped to 55%, unwillingness rose to 19%, and those citing witness protection rose to 26%. The 2025 data shows willingness at 48.5%, unwillingness at 37.5%, and 14% depending on protection. This progressive erosion of witness confidence may reflect increased perpetrator retaliation as conviction rates rise or growing awareness of witness risks as more cases proceed to trial

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Ekiti State operates a three-tiered support infrastructure centered on SARCs, a Transit Home shelter, and community-based gender officers. The flagship SARC at EKSUTH in Ado-Ekiti provides comprehensive one-stop services including medical examination and treatment, forensic evidence collection, HIV and pregnancy prevention, psychosocial counseling, legal consultation, and referral coordination. Two additional SARCs operate in Oye-Ekiti and Ikere-Ekiti, covering the northern and southern senatorial districts respectively. All services are provided free of charge, with no card fees or consultation charges. This indicates a critical equity feature for economically vulnerable survivors.

However, public awareness of these facilities is alarmingly low at just 36.1%, representing a sharp decline from 45% (2024) and 31% (2023). This means nearly two-thirds of Ekiti residents are unaware of the state's primary GBV response infrastructure. Among the minority who are aware, 83.2% (combining 55.2% who strongly agree and 28% who agree) believe these facilities are effectively functional, adequately equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable. This shows a remarkably high satisfaction rating that underscores the quality gap between service delivery and public knowledge.

The referral pathway operates through multiple entry points, though without formal documentation or standardized procedures. Survivors may report to Police, SARC, NGOs, Ministry of Women Affairs, Office of the Wife of Governor, NSCDC, or traditional leaders, with each entity expected to facilitate appropriate referrals. However, awareness of different pathways is highly skewed: 39.8% know about police pathways, 41.7% about healthcare pathways, but only 15.6% about legal representation and 12.8% about support groups. This imbalance indicates that while medical and legal responses are relatively well-known, psychosocial and peer support mechanisms remain largely invisible.

The Transit Home (shelter) accommodates survivors who need separation from abusive environments, providing accommodation, feeding, clothing, and integration support. As of the assessment, the facility housed survivors while 23 others were integrated into boarding schools across the state, with four additional children in nursery and primary schools.

Support services encompass medical, legal, psychosocial, and economic dimensions, though economic empowerment remains the weakest component. Medical services through SARC include HIV post-exposure prophylaxis, emergency contraception, treatment of injuries, forensic examination, and ongoing healthcare as needed. Legal services include case documentation, evidence preservation, prosecution support, and court accompaniment. Psychosocial services include trauma counselling, family therapy where appropriate, and long-term mental health support. Economic empowerment occurs through the Office of the Wife of Governor and Ministry of Women Affairs.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

The most striking change is the rise and sudden collapse in SARC/shelter awareness from 31% (2023) to 45% (2024) to 36.1% (2025). Awareness of referral pathways showed divergent trends across sectors. Police/security pathway awareness declined from 76% (2023) to 56.8% (2024) before partially recovering to 39.8% (2025), though remaining well below 2023 levels. Healthcare pathway awareness fluctuated from 22.3% (2023) to 22% (2024) to 41.7% (2025), showing eventual improvement. Legal pathway awareness collapsed from 57.9% (2023) to 23.5% (2024) to 15.6% (2025), a 42.3 percentage point drop. Support group pathway awareness increased from 8.3% (2023) to 12.7% (2024) to 12.8% (2025), showing modest growth from a very low base. These divergent trends reveal shifting communication priorities and effectiveness. The improvement in healthcare pathway awareness likely reflects enhanced visibility of SARCs through NGO advocacy and survivor testimonials, while the collapse in legal pathway awareness suggests reduced emphasis on prosecution messaging or diminished legal aid outreach.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Ekiti State conducts GBV awareness programming through multiple channels and produces materials in local languages including Fulani and Hausa to reach diverse populations. A toll-free hotline operates for reporting. Despite this multi-channel approach, only 43.3% of respondents are aware of GBV information or awareness programs – a dramatic decline from 65% (2024) and 70.2% (2023). This 26.9 percentage point erosion over two years indicates either insufficient reach, inadequate message frequency, or poor targeting of communication efforts. However, among those exposed to GBV materials, 73.5% found them useful (28.8% completely useful, 44.7% mostly useful), demonstrating that when information reaches people, it is clear, relevant, and impactful.

Source diversification reveals heavy reliance on specific channels. Among those aware of GBV information, 63.6% learned through radio, 40.1% through social media, 28.1% through television, 25.9% through NGOs/CSOs, and only 19.8% through newspapers. Traditional information channels like friends/family (13.5%), schools (9.6%), healthcare facilities (6.5%), workplaces (7.6%), religious centres (2.2%), and traditional leaders (1.7%) contribute minimally, representing significant untapped communication and sensitization opportunities.

The school-based GBV prevention program through AGILE represents one of Ekiti's strongest awareness interventions. The program operates across all secondary schools in the 16 LGAs, with weekly Thursday sessions where trained counsellors use a developed curriculum to teach students about sexual violence recognition, rights, reporting mechanisms, and safety strategies. However, transfers of teachers from one school to another impact the school GBV programmes negatively. Additionally, the program operates as extracurricular content rather than formal curriculum integration, making it vulnerable to scheduling pressures and exam preparation priorities.

Information accessibility for persons with disabilities remains severely inadequate despite recent improvements. Only 42.3% of respondents are aware of audio/spoken GBV content for persons with disabilities, 42.8% of sign interpretation, 20.2% of braille materials, 19.8% of visual content, 15.9% of screen subtitling, 14.4% of picture-based messages, and just 9.6% of simplified messages. While the three specialized schools (Blind in Ikere, Deaf in Ikoro, physically challenged in Ido) receive adapted materials through AGILE, persons with disabilities living in mainstream communities have minimal access to disability-inclusive GBV information.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV information programs declined precipitously from 70.2% (2023) to 65% (2024) to 43.3% (2025). This erosion occurred despite qualitative evidence of continued IEC production and distribution, suggesting the issue is not material availability but rather dissemination strategy, media placement, or message saturation fatigue.

The usefulness rating of GBV materials showed interesting fluctuation: 71.9% found materials useful in 2023, rising to 74% in 2024, then dropped to 73.5% in 2025 (combining completely and mostly useful categories). This improvement in perceived usefulness despite declining awareness may suggest that recent materials are better designed, more culturally relevant, or more action oriented.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Ekiti State allocated ₦1.22 billion to GBV programs in 2024, representing 0.33% of its total state budget. Of the allocated amount, ₦458 million was actually spent, achieving a 38% implementation rate. This means approximately 62% of the budgeted resources remained unutilized by the end of the fiscal year. The actual GBV expenditure constituted 0.14% of the state's total spending, lower than the budget allocation share. On a per capita basis, Ekiti State spent approximately ₦218.11 per female resident on GBV-related programs..

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Across the three years under review, Ekiti State demonstrated clear fiscal intent by allocating substantial resources to gender-based violence (GBV) interventions. However, execution outcomes fell significantly short in 2024. Several key projects, including the "Design of the GBV Prohibition Law" (₦20 million) and the "Domestication of the National Gender and Development Policy" (₦5 million), were fully allocated but not implemented. The single notable exception was the "Renovation of the GBV Centre in Ado Ekiti," which received a ₦5 million allocation, with ₦4.98 million expended, representing the only tangible implementation within the broader GBV budget for that year.

The state recorded actual budget performance rates of 37.7% in 2022, 73.0% in 2023, and 56.0% in 2024. Per capita spending was ₦218.11 in 2024, ₦104.83 in 2023, and ₦102.06 in 2022. The upward movement across the three years reflects gradual improvement, although the increases remain modest and indicate slow expansion in investment toward GBV-related interventions.

Human Angle Stories

A 100-level university student and her friend were gang-raped at a party, and the ordeal was recorded. Before her violation, the survivor was aware that rape is a crime under the law. She also knew about the law in Ekiti that addresses rape, imposing life imprisonment as punishment for perpetrators. This knowledge emboldened her to seek help.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	58.5% of respondents are aware of GBV laws, reflecting a decline from previous years (68%) despite robust legal frameworks.	Intensify public awareness campaigns about GBV laws and convictions through sustained mass media presence (radio, TV, social media) with quarterly conviction updates to enhance deterrence. Publish and widely disseminate simplified citizen-friendly versions of GBV laws in English and local languages across all LGAs.
	Only 33.2% know of GBV convictions, down from 51.9% in 2024, despite 20-30 actual convictions in the past year with case resolution times reduced from 2-3 years to 3-6 months.	Intensify public awareness campaigns about GBV laws and convictions through sustained mass media presence (radio, TV, social media) with quarterly conviction updates to enhance deterrence. Establish a digital GBV case-tracking system showing real-time case status and timelines to increase awareness and ensure accountability.
 Access to Legal Justice	Only 51.8% are aware of legal assistance services provided by the state, down from 73% in 2024.	Partner with civil society organizations, legal aid clinics, and local media to amplify messaging about available services, eligibility criteria, and access points. Establish visible signage and information desks at justice sector institutions with trained staff to guide citizens.
	Legal aid services are concentrated in Ado-Ekiti, with remote LGAs like Ilejemeje, Omuo, Efon, Moba, and Emure significantly underserved.	Scale legal aid coverage to all 16 LGAs conducting monthly circuits to underserved areas. Train and deploy 32 community paralegals (2 per LGA) to provide first-line legal information and facilitate referrals.
	Specialized infrastructure exists including family courts in three senatorial districts, gender desks in Police divisions, NSCDC, and Amotekun, but only 48.5% would feel safe serving as witnesses.	Develop and implement formal witness protection protocols including safe houses, identity protection, psychological support, and court accompaniment.
 Support Services	Only 36.1% of respondents are aware of SARCs or shelters, representing a decline from 69.4% in 2023 and 45% in 2024.	Launch aggressive multi-channel SARC awareness campaign including billboards at LGA entrances, radio jingles, marketplace announcements, and distribution of fliers through churches, mosques, and schools.
	Three SARCs (Ado-Ekiti, Oye-Ekiti, Ikere-Ekiti) serve 16 LGAs, creating geographic access barriers for remote communities.	Establish satellite SARC units or mobile clinics in underserved LGAs (Omuo in Ekiti East, Efon, Ilejemeje) to reduce travel distance and improve timely access to care.
	Awareness of referral pathways is skewed: 41.7% know healthcare pathways, 39.8% police pathways, but only 15.6% legal pathways and 12.8% support groups.	Document and disseminate standardized referral pathway protocols to all entry points with laminated contact directories and clear step-by-step procedures.
 Information and Awareness	Only 43.3% of respondents are aware of GBV information and awareness programs, declining from 70.2% in 2023 and 65% in 2024.	Implement sustained GBV campaign with minimum weekly messaging across radio, television, social media, and print media for the next 24 months. Integrate GBV prevention into formal school curriculum (not extracurricular) at primary and secondary levels to ensure sustainability beyond donor-funded projects.
	Disability-inclusive information is critically inadequate: only 42.3% audio/spoken content, 20.2% braille, 19.8% visual content, 15.9% screen subtitling, 14.4% picture-based messages, and 9.6% simplified messages.	Produce comprehensive disability-inclusive IEC materials including braille pamphlets, audio messages, sign language videos, pictorial guides, and simplified texts distributed widely, especially through specialized schools, community centres, and grassroots communities.
 Budget and Spending	Ekiti State has a severe budget execution problem, spending only 38% of allocated GBV funds in 2024. Critical projects like the GBV Prohibition Law design received full funding but had zero implementation, leaving 62% of resources unutilized due to weak procurement and project management capacity.	Establish a GBV Budget Implementation Monitoring Unit to track quarterly expenditure and resolve disbursement bottlenecks. Conduct capacity assessments of implementing agencies and link performance incentives to budget utilization rates to improve accountability and actual service delivery.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | Invictus AFRICA



Enugu State

Coal City State

Micheal Okpara Statue

Enugu State

Population: 5,607,631

52.3% Female | Male 47.7%

Overall Grade 60.8%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,080)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

66.6% | 33.4%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

78.5% | 21.5%

AGE

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

1.3% | 37.0% | 34.1% | 16.4% | 6.9% | 4.2%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

8.9% | 91.1%

SARCs: 2

Shelters: 1

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦339.96m

(This accounts for **0.1%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦191.77m

(This accounts for **56.4%** of total allocation to the ministry)

56.4%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

30.4% | 51.4% | 18.2%

Per Capita Spending

₦65.44

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	50.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	56.3%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	68.8%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	66.7%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

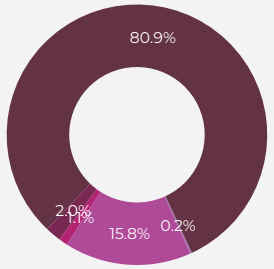
15.4% | 84.6%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

79.0% | 46.9% | 29.8% | 12.7% | 4.2%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

66.4% | 52.2% | 37.5% | 20.6% | 4.8% | 3.1%

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

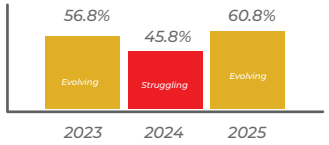
Where did you or the person first seek help?

28.7% | 45.1% | 6.2% | 1.6% | 0.1% | 1.4% | 0.8% | 0.7%

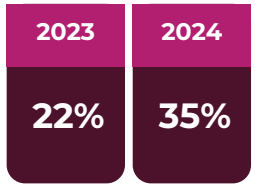
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



28%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	−1 ▼ LP 58.3%	LP 50.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	−1 ▼ ALJ 43.8%	+1 ▲ ALJ 56.3%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	SS 50.0%	SS 62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3%	−1 ▼ IA 43.8%	+1 ▲ IA 68.8%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 33.3%	+1 ▲ BS 66.7%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Public awareness of formal GBV laws more than doubled, rising from 17.6% in 2023 to 35.4% in 2025.
- Willingness to use formal justice systems rose from 41.4% to 53.3%, while reliance on informal channels dropped from 52.1% to 46.6%.
- Witness safety perceptions improved significantly, with those feeling safe to testify rising from 39.3% to 51.1%.

Areas of Concern

- Zero convictions secured under VAPP Law during the 12-month assessment period, with all cases still in progress.
- Public knowledge GBV-related conditions fell from 60% in 2024 to 24.3% in 2025.
- Awareness of legal aid services collapsed from 49% to 26.1% despite services expanding to all 17 LGAs.
- Public awareness of GBV education programs declined dramatically from 47% to 19.9% as funding constraints forced suspension of activities.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The Enugu State Ministry of Children, Gender Affairs, and Social Development, in collaboration with South Saharan Social Development Organization, with support from Ford Foundation, set up a review commission in July 2025 to assess and update the Enugu State VAPP Law.
- Secured signing of a bylaw against GBV by the traditional rulers' council chairman.
- Produced and distributed VAPP law materials translated into English, Pidgin, and Igbo.

Access to Legal Justice

- A Survivor Legal Aid Network was established in June 2025, engaging 12 pro bono lawyers and formalizing MoUs across six LGAs to strengthen legal support for GBV survivors.
- In July 2025, the Enugu State Ministry of Children, Gender Affairs, and Social Development partnered with UNICEF to train 160 community-based child protection volunteers across three LGAs to strengthen grassroots detection and response to child abuse and GBV.

Support Services

- Provided economic support in "sympathetic" cases through the Commissioner's intervention with the state's First Lady.
- Established GBV desk officers in each LGA to coordinate referrals and reduce travel burden for rural survivors.

Information and Awareness

- Convened a major gathering of women from all 17 LGAs at Okpara Square in August 2024 to discuss GBV.
- Produced VAPP law booklets translated into English, Pidgin, and Igbo for distribution at community events

Change Spotlight

To overcome obstacles like distance and transport costs, the Ministry of Women Affairs deployed trained GBV focal persons in all 17 LGAs. These local officers serve as first responders, handling complaints and coordinating referrals, thus reducing the need for survivors to travel to Enugu for assistance. This decentralized approach has yielded measurable results, with the ministry reporting 18 new GBV cases in a single day during the assessment period. Previously, survivors spent ₦6,000-₦7,000 on transport from villages like Enugu Ezike to the capital; now, they can walk to their local offices for immediate help.

The model has also sped up response times, allowing cases to be logged in communities rather than waiting for survivors to travel to Enugu. As one ministry official put it, survivors can now report directly to trained local government focal persons.

Enugu State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 60.8%

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 ■



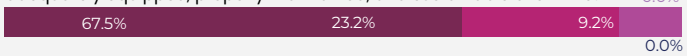
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?



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

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



■ 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 ■



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

Enugu State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 60.8%

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



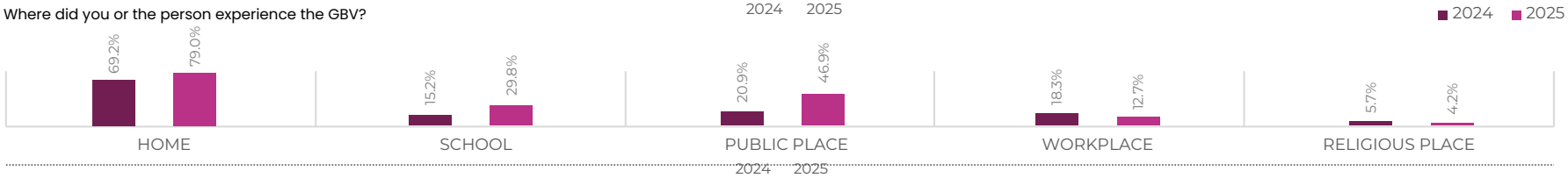
84.6%

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

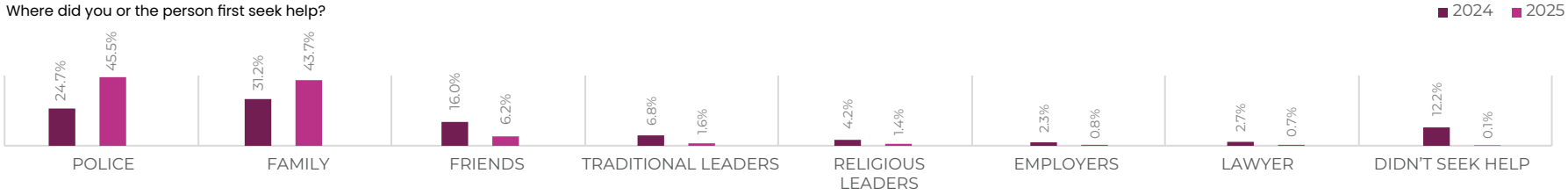
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



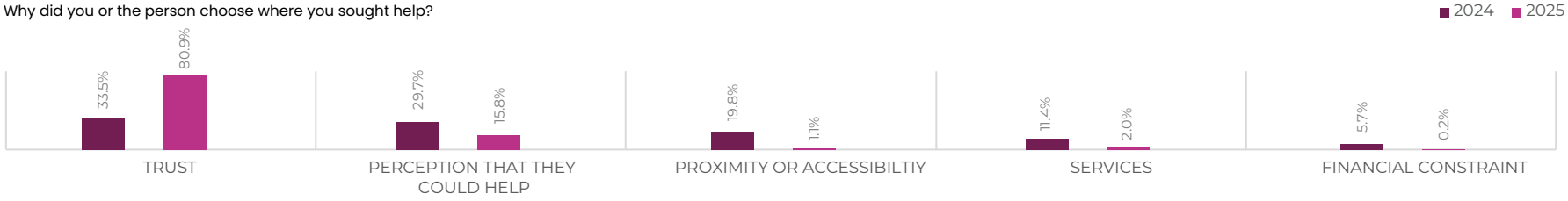
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?

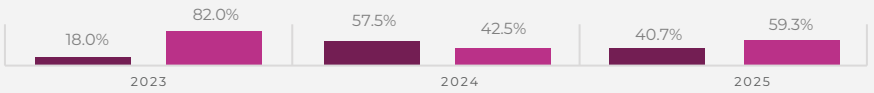


Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?

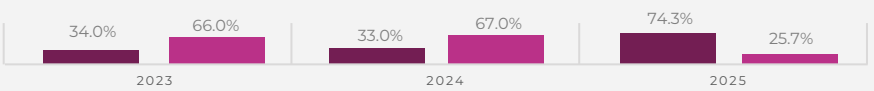


LAWS AND POLICIES

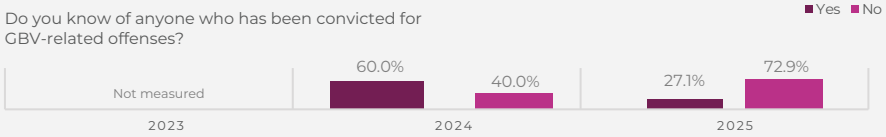
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

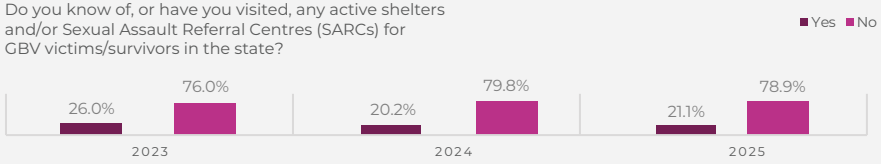


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

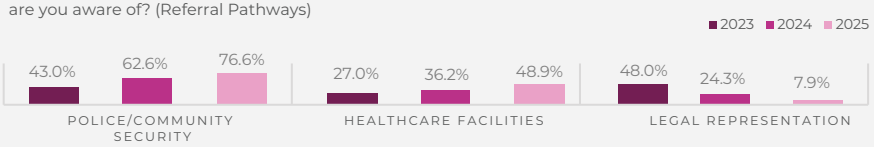


SUPPORT SERVICES

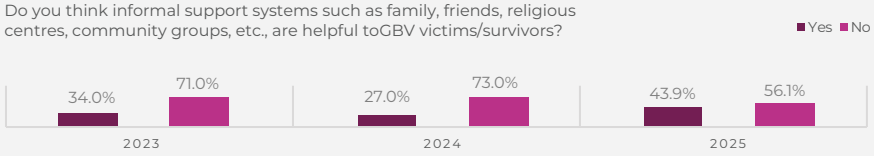
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

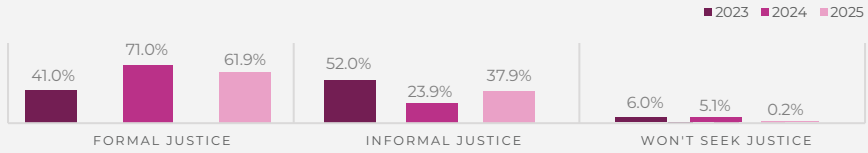


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

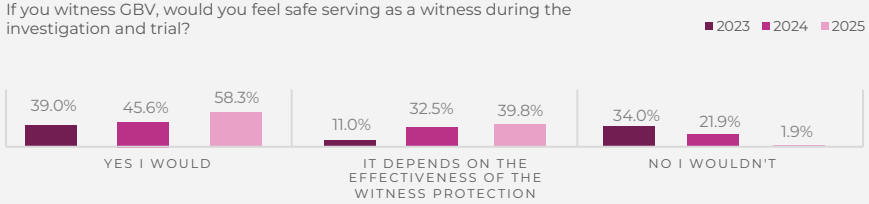


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

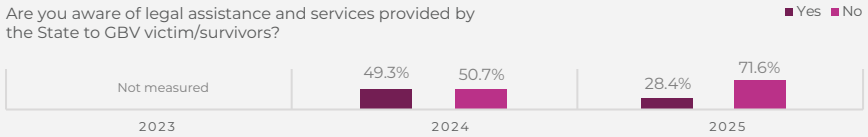
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

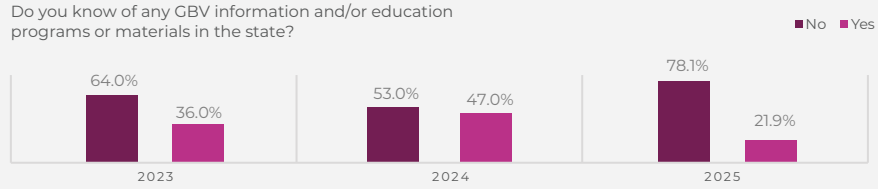


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

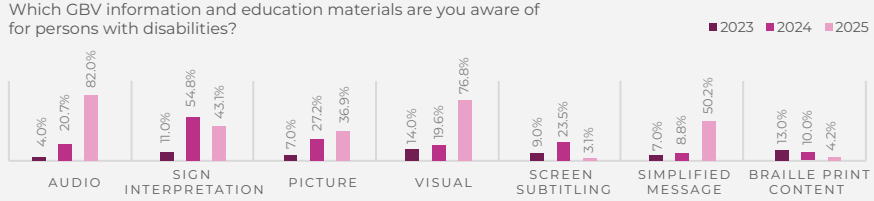


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

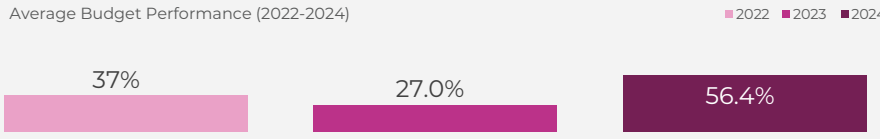


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

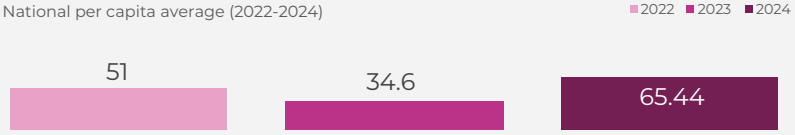


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Enugu State has enacted key legal frameworks to address GBV, most notably the VAPP Law, domesticated in 2019. While the law retains core elements of the federal Act, public awareness remains low: only 40.7% of residents are familiar with it. Perceptions of the law's effectiveness are split, with 49.5% seeing it as effective and 50.5% not. This skepticism likely stems from weak enforcement and the limited visibility of legal outcomes.

Convictions under the VAPP Act are rare. The Ministry of Justice reported no concluded cases within the assessment period, with all prosecutions still in progress. Legal Aid representatives and FIDA attributed delays to corruption, interference by perpetrators' families, prolonged trials, and frequent out-of-court settlements. Only 27.1% of respondents know of a GBV conviction, reinforcing the perception that justice is often elusive.

In contrast, informal systems enjoy broader public confidence. Although only 37.2% of residents are aware of customary or religious mechanisms addressing GBV, 74.3% believe these systems are effective. This preference may reflect their cultural familiarity and accessibility, despite known shortcomings in delivering accountability. Stakeholders noted that informal settlements often lead to case withdrawals, and that harmful traditional practices still persist. Examples include property disinheritance of widows, forced remarriage to deceased husbands' relatives, and public shaming rituals.

Some progress was reported. The traditional rulers' council has signed a bylaw against GBV, and officials report that female genital mutilation has been "completely eradicated." However, harmful religious messaging remains a barrier, as some faith leaders reportedly advise women to "endure and pray" rather than seek protection or legal redress.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, public awareness of formal GBV laws increased overall, from 17.6% to 35.4%, peaking at 57.5% in 2024. This increase aligns with reported sensitization efforts across all 17 local government areas. The Ministry of Women Affairs confirmed conducting awareness programs, capacity building trainings, and community sensitization sessions in every LGA, including a major gathering of women from all 17 LGAs at Okpara Square in August 2024. Civil society organizations have also contributed by producing and distributing VAPP law materials translated into English, Pidgin, and Igbo to improve accessibility across literacy levels.

In contrast, trust in customary and religious systems rose sharply, with the proportion of residents who see them sufficient holding steady at 33.6% in 2023 and 33% in 2024, before surging to 74.3% in 2025. This points to a growing reliance on informal mechanisms for GBV response. Stakeholders attribute this trend to faster resolution times and cultural familiarity of traditional justice processes. It also reflects frustration with formal systems, where cases can take months or years without resolution.

Meanwhile, the proportion of residents who knew of GBV convictions dropped from 60% in 2024 to 27.1% in 2025. This decline may reflect fewer publicized convictions or reduced transparency, potentially weakening confidence in formal justice processes.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Residents of Enugu State continue to navigate both formal and informal justice systems for GBV cases, with trust in formal mechanisms remaining fragile. The formal process involves several steps: survivors report to the police, who investigate and remand suspects; case files are then transferred to the Attorney General's office for legal review before proceeding to magistrate courts and, eventually, the High Court. This process can take months, during which complainants often lose interest or opt for out-of-court settlements.

Just over half of respondents (61.9%) say they would turn to police or courts, while 37.9% still prefer informal channels such as traditional or religious leaders. Notably, 75.7% believe informal mechanisms are effective in delivering justice. This aligns with earlier findings showing stronger public confidence in customary and religious responses to GBV. However, stakeholders report that community-level settlements remain common, despite government policy prohibiting mediation in criminal GBV cases.

Willingness to engage with formal processes is cautious. While 58.3% are willing to serve as witnesses in GBV cases, (39.8%) would do so only if there are effective protection mechanisms in place. This caution is justified by reports of threats and intimidation by perpetrators, highlighting the urgent need for stronger witness protection and accountability systems.

Stakeholders report functional Family Support Units or Human Rights Desks exist in some Police Commands (specifically at State CID level), and there is movement toward designated courts, but comprehensive coverage across all commands/divisions and formal designated GBV courts are not yet established.

Legal aid infrastructure exists across all 17 LGAs, including Human Rights Desks in police stations, social welfare departments, and trained GBV focal persons. Civil society organizations such as FIDA, the Legal Aid Council, and various NGOs also provide support, though many report that funding constraints limit their reach. Public awareness of these services remains low at 28.4%, pointing to a critical gap in information and outreach, which may further weaken public confidence in the formal justice system.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Over the three-year period, there is a growing willingness among Enugu residents to engage with formal justice mechanisms for GBV cases. The proportion of those willing to turn to police or courts rose from 41.4% in 2023 to a peak of 71% in 2024, before settling at 61.9% in 2025. At the same time, reliance on informal channels declined from 52.1% in 2023 to 24% in 2024, before rising slightly to 37.9% in 2025, suggesting a fluctuating but overall downward trend, with no complete transition away from traditional systems. This shift coincides with increased training of law enforcement officers on GBV issues. Multiple stakeholders confirmed that police and judicial officers have received training within the past year. Though implementation gaps remain, some officers still blame survivors or favor perpetrators based on gender bias.

Perceptions of safety in serving as a witness improved over time, with 39.3% of residents feeling safe to testify in 2023, rising to 46% in 2024 and reaching 58.3% in 2025. However, concerns about personal risk increased. The share of residents who said they would only participate if strong witness protection measures were in place jumped from 11.4% in 2023 to 32% in 2024, and further to 40% in 2025. This highlights the urgent need to institutionalize safeguards that protect those who come forward.

Meanwhile, despite reports of state-provided legal aid services expanding, awareness of these services dropped sharply, from 49% in 2024 to just 28.4% in 2025. This expanded infrastructure has not translated to increased public awareness, indicating a communication failure rather than service unavailability. It underscores the need for renewed public education and outreach to ensure that legal support is visible and accessible.

Together, these findings affirm earlier observations that informal systems continue to fill critical gaps. They also point to the importance of strengthening formal structures, through better protections, improved visibility, and expanded legal support, to build public trust and ensure survivors can access justice safely and confidently.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Enugu State has only one government-operated SARC located in the metropolis. It operates through collaboration among three ministries: Gender Affairs (counselors), Health (nurses and doctors), and Justice (legal officers), offering free medical, psychosocial, and legal services. The Ministry of Women Affairs provides additional economic support in “sympathetic” cases through the Commissioner’s intervention with the state’s First Lady. However, the concentration of these services in Enugu metropolis creates significant access barriers for rural populations across the state’s 17 LGAs. In addition to the government-run facility, civil society organization WACOL operates a separate SARC, also located in the urban center. Another CSO, Ihuoma Girls Foundation, runs a shelter providing support to survivors. Despite these efforts, all existing facilities remain concentrated in urban areas. Plans exist to establish three additional SARCs in Igbo-Eze North, Awgu, and Nkanu East, but these remain unimplemented.

Only 21.1% of respondents reported they knew of or visited a SARC or shelter, and just 26% were aware of available support services such as medical, legal, psychosocial, or economic aid. These low figures reflect earlier findings of limited public knowledge about state-supported services and reinforce the challenges survivors face in seeking timely, coordinated support.

The state has established a referral system with GBV focal persons in each LGA who receive cases and coordinate with the central ministry. The state supports a hotline for reporting, though it is not toll-free. However, implementation quality varies. While a majority of residents are familiar with reporting through police or community security (76.6%) and to a lesser extent through hospitals (48.9%), awareness of legal representation (7.9%) and support group pathways (7.1%) is extremely low. Some stakeholders described relying on “oral referral” only, admitting the government should provide written materials describing these pathways “to make things easier.”

The role of informal support systems remains strong, with 43.9% of respondents believing these are better than formal services. This mirrors earlier insights around greater trust in community-based structures and religious networks, especially in the absence of widespread, accessible formal services. These informal supports systems offer mixed outcomes for GBV survivors. While growing awareness has improved family and community-level support in some areas, harmful attitudes persist: some religious leaders advise prayer instead of action, and some traditional leaders tell women to return to their family homes. Strengthening and integrating informal and formal systems, through clearer referral pathways, capacity building, and public education, will be essential for improving survivor support and outcomes..

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of active SARC remained consistently low over the three-year period: 26.4% in 2023, 20% in 2024, and 21.1% in 2025. This stagnation is concerning given the critical role SARCs play in supporting survivors with protection, care, and recovery.
In contrast, awareness of formal referral pathways has improved. From 43.0% in 2023, recognition of police and healthcare channels rose sharply, reaching 62.6% and 36.2% respectively in 2024, and further to 76.6% and 48.9% in 2025. This improvement corresponds with deliberate efforts to

strengthen referral mechanisms. The state established GBV desk officers at each LGA, distributed their contact information to communities, and conducted training for law enforcement and healthcare workers on GBV response. UNICEF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender Affairs, trained community-based child protection structures in three LGAs, creating volunteer networks that can make referrals. However, knowledge of legal referral pathways has declined steeply over three years, from 48% in 2023 to 24.3% in 2024, and further down to just 7.9% in 2025. This decline points to growing gaps in access to legal support, echoing previous findings on low awareness of legal aid services.

At the same time, reliance on informal support appears to be increasing. The share of residents who view informal systems, such as help from family, religious centres, and community groups, as helpful rose from 34.3% in 2023 to 43.9% in 2025. This shift may signal both accessibility challenges within formal services and the continued relevance of community networks. The trends underscore the need to expand and publicize formal services while building stronger, more accountable links with informal support systems.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Stakeholders report extensive GBV sensitization efforts, including capacity-building trainings, community outreach, and media campaigns led by the Ministry of Women Affairs across all 17 LGAs. A major event in August 2024 gathered women from all LGAs to discuss GBV prevention and response, while civil society organizations run regular radio and TV programs. Despite these initiatives, awareness remains critically low, only 19.9% of respondents know of any GBV education efforts, highlighting a disconnect between outreach strategies and public engagement.

Among those aware of GBV programs, family and friends (53%) and television (52.1%) were the main information sources, followed by social media (32.2%) and NGOs (20.3%). Traditional media and institutional platforms such as schools, healthcare facilities, and religious centers had minimal impact, signaling missed opportunities to leverage trusted community structures for broader awareness.

Public support for school-based GBV education is strong (98.6%), yet implementation appears inconsistent. While the Ministry of Women Affairs claims GBV content is integrated into Civic Education at primary and junior secondary levels, civil society actors remain unaware or skeptical, suggesting poor visibility and coordination. Efforts to make GBV information accessible to persons with disabilities are growing but limited, with sign language and simplified messaging more common than braille or screen subtitling, leaving critical gaps in inclusive communication.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV information programs declined precipitously from 36% in 2023 and 47% in 2024 to 21.9% in 2025. This erosion occurred despite qualitative evidence of continued IEC production and distribution, suggesting the issue is not material availability but rather dissemination strategy, media placement, or message saturation fatigue.

The usefulness rating of GBV materials showed interesting fluctuation: 71.9% found materials useful in 2023, rising to 74% in 2024, then dropped to 73.5% in 2025 (combining completely and mostly useful categories). This improvement in perceived usefulness despite declining awareness may suggest that recent materials are better designed, more culturally relevant, or more action oriented.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Enugu State allocated ₦340 million to GBV in 2024, representing 0.07% of its total state budget, one of the lowest budget prioritizations among Nigerian states. The state spent ₦191.8 million of the allocated amount, achieving a 56.4% implementation rate, which is relatively better than many states but still indicates underutilization of available resources. In 2024, the state recorded ₦65.44 in per capita spending on women affairs and GBV-related interventions, indicating persistent underfunding relative to need. While the state has established specific GBV budget lines within the Ministry of Women Affairs and relevant ministries, both the low budget allocation and moderate implementation performance suggest limited political prioritization of GBV interventions and the need for stronger advocacy to increase funding and improve service delivery for survivors.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

The 2024 budget marked the first time in the three-year assessment period that Enugu State included GBV-specific line items. These were: “Production and Erection of Billboards on GBV, Child Protection, Mental Health Seminars, and Drug Abuse,” which received an allocation of ₦10 million but recorded 0% execution; and “Equipping the GBV Situation Room in the Ministry of Children, Gender Affairs and Social Development with a Server,” allocated ₦8 million, of which ₦7.1 million was spent, representing an 88.8% performance. The introduction of these GBV-specific line items significantly influenced the state’s overall score in the 2025 budget and spending domain of the Womanity Index. In addition, the state’s score in the budget performance indicator also improved, as budget performance rose substantially from 27.0% in 2023 to 56.4% in 2024, the highest recorded in the South East region.

Per capita spending stood at ₦65.44 in 2024, ₦34.60 in 2023, and ₦51.00 in 2022. Although 2024 reflects an improvement compared to earlier years, the values are critically low and the fluctuations across the period indicate inconsistent investment in GBV-related interventions

Human Angle Stories

A 100-level university student and her friend were gang-raped at a party, and the ordeal was recorded. Before her violation, the survivor was aware that rape is a crime under the law. She also knew about the law in Ekiti that addresses rape, imposing life imprisonment as punishment for perpetrators. This knowledge emboldened her to seek help.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	Only 40.7% of residents are aware of the state's VAPP Law, despite its domestication in 2019 and translation into English, Pidgin, and Igbo.	Deploy trained legal educators to all 17 LGAs with simplified materials in local languages. Prioritize market squares, religious gatherings, and community meetings to reach women and men in rural areas.
	The Ministry of Justice reported no concluded cases within 12 months. Delays are attributed to corruption, out-of-court settlements, case withdrawals, and prolonged trials. Only 27.1% of residents know of any GBV conviction cases.	Designate specialized GBV courts with dedicated judges to expedite case hearings. Implement strict timelines for case progression from arrest to judgment and monitor compliance through quarterly reports.
	Trust in customary and religious laws held steady at 33.6% in 2023 and 33% in 2024, before surging to 74.3% in 2025, while harmful practices such as widow disinheritance and forced remarriage persist in some communities.	Work with trusted traditional and religious leaders to end harmful practices by training them on the VAPP Act and setting clear rules that prevent the settlement of GBV crimes outside the formal justice system.
 Access to Legal Justice	Only 26.1% of residents are aware of available legal aid, down from 49% in 2024, despite services existing across all 17 LGAs through Human Rights Desks, social welfare departments, and GBV focal persons.	Publicize the availability of legal aid more directly by using radio, community outreach, and posters in courts, police stations, and social welfare offices. Clearly explain that survivors can access free legal help and where to go in each LGA.
	While 58.3% are willing to testify, 39.8% would only do so with protection measures. This caution is justified by reports of threats and intimidation by perpetrators, aimed at silencing witnesses.	Establish a robust witness protection program to include, but not limited to, safe houses, police escorts, and financial support for transportation and lost income. Criminalize witness intimidation with mandatory prosecution and publicize penalties to deter perpetrators and their families.
 Support Services	Only one government SARC exists, located in Enugu metropolis, serving all 17 LGAs. Civil society shelters are also concentrated in urban areas.	Fast-track establishment of facilities in Igbo-Eze North, Awgu, and Nkanu East with dedicated budgets, staff deployment, and functional medical equipment. Ensure each serves its senatorial zone to improve geographic coverage.
	Stakeholders identified survivor transportation as "the biggest gap" in support services. Survivors from villages cannot afford the transport fare to Enugu metropolis, resulting in underutilization of existing services.	Provide reimbursements for transportation to SARCs and court appearances. Alternatively, establish mobile service units that rotate through LGAs monthly to deliver medical exams, counseling, and legal consultations.
	43.9% of residents view informal support as helpful, and some religious leaders advise survivors to "endure and pray" while some traditional leaders still facilitate settlements rather than referrals.	Raise awareness among residents about the limits of informal support by engaging religious and traditional leaders in training on GBV referral protocols. Encourage them to prioritize formal referrals over settlements to ensure survivors receive proper assistance.
 Information and Awareness	Awareness fell from 47% in 2024 to 21.9% in 2025, despite stakeholders reporting ongoing activities. Funding constraints forced suspension of media programs, school visits, and community outreach in some areas.	Allocate dedicated annual budget lines for GBV information dissemination across media, schools, and communities. Establish partnerships with private sectors to supplement government funding and ensure program continuity.
	While audio (83.9%) and simplified messaging (56.6%) have moderate reach, braille (4.1%) and screen subtitling (3.9%) are rarely used. Sign interpretation is only deployed at physical meetings, not integrated into media campaigns.	Mandate that all television programs include subtitles and sign interpretation. Produce braille versions of key materials for distribution through disability organizations. Partner with radio stations to create audio dramas and call-in shows that reach persons with visual impairments.
 Budget and Spending	Enugu State's GBV allocation of 0.07% of total budget is among the lowest in Nigeria, resulting in per capita spending of just ₦65.44, insufficient to provide adequate services to survivors across the state.	The Ministry of Women Affairs should develop a costed plan detailing funding needs for survivor services and present it during the next budget cycle to justify increasing GBV allocation to at least 0.3% of the state budget.

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Federal Capital Teritory

Center of Unity

City Gate

FCT Abuja

Population: N/A

N/A | Female | Male | N/A

Overall Grade 55.8%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,027)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■



AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■



AGE

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



DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■



SARCs: 2

Shelters: 6

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

N/A

(This accounts for **0%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

N/A

(This accounts for **0%** of total allocation to the ministry)

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

Per Capita Spending

N/A

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	68.8%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	68.8%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	75.0%
Budget and Spending	N/A	N/A	N/A	–	N/A

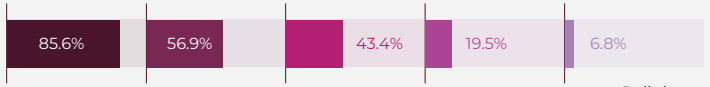
GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

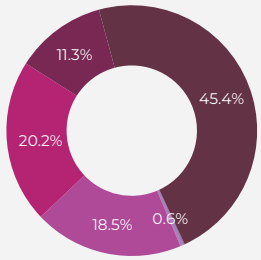


Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

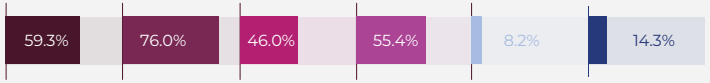


Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution

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

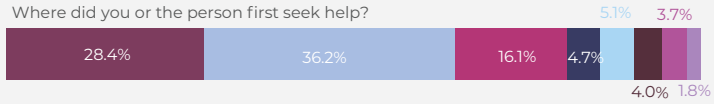


What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



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

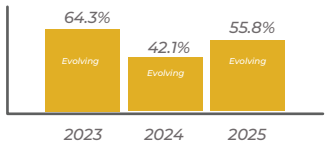
Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
17%	25%

21%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 48.3%	LP 41.7%	+1▲LP 66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 50.0%	ALJ 68.8%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	SS 50.0%	SS 68.8%
Information and Awareness	IA 86.3%	−1▼IA 68.8%	+1▲IA 75.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Preference for formal justice systems more than quadrupled from 16.4% to 77%.
- Increased convictions under the specialized SGBV courts, including two life sentences.
- Recognition of police pathways increased from 49% in 2023 to 89.3% in 2025, while hospital pathways also grew from 9% in 2023 to 42% in 2025.

Quality and usefulness of GBV materials improved sharply in 2025.

Areas of Concern

Even with increased engagement with formal mechanisms, residents viewing customary laws as sufficient more than doubled, from 30% in 2023 to 69% in 2025.

- Awareness of legal assistance services stagnated at 47%.
- Knowledge of SARCs and shelters remained critically low.
- Reliance on witness protection nearly doubled, from 15% in 2023 to 28% in 2025, while the framework remains weak.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Expansion of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act to broaden the definition of rape to include conflict-related sexual violence under Federal High Court jurisdiction, and recognition of all forms of genital mutilation with extended protections for men

Access to Legal Justice

- Expanded provision of legal aid and pro bono services by the Legal Aid Council, FIDA, and NGOs, including psychosocial support and referrals to SARCs and shelters.
- Establishment of six specialized Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) courts across Kuje, Zuba, Jabi, Apo, Kwali, and Maitama.
- Appointment and training of GBV-designated judges to strengthen judicial capacity.

Support Services

- Expansion of shelters from four in 2023 to six in 2025, and SARCs from one in 2023 to two by 2024, sustained into 2025.
- Improved collaboration among service providers (police, FIDA, NGOs, healthcare institutions) to deliver medical, psychosocial, legal, and vocational support.

Information and Awareness

- Legal Aid Council, FIDA, and NGOs intensified outreach in schools, markets, and rural communities, collaborating with traditional and religious leaders to bridge statutory frameworks and cultural norms.
- Increased engagement with schools through gender clubs and assemblies.

Change Spotlight

Between 2023 and 2025, six specialized courts for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) were established in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) to address delays and accountability in handling GBV cases. These courts responded to demands from survivors and advocates for a justice system prioritizing GBV issues. By 2025, they achieved four convictions, including two life sentences, increasing survivors' confidence in reporting cases.

Trust in the formal justice system rose significantly, from 16.4% in 2023 to 76.8% in 2025. This development not only improved legal outcomes but also fostered cultural change regarding GBV accountability in the FCT.

FCT GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 55.8%

LAWS AND POLICIES

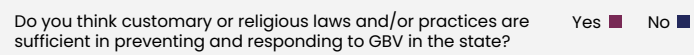
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?

Yes ■ No ■



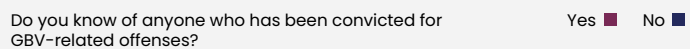
Do you think customary or religious laws and/or practices are sufficient in preventing and responding to GBV in the state?

Yes ■ No ■



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

Yes ■ No ■



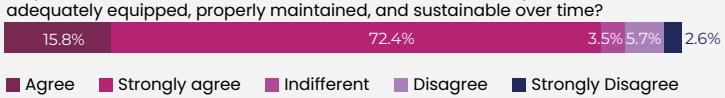
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

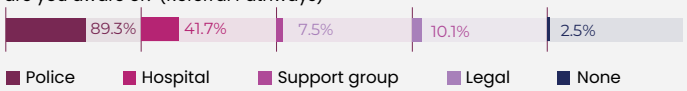
Yes ■ No ■



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)



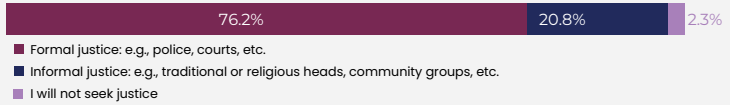
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

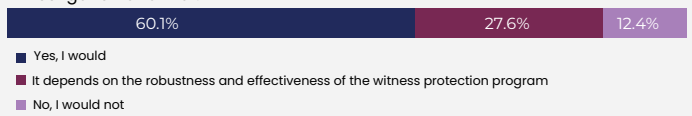


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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?

Yes ■ No ■



INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

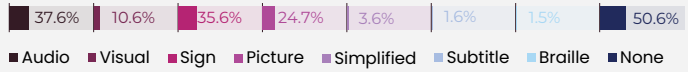
Yes ■ No ■



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



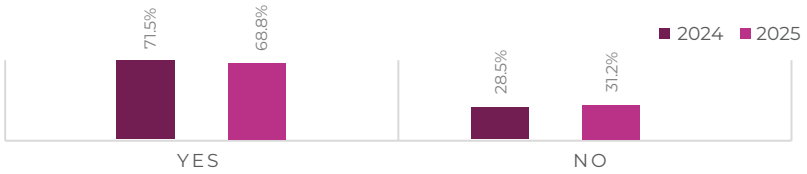
Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



FCT GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 55.8%

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

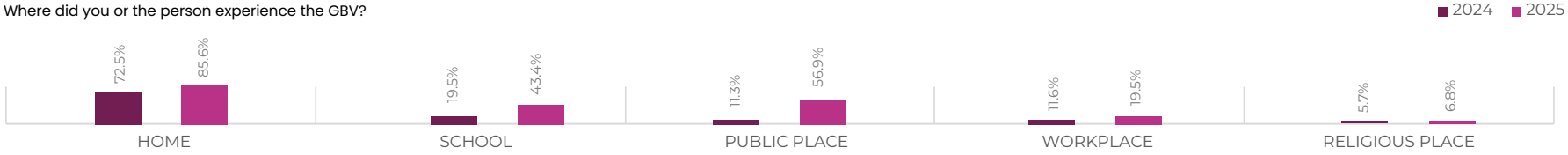


68.8% of Federal Capital Territory population have either experienced GBV or knows someone who have experienced GBV

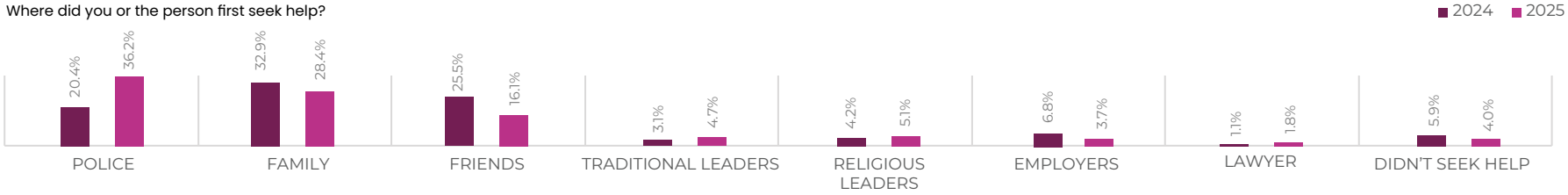
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



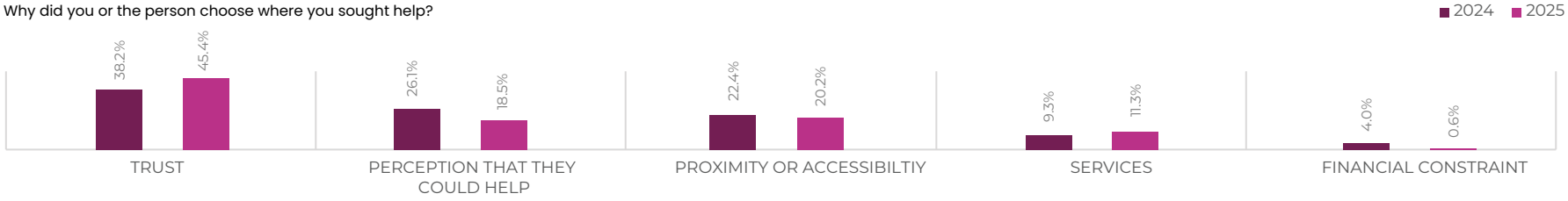
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

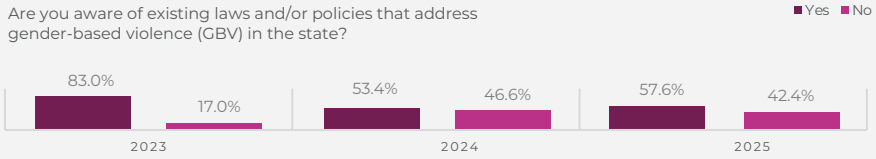


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

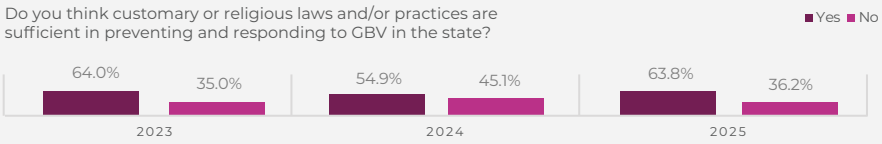
Overall Grade 55.8%

LAWS AND POLICIES

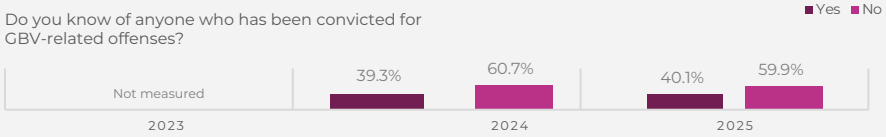
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

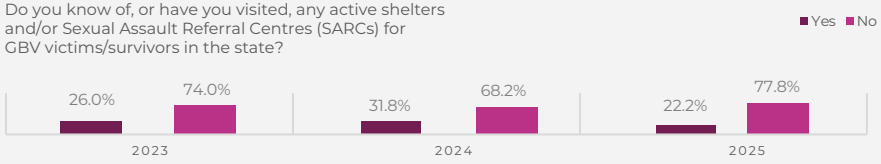


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

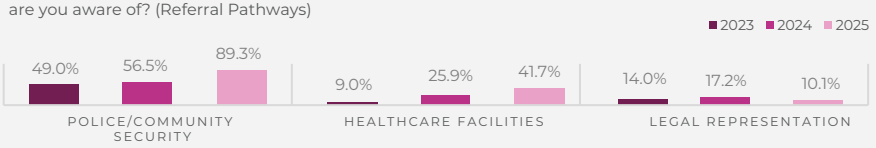


SUPPORT SERVICES

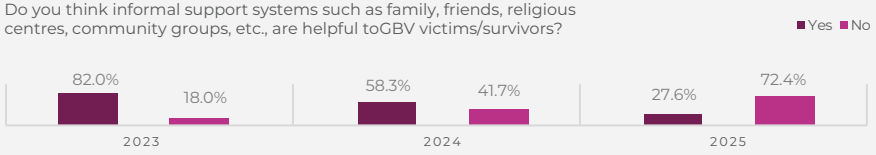
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

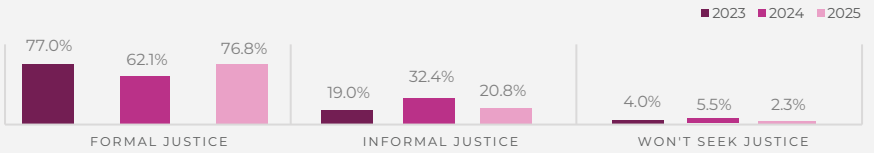


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

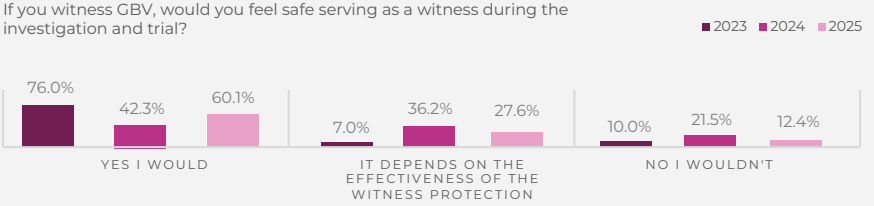


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

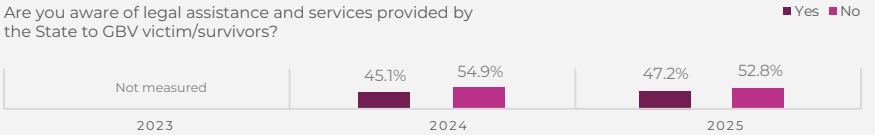
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

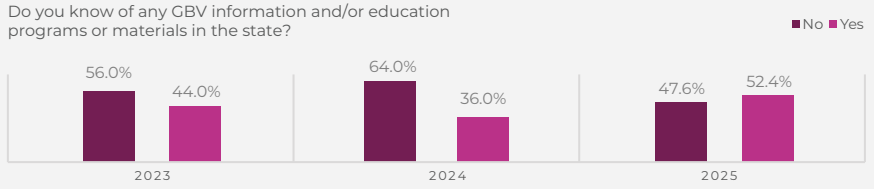


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

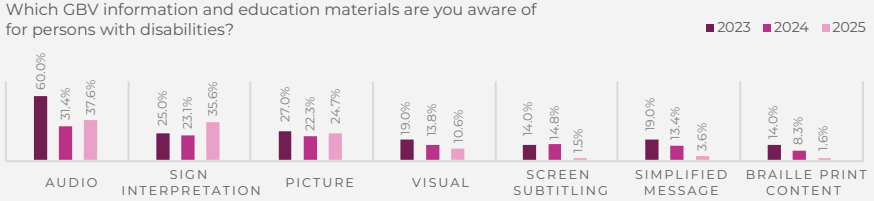


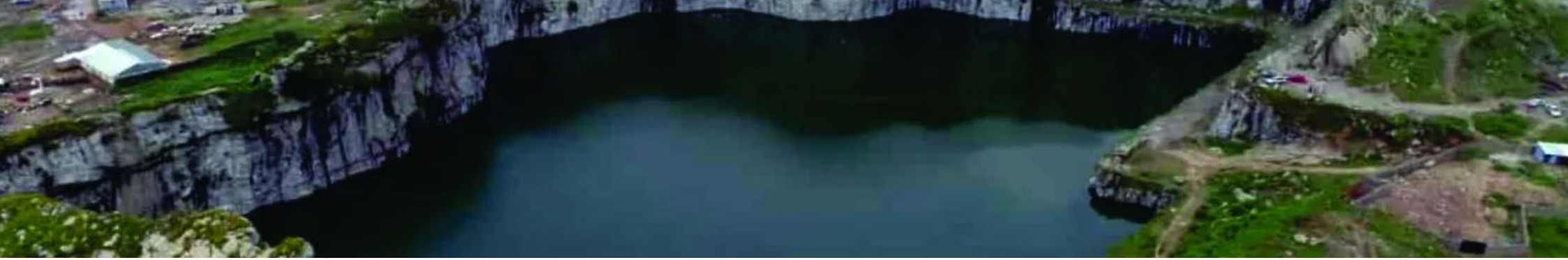
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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?





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

The VAPP Act remains the primary legal framework, with its expanded scope covering conflict-related sexual violence, genital mutilation, and broader definitions of rape. However, awareness remains uneven: 57.6% of FCT residents knew about laws protecting against GBV, while 42.4% did not. As a stakeholder observed, "many communities remain unaware of how these laws apply to them," particularly in rural councils.

Six specialized SGBV courts were established in Kuje, Zuba, Jabi, Apo, Kwali, and Maitama to fast-track cases, and at least four convictions, including two life sentences, were secured in the past 12 months, marking concrete progress toward accountability. However, stakeholders highlighted persistent delays in the justice system. The Legal Aid Council noted that "our legal system is slow, with frequent adjournments and instances when the court does not sit," which delays justice delivery and frustrates survivors. Additional challenges include corruption and weak follow-through, which continue to undermine trust.

While harmful customary and religious practices persist in some communities, they are not widespread. Enforcement of the VAPP Act is strengthening, with targeted training and legal provisions aimed at discouraging interference by traditional and religious leaders in GBV cases. Practices such as the Aliku system and breast ironing still occur, but stakeholders noted they are declining due to ongoing public sensitization and increased legal awareness.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

While awareness of GBV laws dropped from 83.0% in 2023 to 53.4% in 2024 before recovering slightly to 57.6% in 2025, the proportion of people who believe customary and religious laws are sufficient moved from 64% in 2023 to 54.9% in 2024, before increasing to 63.8% in 2025.

Despite more people now knowing that the formal system secures convictions, people still express confidence in the effectiveness of informal justice mechanisms. For these residents, customary systems continue to offer faster, more accessible, and culturally familiar alternatives, even when they may not deliver meaningful justice or protection. This suggests that while formal systems are gaining ground, they have yet to fully meet community expectations or overcome long-standing barriers to access.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

While most FCT residents (76.8%) say they would prefer to seek justice through formal legal systems, significant gaps in awareness and protection continue to limit their ability to do so effectively. Many survivors are unaware of where to access legal support, which often leads them to rely on informal mechanisms, not out of preference, but due to lack of information. The Legal Aid Council confirms this trend, noting that survivors frequently turn to community structures first simply because formal options are inaccessible.

The Legal Aid Council operates four offices in the FCT, while FIDA has extended its reach to all six Area Councils through paralegal networks. However, geographic distance still poses a challenge, especially in remote areas like Kuje, where support is often limited to phone consultations rather than in-person assistance. These logistical barriers complicate access to justice for vulnerable populations.

Although most residents were willing to serve as witnesses, a substantial proportion made their participation conditional on witness protection. Court officials acknowledge that this framework remains weak, and FIDA has emphasized that fear of reprisals continues to discourage survivors—even when legal aid is available.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

The period shows a clear shift toward formal justice systems. Preference for formal mechanisms more than quadrupled, while those saying they would not seek justice at all dropped significantly. This suggests that efforts to strengthen courts and formal reporting pathways are beginning to change how communities view their options. While confidence in testifying recovered in 2025 after a sharp drop in 2024, reliance on witness protection nearly doubled over the period, indicating that survivors increasingly view their safety as dependent on protections that remain inadequately developed. Overall, willingness to engage with formal systems is growing, but it comes with clear conditions that the system has not yet fully met. Awareness of legal assistance services barely improved, and many survivors still do not know that help exists or how to access it.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

By 2025, the FCT has two SARCs, one government-owned at Bwari General Hospital and another managed by an NGO, Cece Yara, in Wuse II. There are also six shelters, mostly run by NGOs. Although these services exist, many residents had never visited or even heard of a SARC or shelter (77.8%). Rural and remote area councils like Kwali and Abaji are especially underserved. Survivors in these areas face serious challenges, including long travel distances and poor transport options.

To improve access, the Primary Health Care Board has trained gender focal persons in 62 Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) across the FCT. Each of the six Area Councils also has a gender desk officer to help coordinate services. These PHCs offer medical care, psychosocial support, legal referrals through partnerships with the police and civil defense, and vocational training to help survivors rebuild their lives.

The Ministry of Justice confirmed robust referral pathways connecting medical services (hospitals and SARCs), legal services (FIDA, NAPTIP, Legal Aid Council), psychosocial support, and shelter placement. This coordination helps ensure that survivors receive the full range of support they need, as long as they are aware of where to go.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, there were notable shifts in how people in the FCT engaged with GBV services and support systems. Awareness of shelters and SARCs remained low and showed no significant improvement (26% in 2023 and 22% in 2025), a trend attributed to overreliance on mass media awareness, thereby limiting localized outreach. However, awareness of formal reporting channels improved significantly, though this represents knowledge of entry points rather than specialized facilities.

Residents increasingly know that police and hospitals can help with GBV cases but remain largely unaware of where specialized SARCs and shelters are located or what services they provide. A civil society actor and court officials noted that while police and hospital linkages are stronger in urban areas, survivors in remote councils often “have nowhere to turn.”

Trust in informal support systems such as family and religious leaders, to provide comprehensive support declined sharply, from 82% to 27.6%, pointing to a shift in attitudes and a growing realization that informal structures are unable to provide comprehensive support services needed by GBV survivors.

Information and Awareness

Budget Analysis 2024

The FCT have adopted a multi-channel approach to GBV awareness, combining both digital and offline strategies. The Education Secretariat uses school magazines, signage, and WhatsApp platforms to reach students and staff, while FIDA complements this with detailed radio discussions on the VAPP Act. However, these mass media approaches have not adequately reached grassroots communities. In 2025, just over half of respondents (52.4%) reported awareness of GBV sensitization programs, while 47.6% had no exposure.

Campaigns were mostly tied to major events such as the 16 Days of Activism, International Family Day, or Children’s Day. While these create spikes in visibility, they limit consistent, community-based sensitization, helping explain why almost half of respondents had no exposure.

Schools have shown potential as channels for raising awareness through gender clubs and assemblies, GBV topics are discussed as extracurricular activities. As one stakeholder noted, ‘learners now speak out and also serve as GBV vanguards in their respective schools.’ However, GBV and child sexual abuse education remain outside the formal curriculum, despite strong public demand for its inclusion (99.4%).

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Awareness of GBV education programs increased modestly from 44% in 2023 to 52% in 2025. In contrast, perceptions of the quality and impact of the content rose sharply, from 53% to 90% over the same period. Government sources attributed this to better-targeted messaging and increased involvement of schools and youth groups.

Inclusivity for persons with disabilities remained limited. By 2025, awareness of sign interpretation and audio content improved, but awareness of braille, subtitling, simplified messages, and picture-based content remained very low. A civil society group acknowledged these gaps, explaining that while some organizations introduced ramps and sign interpretation, many lack expertise to develop fully disability-inclusive programming. .

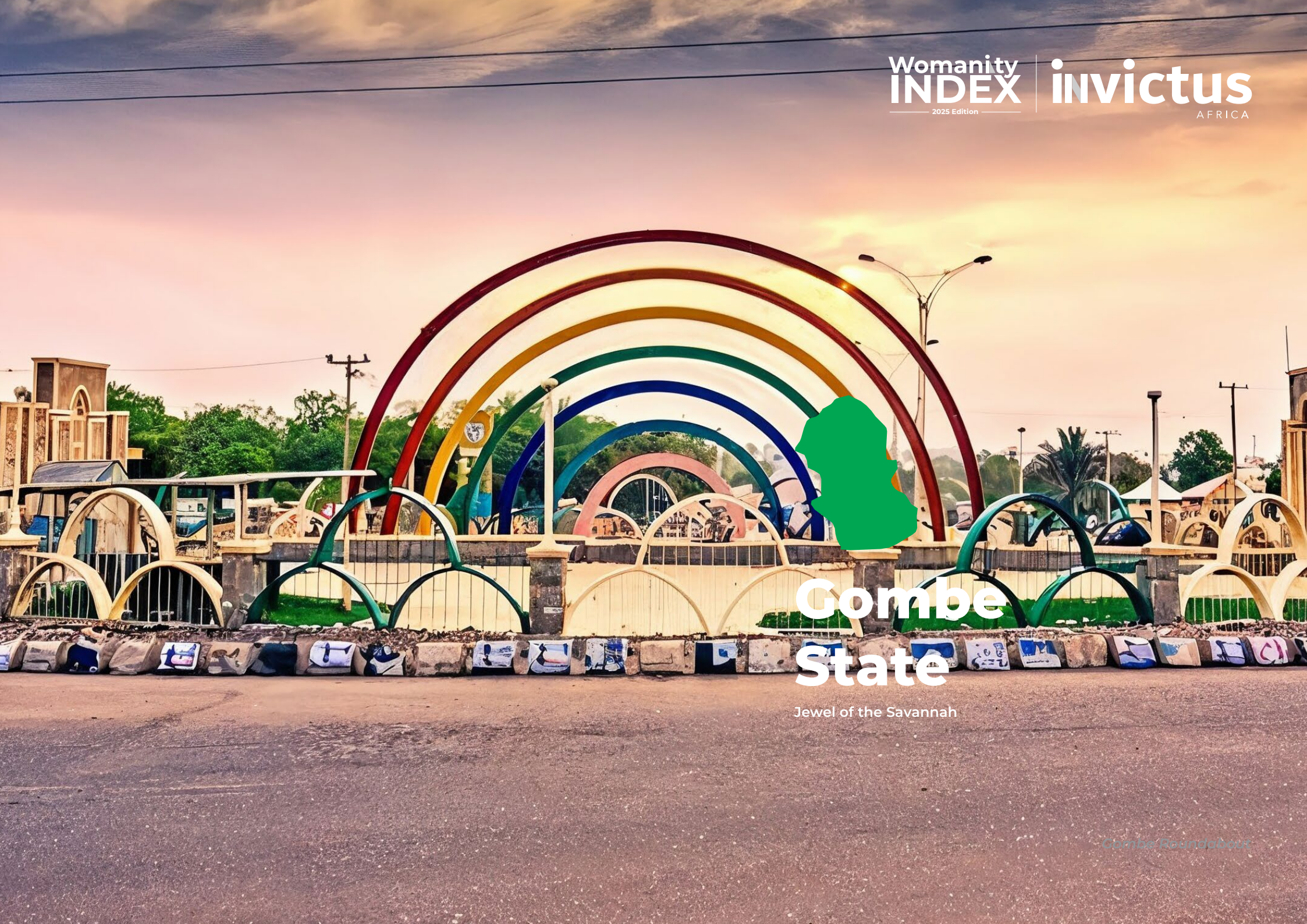
Human Angle Stories

Between the ages of nine and eleven, Mrs. Christiana was repeatedly sexually abused by a relative of her aunty’s husband. As a young girl, she lacked the awareness of the right authorities to report to; she also feared the consequences her report would have on her aunt’s marriage. Instead, she chose to keep quiet and endure the burden on her own. As a young victim, there was no support to help her navigate the horrifying situation.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Awareness of GBV laws dropped from 82.1% (2023) to 53% (2024), recovering slightly to 58% (2025), indicating inconsistent sensitization.	Develop sustained, year-round legal awareness campaigns including community dialogues, school programs, and localized outreach in rural councils.
	Residents viewing customary and religious laws as sufficient more than doubled from 30% to 69% (2023-2025), despite increased formal convictions.	Organize joint awareness sessions with traditional and religious leaders, and legal professionals. These sessions should help the public understand the benefits of formal justice systems while respecting cultural values.
Access to Legal Justice	While 76.8% prefer formal justice systems, only 47% are aware of legal assistance services. Survivors approach community structures first because they do not know where to find formal support.	Establish visible legal aid desks at police stations, hospitals, and community centers, with clear signage and trained personnel to guide survivors through available services and referral pathways.
	Legal aid services are available but remain concentrated in urban areas, leaving rural councils underserved.	Expand legal aid to rural areas through mobile clinics, stronger coordination with CSOs, and dedicated state funding to scale up pro bono services.
	Reliance on witness protection nearly doubled (2023-2025), yet the framework remains weak, and fear of reprisals continues to deter survivors.	Strengthen witness protection by allocating resources for safe houses, relocation, psychosocial support, and confidential communication channels. Ensure survivors are informed at first contact.
Support Services	Awareness of shelters and SARCs remained low and showed no significant improvement (22.2% in 2025), despite the increased number of facilities.	Increase public awareness through targeted campaigns, digital service directories, and stronger coordination between shelters, SARCs, and health facilities.
	Shelters and SARCs are expanding but remain concentrated in urban centres, leaving rural women underserved.	Strengthen mobile outreach services to provide interim support in rural and underserved areas while infrastructure expands.
	Recognition of police pathways rose to 89.3% and hospital pathways to 42% (2025), but awareness of legal and psychosocial referrals remained low.	Standardize referral protocols across police stations and hospitals. Train frontline officers and healthcare workers to actively connect survivors to SARCs, legal aid, and psychosocial support.
Information and Awareness	Only 52.4% reported awareness of GBV sensitization programs (2025). Campaigns remain event-based, limiting sustained sensitization.	Shift to continuous, community-embedded awareness programs through town halls, market outreach, and partnerships with local organizations.
	GBV materials remain poorly inclusive for persons with disabilities: braille (1.6%), simplified messages (3.6%). NGOs lack expertise in disability-focused programming.	Develop materials in accessible formats (braille, pictorials, and simplified texts). Train NGOs, CSOs, and government agencies on inclusive communication, and allocate dedicated funding to support disability-focused programming.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | Invictus AFRICA



Gombe State

Jewel of the Savannah

Gombe Roundabout

Gombe State

Population: 4,207,190

48.2% Female | Male 51.8%

Overall Grade 65.0%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,025)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

63.4% | 36.6%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

49.4% | 50.6%

AGE

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

15.3% | 39.3% | 26.7% | 11.9% | 5.1% | 1.8%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

14.8% | 85.2%

SARCs: 1

Shelters: 1

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦1.10bn

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

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦159.59m

(This accounts for **14.5%** of total allocation to the ministry)

14.5%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

88.3% | 11.7%

Per Capita Spending

₦78.74

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	68.8%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	75.0%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	75.0%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	25.0%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

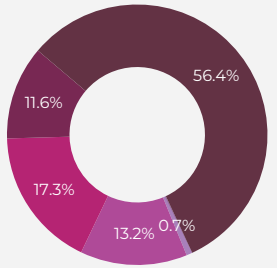
34.1% | 65.9%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

60.4% | 19.3% | 20.3% | 16.4% | 11.7%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

35.9% | 21.3% | 39.1% | 25.9% | 7.0% | 8.3%

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

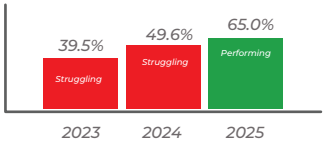
Where did you or the person first seek help?

24.0% | 28.4% | 8.3% | 28.1% | 5.2% | 0.7% | 3.4% | 1.8%

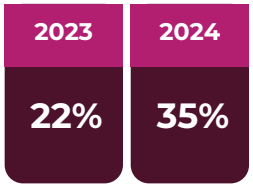
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ I did not seek help ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



25%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 25.0%	+1 ▲ LP 58.3%	+1 ▲ LP 75.0%%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 68.8%	ALJ 68.8%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	SS 50.0%	+1 ▲ SS 75.0%
Information and Awareness	IA 25.0%	IA 37.5%	+2 ▲ IA 75.0%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 33.3%	-1 ▼ 25.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Public confidence in formal GBV laws remained relatively strong at 74.7%, with 59.6% aware of specific legal provisions.
- Legal aid services expanded across all 11 LGAs through partnerships with NGOs and development partners.
- Awareness of hospital-based GBV reporting increased from 30.2% to 60.1%, reflecting improved visibility of healthcare entry points.

Areas of Concern

Public preference for informal justice systems more than doubled (24.7% to 51.5%), while preference for formal channels dropped from 70.8% to 48%

Awareness of GBV convictions declined from 75% to 55.7%,

- Willingness to testify as a witness fell from 60.9% to 49.9%, while fear of testifying increased from 15.8% to 32.7%.
- Overall awareness of GBV programs remained stagnant (50.5% to 53.1%) despite reported expansion of activities.
- No designated GBV courts or judges have been appointed, and witness protection mechanisms remain undeveloped.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The Attorney General presented an amendment to the Penal Code before the State House of Assembly to harmonize GBV sentencing with VAPP law provisions.
- The Ministry of Justice submitted a memo to the Governor requesting establishment of the VAPP implementation committee as mandated by law

Access to Legal Justice

- The state developed a comprehensive GBV referral pathway document containing contact information for all service providers across health, security, legal, and social services in all 11 LGAs.
- The Legal Aid Council, Human Rights Commission, and Ministry of Justice expanded free legal services, supported by partnerships with NGOs and development partners.

Support Services

- A Sexual Assault Referral Centre was established at the State Specialist Hospital in 2024 with UNICEF support, providing centralized medical, legal, psychosocial, and security services.
- The Ministry of Health trained GBV focal persons in all 24 secondary health facilities and primary health care centers to provide immediate care and coordinate referrals.

Information and Awareness

- The state broadcast GBV awareness programs through four radio stations (Gombe Media Corporation, Vision FM, Progress FM, and Amana FM) and television, including call-in programs for public engagement
- The Ministry of Education, in partnership with CGGE and the AGILE project, delivered school-based sensitization, debates, and seminars.

Change Spotlight

In 2024, Gombe State, with UNICEF's support, established its first Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) at the State Specialist Hospital, integrating essential services into one location. Survivors can access medical care, legal assistance, psychosocial support, and security services all under one roof, eliminating the need to visit multiple departments.

The SARC strengthens the referral pathway by serving as a clear entry point for survivors. With providers connected through a WhatsApp platform, response times and coordination have significantly improved. State officials highlight the system's effectiveness compared to previous years. Ongoing sensitization and plans to expand SARC coverage to other senatorial districts are crucial for maximizing its impact.

Gombe State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 65.0%

LAWS AND POLICIES

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

Yes ■ No ■

59.6% | 40.4%

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

Yes ■ No ■

78.6% | 21.4%

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

Yes ■ No ■

55.7% | 44.3%

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 ■

21.1% | 78.9%

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

58.7% | 15.7% | 8.4% | 8.7% | 8.4%

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

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

52.9% | 60.1% | 15.3% | 3.6% | 1.7%

■ 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 ■

62.3% | 37.7%

ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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

48.0% | 51.5% | 0.5%

■ 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?

49.9% | 17.5% | 32.7%

■ 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

52.3% | 47.7%

INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

Yes ■ No ■

53.1% | 46.9%

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

41.9% | 27.9% | 21.5% | 8.6%

■ 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?

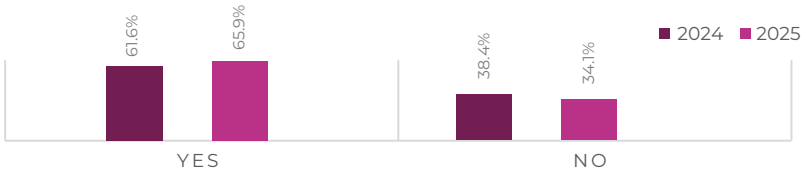
51.7% | 21.5% | 28.3% | 28.4% | 3.6% | 8.4% | 6.8% | 9.0%

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

Gombe State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 65.0%

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



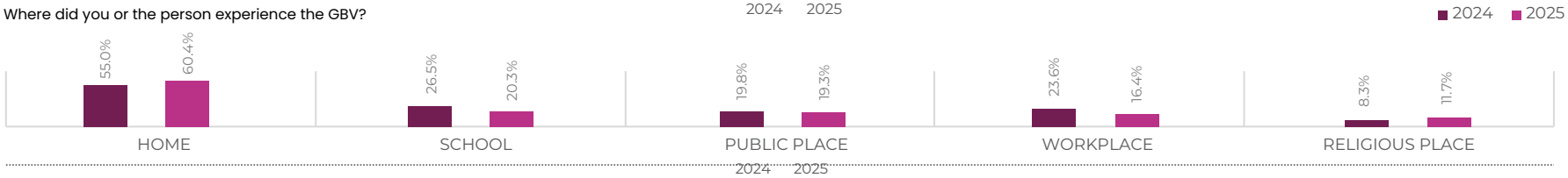
65.9%

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

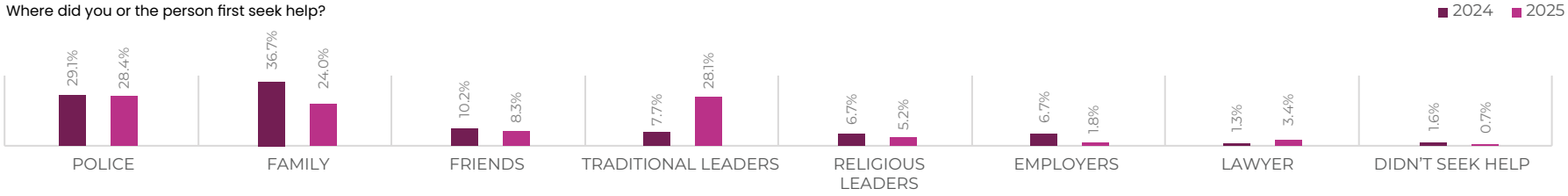
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



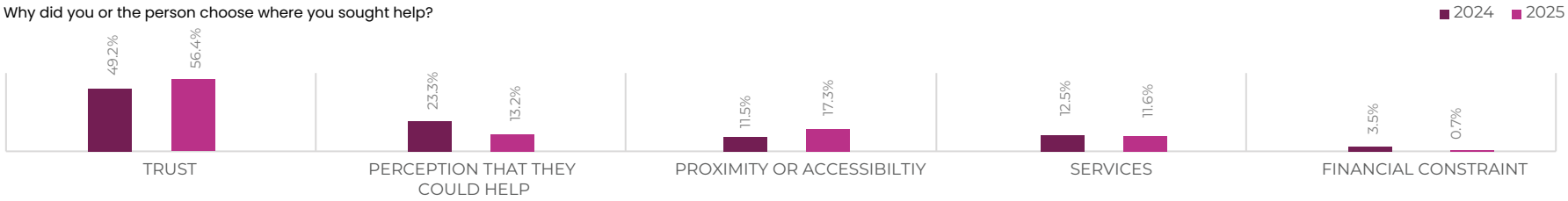
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

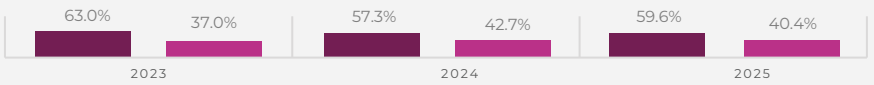


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

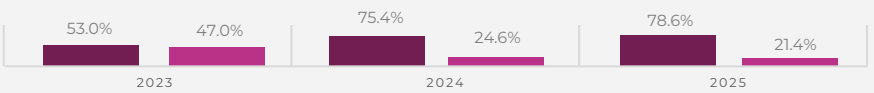
Overall Grade 65.0%

LAWS AND POLICIES

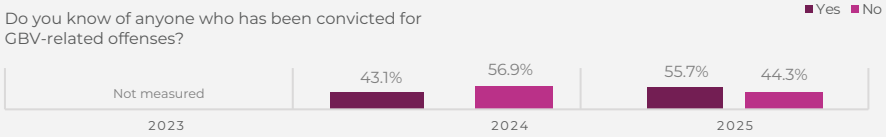
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

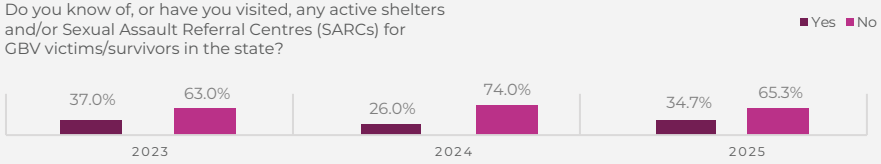


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

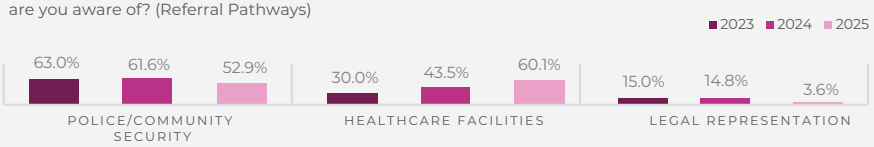


SUPPORT SERVICES

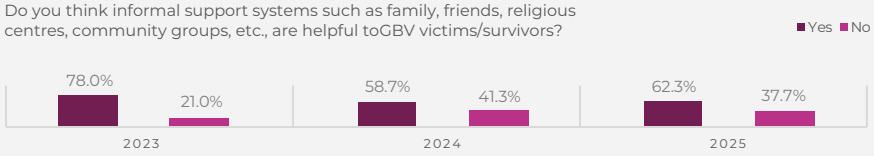
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

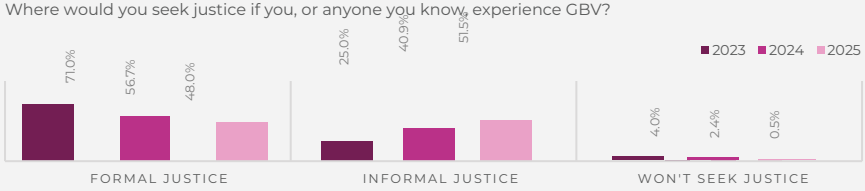


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

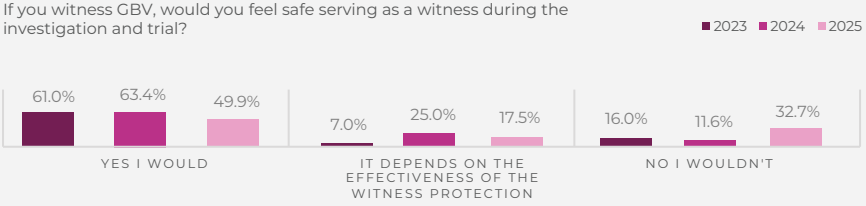


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

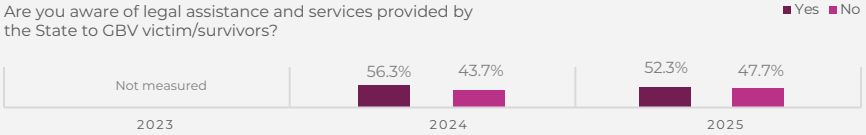
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

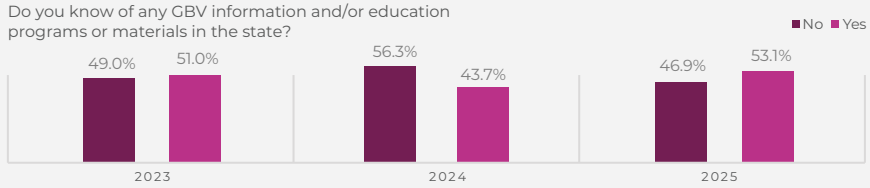


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

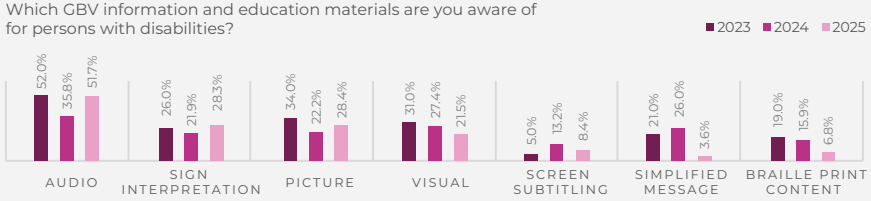


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

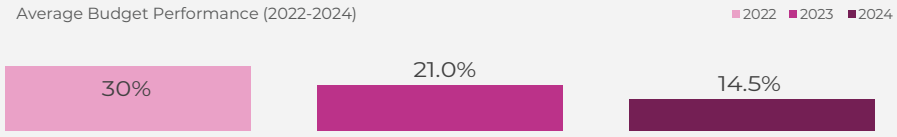


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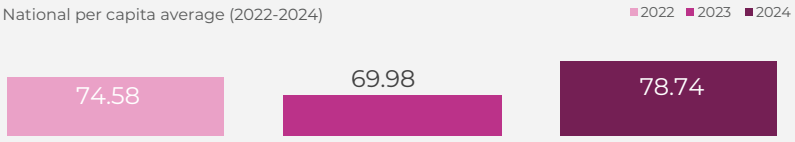


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

In Gombe State, both formal and informal legal systems continue to shape the response to GBV. The formal legal framework includes the VAPP Law, the Child's Right Law, and the Penal Code. The state's VAPP law mirrors key provisions of the federal VAPP Act of 2015. In early 2025, the Attorney General submitted an amendment to the Penal Code to align sentencing with the VAPP law, mandating a minimum of 14 years, or life imprisonment for cases involving minors. This amendment is still awaiting passage.

Despite these legal provisions, implementation gaps persist. Stakeholders noted that perpetrators are often not given the sentences required under the VAPP law. Additionally, the committee mandated by the VAPP law to monitor implementation has not yet been established, although a memo has been submitted to the Governor for action. These gaps may be contributing to public concerns about enforcement.

Still, public confidence in the formal legal system remains relatively strong. In 2025, 74.7% of residents believed that existing GBV laws are effective and sufficient, and 59.6% were aware of specific legal provisions. Over half (55.7%) reported knowing of GBV-related convictions in their communities. Although exact conviction numbers were unavailable, state officials confirmed that convictions have increased, largely due to improved awareness and reporting. FIDA also noted that more cases are reaching court and delivering "some form of justice for survivors."

At the same time, customary and religious laws remain deeply embedded in community responses. A majority of residents (65.1%) are familiar with these informal systems, and 78.6% consider them helpful in addressing GBV. Their popularity may reflect perceptions of accessibility and cultural relevance, especially in areas where formal services are limited. The state has taken steps to engage these systems constructively. Traditional and religious leaders across all 11 local government areas received training on GBV, sexual health, and reproductive rights. Officials acknowledged that stigma and silence remain major barriers but noted that these leaders are now more vocal in condemning GBV.

The coexistence of formal and informal systems presents both opportunities and challenges. While informal mechanisms can support survivors at the community level, they may also produce inconsistent outcomes or fall short of legal standards.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Trend analysis indicates a notable shift in the legal landscape, with informal systems gaining prominence. Between 2023 and 2025, public awareness of formal GBV laws fluctuated slightly, declining from 63% in 2023 to 57% in 2024, then rising to 59.6% in 2025. Perceptions of customary and religious laws as effective tools increased from 53% in 2023 to 75.4% in 2024, also rose to 78.6% in 2025. This shift may reflect growing reliance on community-based mechanisms, possibly driven by limited visibility of enforcement outcomes. Awareness of GBV-related convictions rose from 43.1% in 2024 to 55.7% in 2025, suggesting a weakening link between public trust and the formal justice system.

These trends align with stakeholder concerns about inconsistent sentencing and delayed implementation of oversight structures. To rebuild trust and improve outcomes, the state may need to improve transparency around legal processes and strengthen collaboration with community leaders. Doing so could help bridge the gap between legal frameworks and people's lived realities, ensuring that survivors are protected, and justice is delivered.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

In 2025, public preference for seeking justice in GBV cases was nearly evenly split between formal channels such as the police or courts (48%) and informal mechanisms like traditional, religious, or community leaders (51.5%). This strong reliance on informal systems is reinforced by the large proportion of residents (69.9%) who consider them helpful in securing justice for survivors.

The state has developed a comprehensive GBV referral pathway document containing contact information for all service providers across health, security, legal, and social services in all 11 local government areas. State officials described this pathway as "very effective" and "more coordinated" than in previous years. FIDA reported "profound improvement" in case handling, with cases now followed from police stations through prosecution to court representation. However, enforcement challenges persist, including bureaucratic bottlenecks, interference from survivors' families who sometimes try to truncate cases, occasional compromises with law enforcement agents, and insufficient personnel to handle the volume of cases, particularly given that most work is done pro bono.

Limited engagement with formal justice systems may be linked to safety concerns. While 49.9% of residents said they would feel safe testifying in GBV cases, 32.7% expressed fear, and 17.5% said their willingness would depend on the effectiveness of the witness protection measures offered by the state. State officials acknowledged that witness protection mechanisms have not been robustly developed, despite recommendations from previous assessments calling for witness protection programs to increase prosecution rates.

Legal aid services are available across all 11 LGAs through various channels including the Legal Aid Council, Human Rights Commission, the Ministry of Justice's dedicated department, FIDA, and trained paralegals. Awareness of state-provided legal aid remains moderate, with 52.3% of respondents aware of such support. However, the nearly equal share of residents (47.7%) who remain unaware underscores the need for stronger outreach. Stakeholders report that coverage is uneven: better access exists in Gombe LGA, Akko, Kwami, Yamaltu-Deba, Billiri, Kaltungo, and Balanga, while Nafada, Funakaye, and Dukku remain underserved due to distance and poor infrastructure. Without clear information on available legal assistance, survivors may be less likely to access formal justice.

The state currently has no designated GBV courts or judges, and there are no family courts. While judicial officers received training on GBV and the VAPP law through IPASS in Kano over a year ago, the absence of specialized courts means cases are handled through the general court system.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

The assessment period recorded a clear shift in preferences toward informal justice systems including traditional leaders, religious heads, and community groups, in GBV cases. In 2023, over 70% of residents preferred formal channels for addressing GBV cases, but this declined to 57% in 2024 and further dropped to 48% by 2025. At the same time, preference for informal systems more than doubled between 2023 and 2025, rising from 24.7% in 2023 to 41% in 2024, and further to 51.5% in 2025.

Confidence in participating as a witness also declined. In 2023, 60.9% felt safe testifying in GBV cases, this rose slightly to 63% in 2024 but dropped to 49.9% in 2025. The share of residents who said they would not participate rose from 15.8% in 2023 and 12% in 2024 to 32.7% in 2025, while more people said their decision would depend on the strength of witness protection. These trends suggest growing concerns about retaliation and limited faith in protective measures.

While legal aid services are expanding due to partnerships with NGOs and development partners, awareness of state-provided legal assistance stagnated at 56% in 2024 and 52.3% in 2025, suggesting that outreach efforts need to be strengthened to match service availability.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

State officials confirmed the presence of one SARC at the State Specialist Hospital, established in 2024 with UNICEF support. The state also has a renovated shelter (Safe Haven) at the Ministry of Women Affairs, handed over by UNFPA in 2016, and UNFPA-supported shelters and safe spaces for girls and women.

Public awareness of these support facilities remained low in 2025. Only 34.7% of residents said they had heard of or visited a SARC or shelter. Awareness of other types of support, such as medical, legal, psychological, or financial help, was slightly higher at 49.9%, although a substantial proportion of the population remain unaware.

All police stations now have GBV Desk Officers, and a toll-free hotline has been introduced to support reporting. The Ministry of Health also confirmed that all 24 secondary and primary health facilities are aware of GBV and either provide services directly or make appropriate referrals. These institutional efforts are reflected in public knowledge, with most residents aware they can report cases at hospitals (60.1%) or the police (52.9%). But knowledge of other referral options, like support groups (15.3%) and legal aid (3.6%), was still very poor.

Many people continue to rely on informal support from family, friends, religious leaders, or community groups (63.3%). While formal services offer more complete and professional care, these are not always the first choice. This shows the need to better connect formal services with trusted community structures. .

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

From 2023 to 2025, awareness and use of SARCs remained low and mostly unchanged, with 37.1% of residents aware in 2023, 26% in 2024 and 34.7% in 2025. This shows that many people still do not know about these formal support services. While fewer residents now believe informal support systems are effective (78% in 2023 compared to 59% in 2024 and 62.3% in 2025), most still prefer to turn to family, friends, or community groups instead of formal services.

Awareness of ways to report GBV cases also changed during this time. Fewer people knew about police reporting (dropping from 62.9% in 2023 and 61.6% in 2024 to 52.9% in 2025), while more became aware of reporting through hospitals from 30.2% in 2023 to 43.5% in 2024 and 60.1% in 2025. In contrast, knowledge of legal reporting options fell sharply from 15.0% in 2023 and 14.8% in 2024 to just 3.6%. These shifts show that while healthcare access is improving, the legal system is becoming less visible. Clear and continuous public education is needed to make all reporting options known and accessible.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

The state uses a multi-pronged approach for GBV education, involving schools, communities, media platforms, and partnerships with civil society organizations. Public education is carried out through radio jingles broadcast on four stations (Gombe Media Corporation, Vision FM, Progress FM, and Amana FM) that cover the entire state, with programs in Hausa and Fulfulde to reach diverse populations. Television programs, including call-in shows for clarifications, are also used. The state leverages coalitions to amplify messaging. Awareness activities are usually intensified during the annual 16 Days of Activism Against GBV, and implementation are more intensive in urban and semi-urban areas like Gombe, Billiri, Kaltungo, and Akko.

Just over half (53.1%) of residents in Gombe reported knowing about GBV information and awareness

programs in the state. While this marks a modest majority, the remaining 46.9% who remain unaware point to the need to expand outreach and sensitization efforts. Most people who had access got their information from radio (55.9%), followed by television (29.4%) and social media (29.4%). Other sources like schools, healthcare facilities, NGOs, religious centers, and workplaces were rarely mentioned, showing that community and institutional channels are underused. Addressing funding constraints and infrastructure challenges will be key to improving the reach and consistency of these programs.

There is strong public support for teaching GBV and child sexual abuse education in schools, with 85.5% agreeing it should be included at all levels. The state currently integrates GBV and child sexual abuse prevention topics into the formal school curriculum at basic and secondary levels through subjects like Civic Education, Social Studies, Basic Science, and Health Education. Implementation faces significant challenges including cultural and religious sensitivities that lead some parents to withdraw children from sessions, limited trained teachers who skip or rush through GBV topics, inadequate teaching aids and age-appropriate materials, student hesitancy to participate due to stigma, and funding constraints.

The state has made efforts to ensure GBV information reaches persons with disabilities and marginalized populations through several formats: radio jingles in Hausa and Fulfulde for those with visual impairments and low literacy, sign language interpreters at major awareness events and workshops, simplified messages and picture-based posters, drama performances and role plays, and oral sensitization sessions in schools for visually impaired learners. However, braille-based GBV materials are not widely available, sign language interpretation is not consistently available at all events or on media platforms, and subtitled video content has not been systematically developed.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of GBV information and education programs stayed mostly average between 2023 and 2025, with no strong improvement Awareness stood at 50.5% in 2023, dipped to 44% in 2024, and rose slightly to 53.1% in 2025, indicating that a large portion of the population continues to lack exposure to these initiatives each year. This disconnect between expanding programmatic efforts, as reported by stakeholders, and stagnant public awareness suggests that campaigns may not be sufficiently sustained throughout the year, or that messaging is not reaching target populations effectively. Officials acknowledged that funding constraints limit the scale and frequency of awareness activities, and that attitudinal challenges among some stakeholders (viewing programs primarily as income opportunities rather than service delivery) affect implementation quality.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Gombe State does not have a specific GBV budget line in its appropriation, indicating that GBV funding is embedded within broader ministry allocations. The state allocated ₦1.10 billion to the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in 2024, representing 0.30% of the state's total budget. However, the state achieved a budget execution rate of 14.5%, disbursing ₦159.59 million in actual GBV spending, which accounted for 0.06% of total state expenditure. This translated to a per capita GBV spend of ₦78.74, placing Gombe among the states with the lowest per capita investment in GBV programming. .

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Gombe State's spending performance within the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development fluctuated over the three-year period. Actual expenditure amounted to ₦159.59 million in 2024 (₦0.00 CAPEX), ₦137.38 million in 2023 (₦0.00 CAPEX), and ₦141.79 million in 2022 (₦2.55 million CAPEX). These figures correspond to total budget performance (personnel, overhead, and capital) of 30.0%, 21.0%, and 14.5% respectively. Gombe State also recorded no GBV-specific budget line items in both 2023 and 2024, further contributing to its low performance. Per capita spending stood at ₦78.74 in 2024, ₦69.98 in 2023, and ₦74.58 in 2022. The figures show minor fluctuations over the three-year period, reflecting relatively stable but consistently low investment in GBV-related interventions.

Human Angle Stories

When 26-year-old Amina Amina first walked into the Gombe SARC, she could barely speak. Her husband's violence towards her had become a daily routine. Her turning point came one evening when she heard a radio program on Amana FM about women's rights and the new Gombe SARC offering free, confidential help. The next morning, she made the journey to Gombe city with a borrowed ₦1,500 in her wrapper. There, she was offered medical, counselling, and legal support were offered together.

Her case was later referred to the Ministry of Justice, where officials helped her file for protection under the VAPP Law (2022). Today, Amina attends weekly trauma-healing sessions at the SARC and volunteers during community sensitizations, sharing her story with other women

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	The VAPP law mandates a committee to monitor implementation, but this committee has not been established despite a memo submitted to the Governor. This gap contributes to inconsistent enforcement and weak accountability.	Establish the VAPP implementation committee immediately as mandated by law. The committee should include representatives from the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Women Affairs, judiciary, law enforcement, and civil society to ensure coordinated monitoring and enforcement.
	Awareness of GBV convictions increased from 43.1% in 2024 to 55.7% in 2025, while perception of customary and religious laws as effective rose from 53% in 2023 and 75.4% in 2024 to 78.6% in 2025, indicating a complex shift in how communities view both formal and informal justice systems..	Publicize GBV convictions through media channels, regularly update the sex offenders register, make it publicly accessible, and consistently communicate enforcement actions to show that perpetrators are held accountable.
 Access to Legal Justice	The state has no designated GBV courts, family courts, or judges assigned to handle GBV cases. All cases go through the general court system, contributing to delays and inconsistent handling.	Establish designated GBV courts and appoint specialized judges in at least three senatorial districts. Provide continuous training for judges and magistrates on GBV laws, trauma-informed approaches, and expedited case management to improve the quality and speed of justice delivery.
	Only 49.9% of residents feel safe testifying in GBV cases (down from 60.9% in 2023 and 63% in 2024), and 32.7% expressed fear. State officials acknowledged that witness protection mechanisms have not been robustly developed despite previous recommendations.	Develop and implement a comprehensive witness protection program that includes physical security measures, confidentiality protocols, safe testimony arrangements, and psychosocial support for witnesses. Publicize these protections to encourage survivors and witnesses to come forward.
	While legal aid is expanding, only 52.3% of residents are aware of the available services. Coverage is concentrated in the state capital and semi-urban areas.	Allocate GBV cases on a pro bono basis to lawyers practicing in each LGA jurisdiction. Strengthen awareness campaigns about available legal services through radio, community dialogues, and GBV Desk Officers at police stations.
 Support Services	Only one SARC exists at the State Specialist Hospital in the capital, serving all 11 LGAs. Public awareness of SARCs remained virtually unchanged (37.1% in 2023, 26% in 2024 and 34.7% in 2025).	Establish at least one SARC in each of the three senatorial districts to improve geographic access. Simultaneously, launch a sustained sensitization campaign across all LGAs using radio, town hall meetings, and community leaders to increase public awareness of existing services and how to access them.
	While 63.3% of residents rely on informal support from family, religious leaders, and community groups, these systems are not consistently linked to formal services. Some traditional leaders have been complicit in aiding perpetrators and truncating justice.	Formalize the integration of informal support systems by establishing regular coordination meetings between government agencies and traditional/religious leaders, providing ongoing training on referral protocols and survivor-centered approaches.
 Information and Awareness	Awareness of GBV programs remained nearly flat (50.5% in 2023 to 53.1% in 2025) despite officials reporting expanded activities. Funding constraints and campaign concentration during 16 Days of Activism limit year-round reach.	Develop a year-round, sustained awareness strategy with dedicated budget allocation. Shift from campaign-driven activities to institutionalized, continuous programming across all 11 LGAs throughout the year.
	GBV topics are integrated into existing subjects, but implementation faces challenges including parents withdrawing children, limited trained teachers who skip topics, inadequate teaching materials, and student reluctance due to stigma.	Train teachers comprehensively on child protection and trauma-informed teaching, engage parents through community sensitization to address cultural concerns, and provide schools with appropriate teaching materials and resources.
	While audio content and some sign language services exist, braille materials are not widely available; sign language is inconsistent, and subtitled videos are not systematically produced.	Produce GBV information in all accessible formats including braille, sign language, and subtitled videos. Partner with disability-focused organizations to design and disseminate materials. Ensure all major awareness campaigns and media programs include accessibility features from the planning stage.
 Budget and Spending	The state lacks specific GBV budget line items for both 2023 and 2024, with consistently low execution rates over the past three years: 14.5% in 2022, 21.0% in 2023, and 14.5% in 2024.	Include at least three dedicated GBV budget lines in the next appropriation, covering prevention, survivor support, and response infrastructure. Conduct quarterly budget performance reviews to identify bottlenecks and work toward achieving a minimum 50% execution rate.



Imo State

Eastern Heartland

Ngwoma Waterfall

Imo State

Population: 6,986,775

50.3% Female | Male 49.7%

Overall Grade 50.0%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,109)*

GENDER — Female ■ Male ■

69.5% | 30.5%

AREA — Rural ■ Urban ■

70.5% | 29.5%

AGE

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

3.7% | 23.6% | 35.0% | 19.9% | 11.5% | 6.2%

DISABILITY STATUS — Yes ■ No ■

8.1% | 91.9%

SARCs: 1

Shelters: 0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦3.45bn

(This accounts for **0.6%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦482.29m

(This accounts for **14.0%** of total allocation to the ministry)

66.2%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ Others ■ (Actual Spend)

19.4% | 39.5% | 41.2%

Per Capita Spending

₦137.11

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	62.5%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	43.8%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	50.0%
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 ■

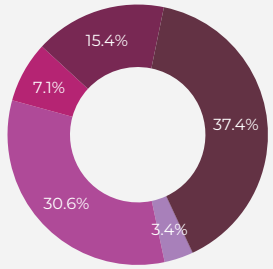
44.4% | 55.6%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

74.2% | 27.1% | 15.2% | 15.9% | 1.5%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

43.3% | 48.6% | 21.1% | 41.5% | 19.8% | 2.8%

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

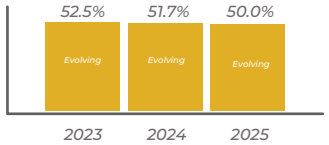
Where did you or the person first seek help?

42.0% | 23.3% | 9.6% | 12.8% | 1.6% | 6.0% | 3.7% | 1.0%

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

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
32%	29%

24%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 90.0%	−2 ▼ LP 58.3%	LP 41.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 56.3%	ALJ 62.5%
Support Services	SS 25.0%	+1 ▲ SS 50.0%	−1 ▼ SS 43.8%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3%	−1 ▼ IA 43.8%	+1 ▲ IA 50.0%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 50.0%	BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- 76.2% of respondents found GBV materials either mostly or completely useful in 2025, indicating increased quality and relevance of information.
- 66.1% of residents preferred formal support services over informal ones, showing trust in formal institutional mechanisms.
- Awareness of the state's SARC increased from 4% in 2024 to 17.9% in 2025—a 13.9% improvement in outreach effectiveness.

Areas of Concern

- Public awareness of GBV laws dropped sharply from 63% (2024) to 44.1% (2025), while reliance on customary laws rose to 48.2%.
- Legal aid services remain concentrated in Owerri; rural LGAs lack functional access to justice and survivor representation.
- The state's only SARC remains under-equipped, and no shelters exist for temporary survivor protection.
- GBV awareness programs remain donor-driven with minimal state budget allocation, threatening program sustainability.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Domestication of the VAPP Law in December 2021, introduction of stronger penalties for GBV crimes, and establishment of the sex offenders register, pending operationalization, thereby strengthening penalties for GBV compared to the Criminal Code.

Access to Legal Justice

- Establishment of Gender Desk Units in all 38 police divisions and five specialized Family Courts in Owerri.

Support Services

- Survivors integrated into First Lady's empowerment schemes.
- Partial setup of a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) provides medical, psychosocial, and legal support but is under-resourced.

Information and Awareness

- Partnerships between IMSUBEB, UNICEF, and CSOs led to teacher training on GBV prevention and inclusion of GBV themes in school subjects.
- Distribution of IEC materials (VAPP law copies, flyers, posters, calendars) supported by NGOs and the Ministry of Women Affairs.

Change Spotlight

Imo State achieved a remarkable milestone in strengthening access to justice for survivors of gender-based violence through the establishment of five specialized Family Courts in Owerri and the deployment of Gender Desk Units across all 38 police divisions. This coordinated initiative led by the Ministry of Justice in collaboration with FIDA, the Legal Aid Council, and the Imo State Police Command has significantly reduced case-handling delays and improved survivor experience in the justice system.

Prior to 2023, GBV cases were handled as general criminal matters, often leading to delayed prosecutions and re-traumatization of survivors. By 2025, the new Family Courts had processed over 40 gender-based violence cases, including three convictions under the VAPP Law, a notable increase compared to just one documented conviction in 2022.

Imo 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 ■



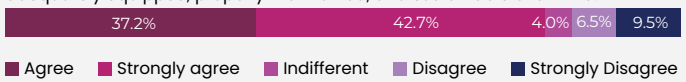
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

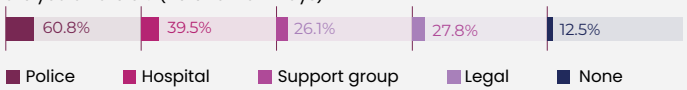
Yes ■ No ■



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)



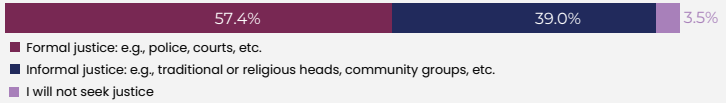
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

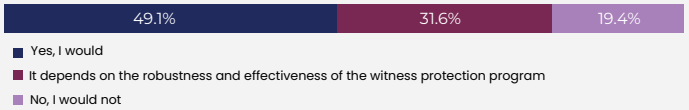


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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?

Yes ■ No ■



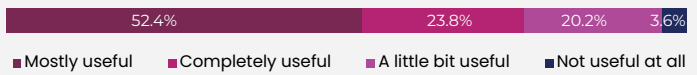
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

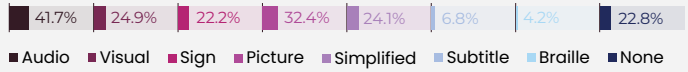
Yes ■ No ■



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



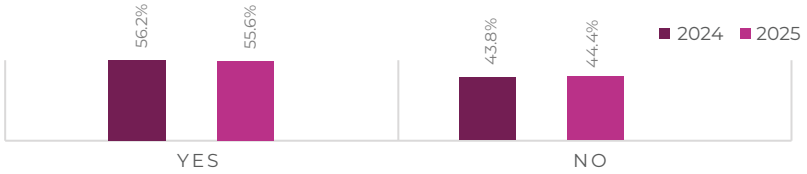
Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Imo State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 50.0%

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



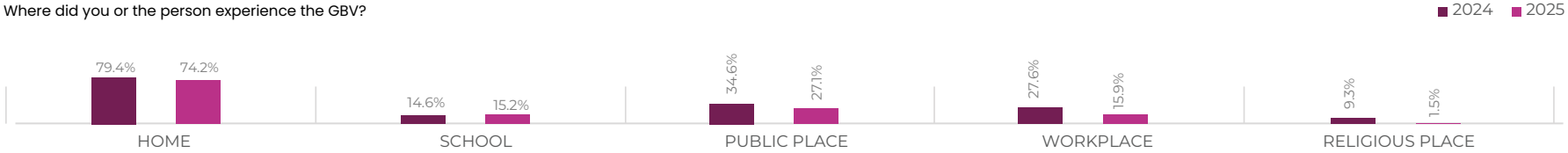
55.6%

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

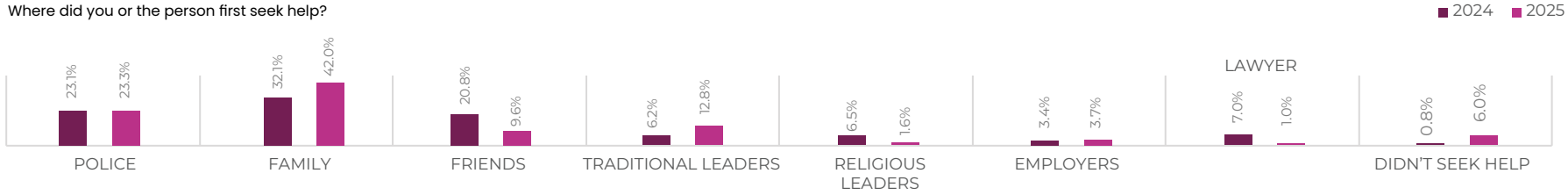
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



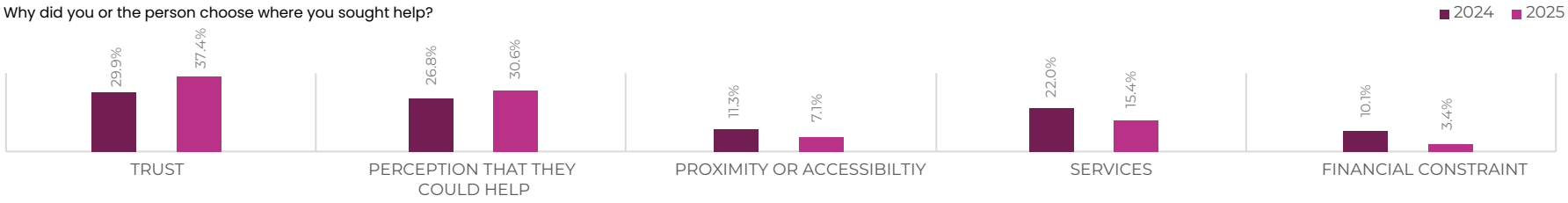
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

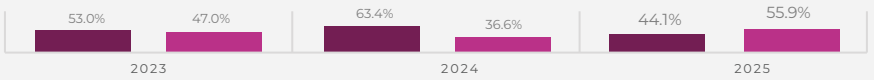


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

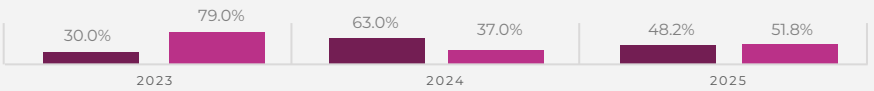
Overall Grade 50.0%

LAWS AND POLICIES

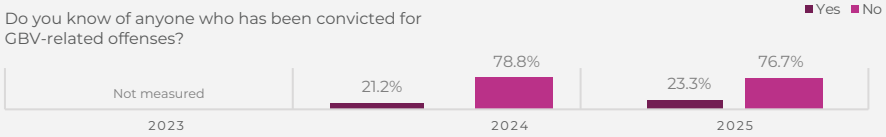
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

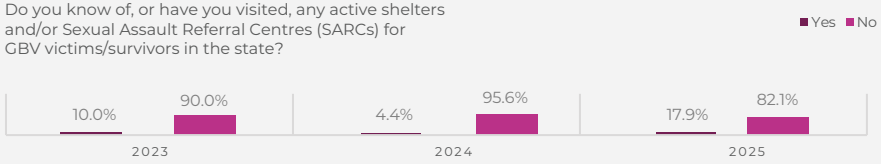


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

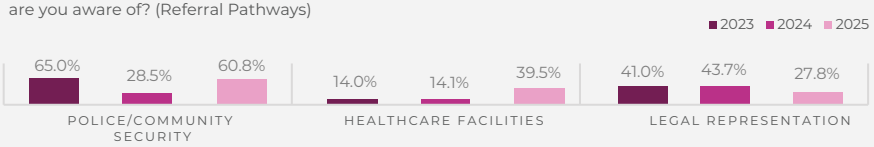


SUPPORT SERVICES

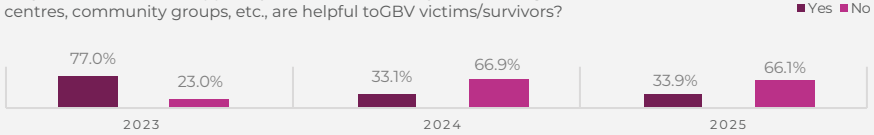
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

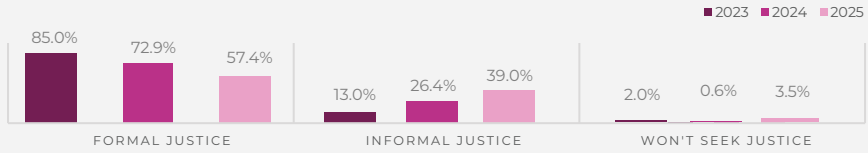


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

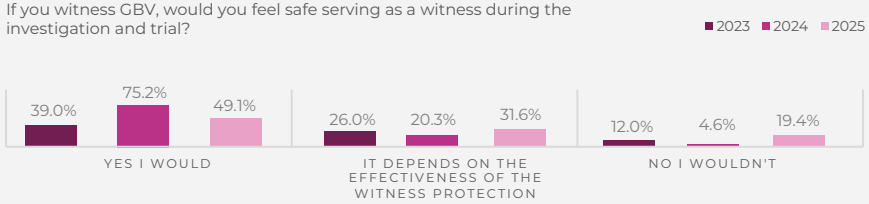


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

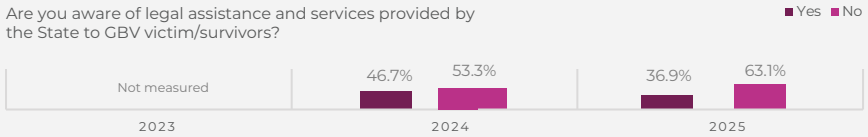
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If you witness GBV, would you feel safe serving as a witness during the investigation and trial?

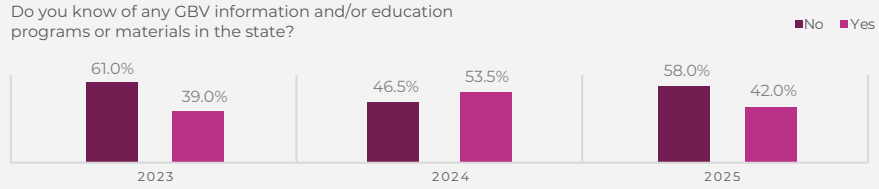


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

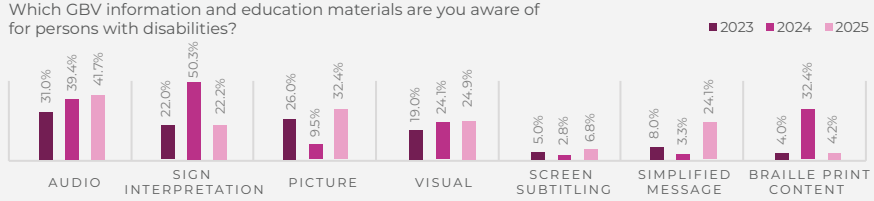


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

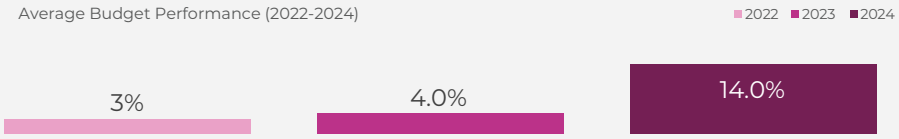


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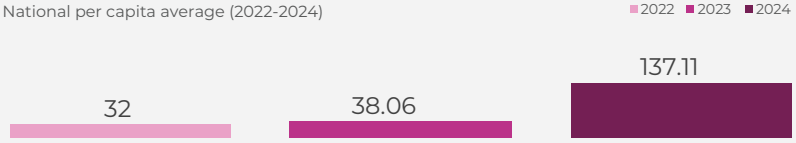


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Imo State has made notable progress in establishing a strong legal foundation to address gender-based violence (GBV) through the domestication of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Law in December 2021, aligning fully with the Federal VAPP Act of 2015. The law broadens the definition of sexual offenses to include emotional, psychological, and socio-economic abuse, criminalizes defilement and domestic violence, and introduces protection orders and a Sex Offenders Register. It complements earlier instruments such as the Female Genital Mutilation (Prohibition) Law (2017) and the Child Rights Law (2004), demonstrating a comprehensive legal approach to GBV prevention and accountability. According to the Ministry of Justice, this expansion represents a major advancement in addressing the complexities of GBV and closing previous legal gaps that hindered convictions.

Despite these policy strides, awareness and public engagement with GBV laws remain modest, with just 44.1% of residents aware of existing frameworks and most information flowing through NGOs, civil society, and media platforms. While more than half of respondents (53.3%) perceive the laws as effective, only 23.3% report knowledge of any convictions, suggesting gaps in enforcement visibility and inter-agency coordination. This is echoed by the Ministry of Justice, who noted that the state currently lacks a centralized system for tracking GBV convictions, making it difficult to assess overall progress. However, an official reported securing three convictions personally in 2025, two for defilement and one for rape. This underscores the need for institutional mechanisms to capture and communicate justices outcomes.

The persistence of customary and religious norms, which 48.4% of respondents acknowledged and over half viewed as unhelpful in preventing GBV, highlights ongoing tension between statutory and traditional systems. Overall, while Imo State's legislative framework is robust, implementation challenges, low public awareness, and cultural resistance continue to limit its full impact, underscoring the need for sustained sensitization, institutional capacity building, and harmonization of formal and customary justice mechanisms.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, there have been significant shifts in the implementation of legal frameworks, policies, and laws addressing gender-based violence (GBV). The state's legal and policy environment is gradually transitioning from reliance on outdated provisions of the Criminal Code to a more inclusive and rights-based GBV framework that emphasizes protection, prosecution, and prevention.

However, despite these progressive legal reforms, public awareness and perception trends show concerning fluctuations. Awareness of GBV-related laws and policies increased from 53% in 2023 to 63% in 2024, but declined to 44.1% in 2025, indicating a substantial drop in awareness. Similarly, the perception of the adequacy of customary and religious laws in addressing GBV has shifted unfavorably. In 2023, 30% of respondents believed these laws were sufficient; in 2024, this fell to 21%, but in 2025 it rose again to 48.2%, suggesting a growing reliance on traditional systems over statutory mechanisms, though 51.8% believes that formal laws and statutory mechanisms are better. In 2024, 63% of respondents reported knowing someone convicted of a GBV offense; however, by 2025, this dropped dramatically to 23.3%, reflecting potential weaknesses in prosecution and conviction rates despite improved legislation.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Access to legal justice for GBV survivors in Imo State reflects steady institutional progress but persistent accessibility gaps. Most residents (57.4%) prefer formal channels such as the police and courts, indicating growing trust in statutory justice mechanisms. However, nearly 40% still rely on informal systems such as chiefs, religious heads, or community leaders, largely due to perceptions of corruption, cost, and procedural delays in formal institutions. Although the state has established Gender Desk Units in all 38 police divisions and expanded family courts to five specialized courts in Owerri to handle GBV-related cases, these facilities remain heavily concentrated in the capital. The Ministry of Justice, Legal Aid Council, FIDA, and NBA Human Rights Committee provide free legal representation, but rural LGAs continue to face insecurity, poor logistics, and low awareness, leaving survivors in remote areas underserved.

Despite the existence of these structures, confidence in enforcement remains weak. Only 36.9% of respondents are aware of state-provided legal assistance, and just under half (49.1%) feel safe testifying in GBV cases. The absence of formal witness protection mechanisms contributes to fear of retaliation and reluctance to pursue justice. Informal settlements by families and traditional leaders continue to undermine formal prosecution, reflecting enduring social resistance to public litigation. Limited training for legal aid officers and judicial staff further constrains the system's effectiveness. Overall, while Imo State has laid important foundations for survivor-centered justice, geographic

inequality, poor enforcement follow-through, and social interference continue to limit equal and timely access to justice.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Access to legal justice for GBV survivors presents a concerning trend. In 2023, 85% of respondents preferred seeking help through formal justice systems, but this declined to 73% in 2024 and further declined to 57.4% in 2025. Conversely, preference for informal justice systems increased from 13% in 2023 to 26% in 2024 to 39% in 2025. Additionally, respondents who would not seek help reduced from 2% in 2023 to 1% in 2024 and increased to 3.5% in 2025. Regarding willingness to serve as witnesses in court, there was a notable decline in confidence. In 2024, 75% of respondents felt safe to testify, an increase from 39% in 2023, but this dropped to 49.1% in 2025.

Furthermore, the number of respondents who believed their testimony would depend on witness protection programs dropped from 26% in 2023 to 20% in 2024 and increased to 31.6% in 2025. Awareness of legal assistance and services provided by the state also showed a decline. In 2024, 47% of respondents were aware, but this dropped to 36.9% in 2025.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Support services for GBV survivors in Imo State remain limited in reach and functionality despite ongoing institutional efforts. The Ministry of Women Affairs manages the state's SARC, which provides medical, psychosocial, and legal support, but operates below optimal capacity due to inadequate infrastructure, staffing, and funding. Stakeholders acknowledged its existence but emphasized that the centre is not fully functional and that the state lacks transit shelters for temporary survivor protection. Formal support services are primarily delivered through FIDA, the Legal Aid Council, and the NBA Human Rights Committee for legal aid; hospitals and NGOs for medical and psychosocial care; and the First Lady's empowerment initiative for limited economic assistance. However, these interventions are largely concentrated in urban areas, leaving rural LGAs underserved.

Awareness and utilization of survivor services remain low, reflecting weak outreach and uneven information flow. Only a minority of residents are aware of SARCs, shelters, or referral mechanisms, with NGOs and social media serving as the main information channels. Despite this, most respondents believe formal support systems such as medical, legal, and psychosocial, are more effective than community-based options, indicating public confidence in structured care when available. Reporting pathways are better established through police and healthcare facilities, yet access to legal and psychosocial referrals remains inconsistent. Overall, while Imo State has laid foundational structures for survivor support, limited coverage, resource constraints, and absence of more SARCs and shelters continue to hinder equal access to holistic, survivor-centred services across the state.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Awareness of the SARC dropped from 10% in 2023 to 4% in 2024, and increased to 17.9% in 2025, while perception of its effectiveness grew from 22% in 2024 to 42.7% in 2025. In 2024, respondents' views on SARC's effectiveness were: 32% Agree, 13% Disagree, 3% Strongly Disagree, and 30% Indifferent. In 2025, these shifted to: 37.2% Agree, 6.5% Disagree, 9.5% Strongly Disagree, and 4% Indifferent, indicating a 5% increase in Agree, 6.5% decline in Disagree, 6.5% increase in Strongly Disagree, and 24% decline in Indifferent. Referral pathways saw significant changes: Police/Community Security declined from 65% in 2023 to 28.5% in 2024 and rose to 60.8% in 2025, Hospital/Healthcare Pathway grew from 14.1% in 2023 and 2024 to 39.5% in 2025, Legal Representation increased from 41% to 43.7% and reduced to 27.8% in 2025, and Support Groups increased from 15% in 2023 to 33.2% in 2024, but declined in 2025 to 26.1%.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public education and awareness on gender-based violence (GBV) in Imo State have grown considerably, driven by partnerships between government institutions and civil society. About 42% of residents reported exposure to GBV awareness programs, with CSOs and NGOs (41.6%) identified as the main sources of information, followed by media platforms such as radio and television. Most respondents found the information useful – 52.4% rated it mostly useful and 23.8% completely useful – reflecting the growing impact of awareness efforts. The Ministry of Women Affairs, FIDA, and NGOs such as Alliance for Africa (AfA) and CLEEN Foundation have conducted community sensitization, outreach during August Meetings, and advocacy on the VAPP Law, harmful traditional practices, and women's rights.

The Imo State Universal Basic Education Board (IMSUBEB), in collaboration with UNICEF and CSOs, has also trained teachers on GBV prevention and integrated related themes into school subjects, although no formal GBV or sexual abuse curriculum currently exists. While workshops and trainings for police and judicial officers have been introduced, they remain limited in scale and frequency.

Accessibility and inclusivity of GBV information remain major challenges. Although 80% of respondents support teaching GBV and sexual abuse education across all school levels, awareness materials are still not fully adapted for persons with disabilities. Data show that 41.7% use audio or spoken content, 32.4% rely on picture-based messages, 24.9% access visual content, and 22.2% use sign interpretation, while only 6.8% engage with subtitled content and 4.2% have access to Braille materials. This indicates that GBV communication is heavily skewed toward non-inclusive media formats, limiting access for people with hearing or visual impairments.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Awareness of GBV information and education programs in Imo State has fluctuated over the three-year period. Awareness of GBV programs improved from 39% in 2023 to 53% in 2024, a 14% increase, but subsequently declined to 42% in 2025, suggesting that early gains in sensitization were not sustained, likely due to reduced outreach and limited funding or program continuity.

Perceptions of the usefulness of GBV information materials have steadily improved overall. In 2023, 34% of respondents found materials "mostly useful," 16% "completely useful," and 24% "not useful at all." By 2024, the proportion describing materials as "mostly useful" had risen to 48%, and in 2025 it reached 52.4%. Similarly, the share of respondents who found GBV information "completely useful" rose from 16% in 2023 to 23.8% in 2025, showing growing confidence in the quality and relevance of available content.

The inclusion of persons with disabilities in GBV information and education has evolved unevenly over the years. In 2023, the use of disability-accessible formats was limited — only 31% of respondents reported using audio or spoken content, 26% used picture-based messages, and 22% relied on sign interpretation, while just 4% used braille materials. By 2024, the use of inclusive formats expanded significantly, with 50.3% using sign interpretation, 39.4% using audio or spoken content, and 32.1% using braille materials, indicating strong progress driven by advocacy and inclusive programming. However, by 2025, usage declined again, as 41.7% reported using audio or spoken content, 22.2% used sign interpretation, and only 4.2% used braille, reflecting reduced consistency and sustainability in providing disability-friendly GBV information channels.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

The "Establishment of a SARC Centre in Owerri" (sic) has been a recurring line item in Imo State's budget. It first appeared with an allocation of ₦200 million in 2022, followed by ₦150 million in 2023, and ₦200 million in 2024. Despite these repeated allocations, no implementation was recorded in any of the three years. Similarly, the "Construction of Three VAPP Buildings in Each of the Zones of the State" appeared in both the 2023 and 2024 budgets, with allocations of ₦100.58 million in each year, yet also recorded no execution.

Budget implementation in the state has been notably inadequate. Although allocations increased from ₦3.10 billion in 2023 to ₦3.45 billion in 2024, actual spending amounted to only ₦129.66 million and ₦482.28 million respectively. The state's budget performance remained very low at 13.99%, although an improvement from 4% in 2023 and 3% in 2023. Per capita spending stood at ₦137.11 in 2024, ₦38.06 in 2023, and ₦32.00 in 2022. The substantial increase in 2024 follows two years of low investment, indicating a marked but irregular rise in fiscal attention to GBV-related interventions.

Human Angle Stories

Shortly after losing her husband, her sister-in-law broke into her house and made away with all her belongings. According to her in-laws, being legally married to her late husband did not count, as she didn't have a child for him before he died. Desperate for justice, she turned to the police, but it yielded no justice. The widow's case was settled after FIDA stepped in. "Before now, I didn't know it was a crime to throw a woman out of her husband's house. Now I know."

Her story reveals the gaps between law and culture; protection and reality. In her community, widowhood without children still invites stigma and dispossession. "There is not enough education about gender-based violence here," she says. "People need to be told what they are doing is wrong."

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Only 3-4 GBV convictions recorded in the past 12 months, attributed to weak referral pathways and limited inter-agency coordination	Establish a centralized GBV case tracking and documentation system across the Ministry of Justice, police, and courts to monitor conviction rates, identify prosecution bottlenecks, and improve enforcement visibility.
	Despite legal prohibitions, harmful practices like female genital mutilation persist in rural communities, with 48.4% of respondents acknowledging customary practices and over half viewing them as unhelpful in GBV prevention	Strengthen community-level enforcement of the VAPP and FGM laws through collaboration with traditional and religious leaders and integrate anti-GBV messaging into existing cultural structures.
	Public awareness of GBV laws declined from 63% in 2024 to 44.1% in 2025, while reliance on customary and religious laws increased from 21% to 48.2%, indicating erosion of formal legal authority	Develop and implement a coordinated state-wide public awareness campaign targeting all 27 LGAs, utilizing mass media, community town halls, and partnerships with traditional and religious institutions to increase knowledge of GBV laws and consequences of harmful practices.
Access to Legal Justice	Legal aid services are concentrated only in Owerri metropolis, with limited or no presence in the remaining 26 LGAs, leaving rural GBV survivors without access to free legal representation	Decentralize legal aid services by establishing functional offices in at least three additional zones (Orlu, Okigwe, and one rural LGA) to expand coverage to at least 50% of LGAs.
	Willingness to testify as witnesses dropped from 75% in 2024 to 49.1% in 2025 due to absence of formal witness protection mechanisms	Develop and operationalize a state witness protection policy that includes safe houses, identity protection measures, and financial support for witnesses in GBV cases to rebuild public confidence in testifying.
	Nearly 40% of residents prefer informal justice systems (chiefs, religious leaders) over formal channels, with informal settlements and family pressure undermining prosecution— "most times the parents don't have that zeal to pursue the matters."	Conduct sustained community sensitization on the dangers of informal settlements, strengthen the authority of Gender Desk Units and Family Courts, and engage traditional leaders as advocates for formal justice processes.
Support Services	The state's only SARC is non-functional and no shelters exist anywhere in the state for temporary survivor protection.	Rehabilitate and fully operationalize the SARC with adequate medical equipment, trained personnel, and dedicated funding, then establish at least two additional SARCs in Orlu and Okigwe zones to improve geographic coverage to 50% of LGAs.
	No structured or streamlined GBV referral pathway exists resulting in survivors navigating services without clear guidance.	Develop and disseminate a standardized GBV reporting and referral pathway document (physical and digital formats) across all relevant MDAs, with clear protocols for each stage from initial report to survivor recovery.
	Support services are concentrated in urban areas with rural LGAs severely underserved; only 17.9% of residents are aware of the SARC despite a 13.9% increase from 2024.	Expand outreach through mobile SARC outreach teams, community health workers, and local radio awareness to improve access to survivor services in rural LGAs.
	Informal support systems (family, religious institutions) are "not very effective" and often undermine survivor protection through forced reconciliation and settlement.	Train and integrate informal support actors, such as religious leaders, community elders, and women's groups, into the formal referral network to enhance survivor protection and discourage harmful settlement practices.
Information and Awareness	GBV awareness programs declined from 53% in 2024 to 42% in 2025, primarily due to over-reliance on NGO funding - "the fund being used for this training... is not from the state government. It's from NGOs."	Allocate dedicated state funding for GBV sensitization programs to ensure sustainability beyond NGO support, targeting coverage of all 27 LGAs through quarterly community outreach, radio jingles in local dialects, and partnerships with traditional institutions.
	No standardized GBV or child sexual abuse curriculum exists; content is fragmented across subjects with inconsistent teacher capacity.	Develop and approve a standardized, age-appropriate GBV and child sexual abuse prevention curriculum for primary and secondary schools, provide mandatory training for all teachers across the state, and integrate comprehensive sexuality education as a standalone subject.
	Accessibility for persons with disabilities is severely limited: only 22.2% use sign interpretation (down from 50.3% in 2024), 4.2% access braille materials (down from 32.1% in 2024), and 6.8% use subtitled content.	Produce and distribute disability-inclusive GBV information materials in multiple formats (braille, sign language videos, audio recordings, pictorial guides, and subtitled content) in partnership with disability rights organizations.
Budget and Spending	Despite repeated allocations over the past three years, ₦150 to ₦200 million for a SARC centre in Owerri and ₦100.58 million for VAPP buildings in 2023 and 2024, none of these projects were implemented, with zero execution recorded across all three years.	Establish an inter-ministerial task force including the Ministries of Women Affairs, Works, and the Budget Office, to review reasons for non-implementation. The task force should identify specific bottlenecks and submit actionable recommendations ahead of the next budget cycle.



Jigawa State

The New World

Emir of Dutse Palace

Jigawa State

Population: 7,350,011

50.8% Female | Male 49.2%

Overall Grade 60.8%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,109)*

GENDER — Female ■ Male ■

70.0% | 30.0%

AREA — Rural ■ Urban ■

64.0% | 36.0%

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

9.6% | 40.7% | 25.6% | 14.6% | 6.8% | 2.7%

DISABILITY STATUS — Yes ■ No ■

16.2% | 83.8%

SARCs: 1

Shelters: 0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦3.61bn

(This accounts for **0.9%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦1.83bn

(This accounts for **50.7%** of total allocation to the ministry)

50.7%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

89.7% | 7.1% | 3.2%

Per Capita Spending

₦490.70

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	56.3%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	68.8%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	37.5%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	66.7%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

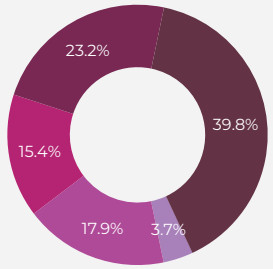
35.6% | 64.4%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

66.9% | 43.0% | 38.2% | 21.8% | 9.3%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

47.2% | 38.5% | 37.6% | 39.2% | 20.1% | 14.1%

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

Where did you or the person first seek help?

29.0% | 34.0% | 6.9% | 11.9% | 9.5% | 3.7% | 1.4% | 3.6%

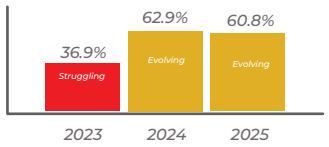
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ I did not seek help ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ Lawyer ■

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

STATE PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD (2023-2025)

Overall Grade 60.8%

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
55%	30%

40%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 48.3%	+1 ▲ LP 83.3%	LP 75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 68.8%	ALJ 56.3%
Support Services	SS 25.0%	+1 ▲ SS 50.0%	SS 68.8%
Information and Awareness	IA 25.0%	+1 ▲ IA 62.5%	-1 ▼ IA 37.5%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 50.0%	+1 ▲ BS 66.7%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Enactment and continued enforcement of the VAPP Law (2021) and Child Rights Protection Law (2022) with stronger prosecution of GBV cases.
- Establishment of functional SARC in Dutse providing medical, legal, and counselling services, with plans for four additional centers underway.
- Expansion of gender and family support units across 30 police divisions, improving case referral and coordination.
- Improved quality and clarity of GBV awareness messages and materials, especially via radio and community outreach.

Areas of Concern

- Declining public awareness of GBV laws and information programs, particularly in rural communities.
- Persistent use of informal settlements by traditional and religious leaders despite legal reforms.
- Limited access to legal aid beyond a few LGAs due to funding and staffing gaps.
- Inadequate shelter facilities and incomplete rollout of new SARCs.
- Low inclusion of persons with disabilities in awareness and service programs.
- Cultural stigma and fear of retaliation still discourage some survivors from reporting cases.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The state enacted its VAPP Law in 2021 with unique provisions including public shaming, compensation regime, and life imprisonment for perpetrators.
- The present state administration introduced appearance fees and transport allowances for state counsels prosecuting GBV cases, addressing previous funding gaps

Access to Legal Justice

- Establishment of committee to address challenges with suspects absconding after bail, with completed report awaiting implementation.
- State provides transport money to witnesses and survivors attending court proceedings across all 27 LGAs.

Support Services

- The state is expanding its Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) services with four new facilities currently under construction in Kazaure, Gumel, Ringim, and Hadejia Local Government Areas.
- SARCs provide free medical treatment, counselling, home visits, and material support with two dedicated hotlines for reporting

Information and Awareness

- During the annual 16 Days of Activism, there are often state-wide campaigns using street rallies, media coverage, and distribution of IEC materials across selected LGAs.
- The World Bank-funded program in the state ensures GBV prevention, prevents early marriage, and promote menstrual hygiene education for female adolescents in schools.

Change Spotlight

In 2025, Jigawa State Government expanded Sexual Assault Referral Centers (SARCs) from one to five across the state, addressing a critical gap in accessibility for GBV survivors. The four new SARCs, strategically located at each Emirate headquarters (Hadejia, Kazaure, Ringim, and Gumel), ensure that survivors across all 27 LGAs can now access medical care, counseling, and support services within one hour's reach, eliminating the burden of traveling long distances to the single SARC previously located only in Dutse

Jigawa State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 60.8%

LAWS AND POLICIES

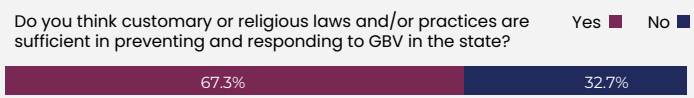
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?

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 ■



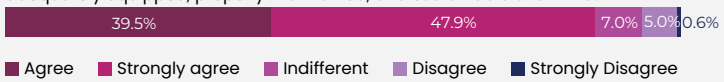
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

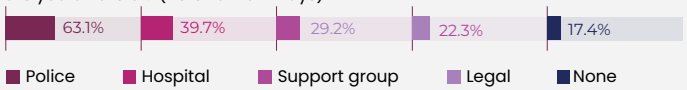
Yes ■ No ■



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)



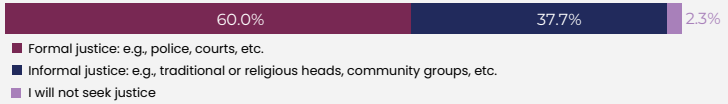
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

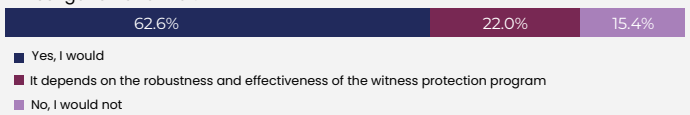


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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?

Yes ■ No ■



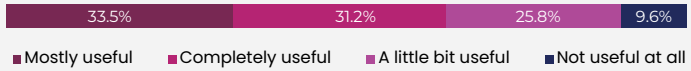
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

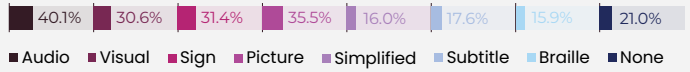
Yes ■ No ■



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



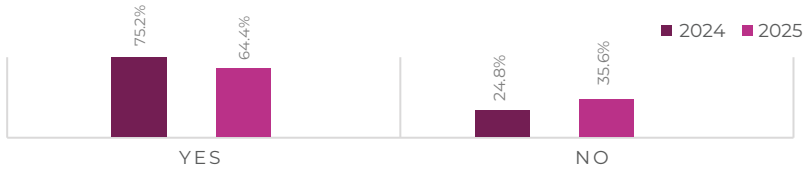
Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Jigawa State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 60.8%

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



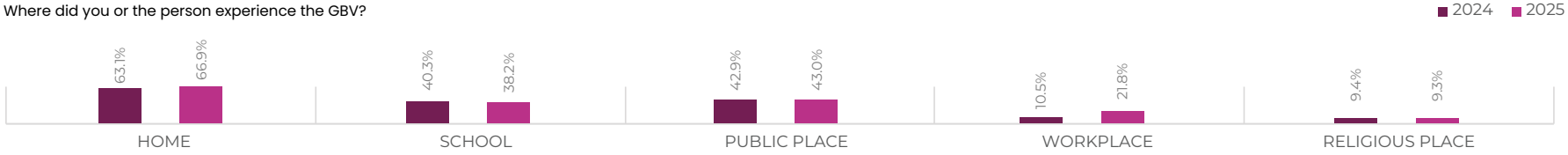
64.4%

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

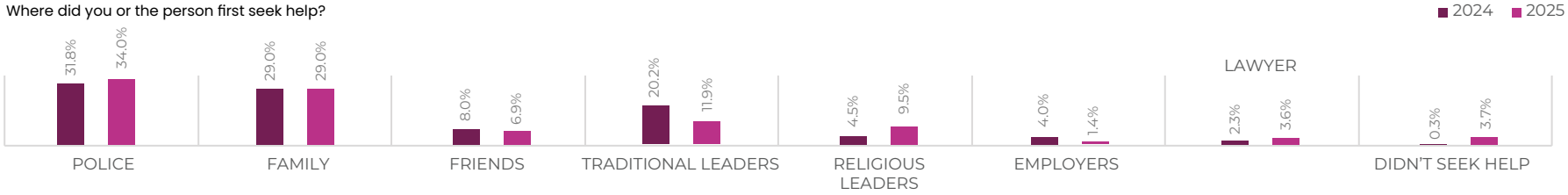
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



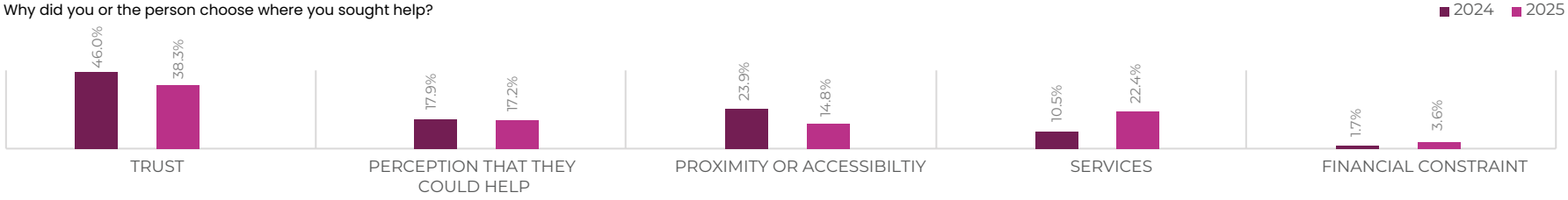
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?

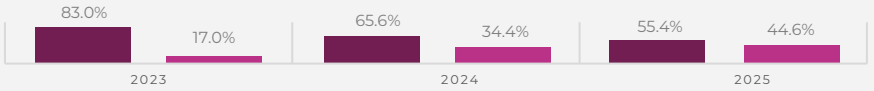


Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?

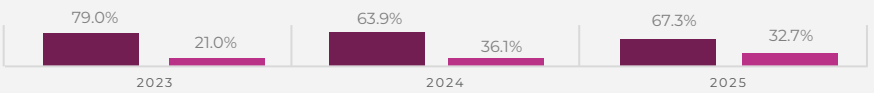


LAWS AND POLICIES

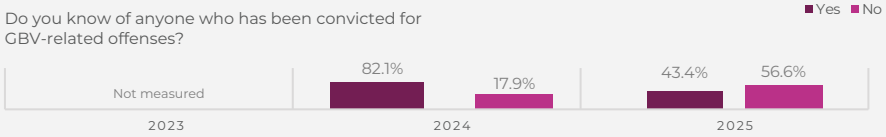
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

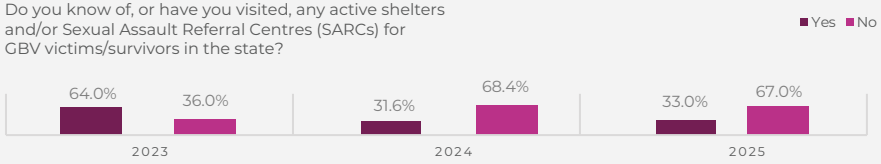


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

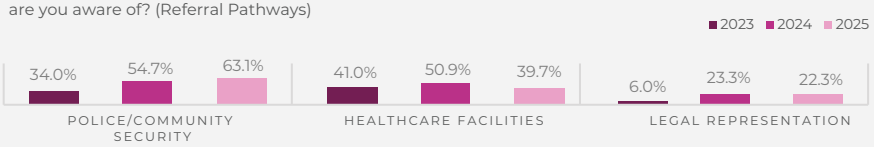


SUPPORT SERVICES

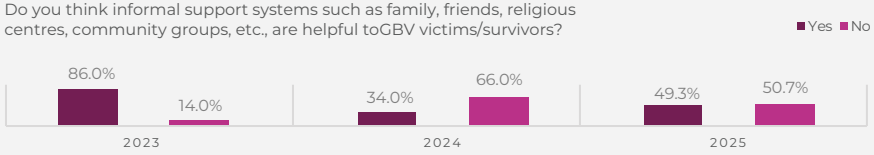
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

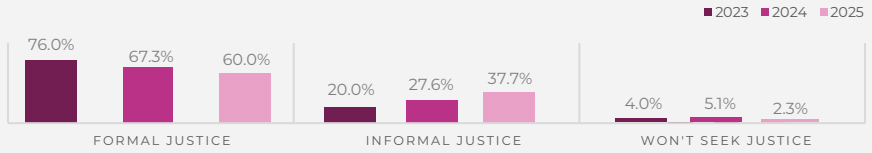


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

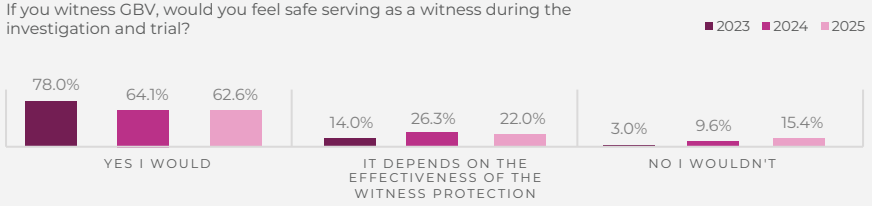


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

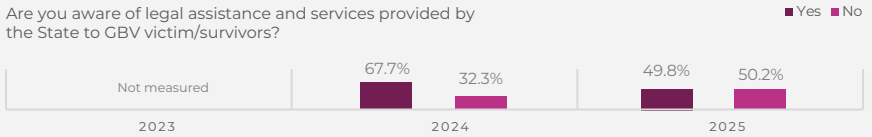
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

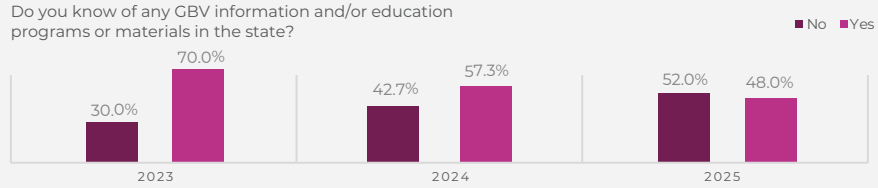


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

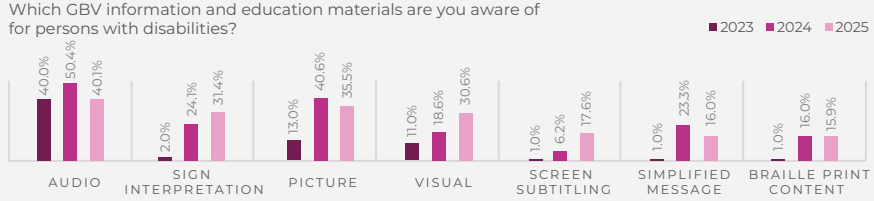


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

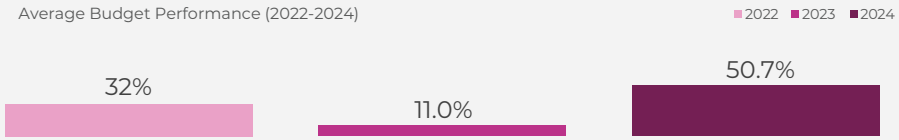


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

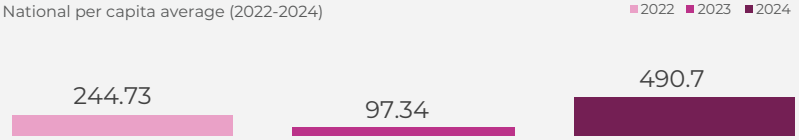


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Jigawa State has established a comprehensive legal framework to combat GBV, anchored by the VAPP Law (2021), Child Rights Protection Law (2022), and supportive gender policies including free girl-child education from primary to university level. The VAPP Law introduced significant reforms beyond federal provisions, including public shaming of perpetrators, a compensation regime for survivors infected with HIV/STDs, and a sex offender registry to track repeat offenders. However, while 55.4% of respondents acknowledged awareness of these laws primarily through radio (63.1%), social media (40.1%), and friends/family networks (26.4%), a substantial 44.6% remain uninformed. Among those aware, 69.5% believe the laws are effective. Although officials from the Ministry of Justice reported 28 convictions in 2024–2025, the Legal Aid Council confirmed over 200 GBV-related convictions across twelve high courts; yet only 43.4% know of any GBV convictions, reflecting a gap in enforcement visibility.

Awareness of customary and religious laws stands at 52.5%, with 67.3% viewing them as helpful in preventing GBV, though officials from the state reveal that traditional leaders still handle GBV cases informally rather than referring them through formal channels. Such community-level settlements, driven by stigma and family pressure, undermine justice delivery despite ongoing government reforms.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, Jigawa State demonstrated moderate progress in applying the VAPP Law (2021) across its 27 LGAs, with increased prosecution of GBV cases and active CSO advocacy, particularly for minors in remote communities. However, despite several attempts, no new GBV-related legislation or significant review of the VAPP Law occurred within the period. Public awareness of existing laws declined steadily from 82.9% in 2023 to 66% in 2024, and further to 55.4% in 2025 reflecting limited outreach beyond urban centers.

Confidence in customary and religious systems also fluctuated, dropping from 79.3% in 2023 to 64% in 2024, then slightly rising to 67.3% in 2025, showing continued community reliance on informal settlements despite the formal legal framework. Knowledge of GBV convictions decreased sharply from 82% in 2024 to 43.4% in 2025, suggesting that justice outcomes remain poorly communicated to the public.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Access to legal justice in Jigawa State reflects mixed progress in recent years. Most respondents (60.1%) seek justice through formal systems, showing growing public confidence in institutional mechanisms, while 37.7% still prefer informal structures led by traditional or religious leaders. Only 2.3% reported not seeking justice, often citing reasons such as fear of retaliation, lack of faith in authorities, or belief that “justice belongs to God.” This indicates that, while formal reporting has improved, barriers like cultural stigma, costs, and limited legal literacy continue to deter some survivors from pursuing justice.

Womanity Index data on awareness of legal assistance services shows only half of respondents knew such support exists, with television (64.1%) being the main information channel.
There is an effective reporting protocol as the Ministry of Justice described detailed case-flow – from police report to Attorney General’s advice and court prosecution, highlighting improved coordination, but there are persistent case delays due to magistrates’ premature bail releases and missing defendants. Stakeholders also confirmed operational law centers in only a few LGAs (Birnin Kudu, Hadejia, Maigatari), while others have closed due to funding constraints, limiting equitable access.

Encouragingly, 62.7% of residents are willing to serve as witnesses in GBV cases, and another 22% would do so if a witness protection mechanism were in place, indicating strong public readiness for justice engagement if adequate safeguards exist. 70% believe informal justice systems help survivors, highlighting their accessibility and social influence, though these systems often lack procedural fairness and perpetuate patriarchal bias.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Despite several government initiatives, access to legal justice in the state declined steadily, with formal justice use dropping from 75.1% in 2023 to 67% in 2024 and 60.1% in 2025, while reliance on informal systems rose from 20% to 37.6%. Willingness to serve as witnesses also fell from 77.9% in 2023 to 62.7% in 2025, though conditional willingness linked to effective witness protection rose from 13.6% in 2023 to 22% in 2025.. Awareness of legal assistance services stagnated, reaching only 49.8% in 2025 compared to 68% in 2024. Despite some increase in convictions, progress remains modest due to inadequate funding, lack of dedicated GBV courts, and slow case resolution, which

are issues that continue to undermine survivor confidence in formal justice systems.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Support services for GBV survivors in Jigawa State remain limited, with only one functional SARC offering medical, counselling, and forensic support. The SARC Officer in Dutse confirmed that the center offers free medical, legal, and counselling services, supported by inter-ministerial coordination among Health, Justice, and Women Affairs, though funding gaps persist. However, the absence of formal shelters severely restricts survivor access to safe spaces and rehabilitation.

Awareness of available support services is low: only 43.2% of respondents reported being aware. 67% of respondents neither knew of nor had visited any SARC, and opinions on its adequacy are mixed: while 40% believe it is well-equipped and functional, 48% disagree as officials noted the facility's small capacity and limited staff, urging expansion to rural LGAs such as Gwaram and Yan Kwashi.

Referral systems described as a formal process where SARC handles medical care, police handle arrest, Justice Ministry handles prosecution, and Women Affairs manages rehabilitation are relatively recognized, with 63% identifying the police or community security as the main reporting pathway, 39.8% mentioning hospitals, 29.2% citing support groups, and 22.4% preferring legal pathway.

About 49.3% of respondents view informal support structures as more effective than formal mechanisms, as community and religious leaders were cited as key channels for awareness and psychosocial support, with Imams, Pastors, and CSOs often helping survivors reintegrate after incidents.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Jigawa State recorded modest progress in strengthening GBV support services, though awareness and accessibility remain weak. Awareness of active SARCs and shelters declined from 63.6% in 2023 to 32% in 2024 but slightly improved to 33% in 2025, coinciding with government efforts to construct four new SARCs in addition to the existing one at Dutse General Hospital. Reported cases at the SARC rose sharply from 3 in 2023 to 108 in 2024 and 381 in 2025, reflecting improved reporting and service utilization.

The state also established 30 gender and family support units across police divisions to improve coordination and response. However, only 47% of respondents believed existing facilities were adequately equipped and functional. Awareness of referral pathways improved; knowledge of police channels rose from 34.3% in 2023 to 54.7% in 2024 and 63% in 2025, and legal referrals from 5.7% to 23.3% to 22.3%, but awareness of healthcare routes declined slightly.

Confidence in informal support systems dropped from 85.7% in 2023 to 34% in 2024 before stabilizing at 49.3% in 2025, showing a gradual shift toward formal mechanisms. Overall, while infrastructure and reporting have improved, stronger public sensitization and completion of new SARCs are needed to achieve equitable, survivor-centred service delivery.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

The Ministry of Women Affairs in Jigawa State coordinates GBV awareness efforts, including the annual "16 Days of Activism" rallies and community sensitizations in selected LGAs, though coverage is uneven. This limited reach is reflected in the fact that only 48% of respondents reported being aware of GBV information or education programs. Among those informed, radio (64.9%) and social media (35.6%) emerged as the most common information sources, followed by friends and family (26%) and television (22.2%).

Schools (11.6%) and healthcare workers (9.2%) play a relatively minor role, indicating a need to strengthen institutional and community-based sensitization platforms. Also, 33.5% of respondents found the content of the GBV information mostly useful and 31% completely useful, suggesting that while reach is limited, message clarity is improving. A vast majority (73.9%) support teaching GBV and child sexual abuse education in schools, underscoring public demand for preventive education at all learning levels.

Use of disability-inclusive GBV communication materials remains uneven, though progress is evident across multiple formats. Respondents reported receiving GBV information through audio/spoken content (40.1%), picture-based messages (35.6%), sign interpretation (31.5%), and visual content (30.5%), suggesting that these are the most accessible and widely used mediums for persons with disabilities. However, fewer respondents accessed information through braille (15.9%), simplified messages (16%), or screen subtitling (17.7%), reflecting ongoing limitations in ensuring equitable access to GBV awareness materials for all disability groups..

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Jigawa State recorded a steady decline in public awareness and information dissemination on GBV. Awareness levels dropped from 70% in 2023 to 57% in 2024 and further to 48% in 2025 – a 22-percentage point decrease over the three-year period. Despite this downward trend, there was notable improvement in advocacy and radio programming aimed at sensitizing the public on GBV-related issues. Meanwhile, the usefulness of GBV awareness materials improved significantly, with the proportion of respondents describing them as "completely useful" rising from 11.4% in 2023 to 49% in 2024 and reaching 31% in 2025. This indicates that while overall access to GBV information has declined, the quality and relevance of the materials available to those reached have become stronger and more impactful.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Jigawa State allocated ₦3.61 billion to GBV programs in 2024, representing 0.94% of its total state budget. Of the allocated amount, ₦1.83 billion was actually spent, achieving a 50.7% implementation rate. This means approximately half of the budgeted resources remained unutilized by the end of the fiscal year. The actual GBV expenditure constituted 0.62% of the state's total spending, slightly

lower than the budget allocation share. On a per capita basis, Jigawa State spent approximately ₦490.70 per female resident on GBV-related programs.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Across the three-year review period, Jigawa State has consistently included GBV-specific line items in its budget. One such item, "Campaign Against Rape and Other Gender-Based Violence," was allocated ₦2 million and fully implemented in 2024. The same intervention received an allocation of ₦2.09 million in 2023, but no actual spending was recorded that year. Additional GBV-related line items in the 2024 budget included "Sexual Assault Referral Centre Expenses," allocated ₦7.83 million, with ₦2.81 million expended, resulting in a performance rate of 35.2%.

The "Implementation of Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) Support Program" was allocated ₦13 million and recorded an expenditure of ₦12.24 million, achieving a strong performance of 94.1%. Unlike many states that recorded minimal or no implementation of GBV-specific line items, Jigawa demonstrates comparatively stronger execution. However, there remains significant room for improvement. The state's overall budget performance for 2024 stood at 50.7%, which, although moderate, is an increase from 11% in 2023 and 32% in 2022. Per capita spending stood at ₦490.70 in 2024, ₦97.34 in 2023, and ₦244.73 in 2022. The sharp rise in 2024 after fluctuating levels in previous years indicates renewed fiscal attention but also highlights inconsistency in GBV-related investment over the period.

Human Angle Stories

Umma was 14 years old when she was drugged and raped by a community member and got pregnant as a result. The alleged perpetrator confessed to the crime and agreed to pay for child support, but he reneged on his promise and later denied the crime.

The case was escalated to the Ministry of Women Affairs and the office of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense. The alleged perpetrator was arrested but released after spending 30 days in police custody.

Despite threats from the alleged perpetrator and his family, Umma's family remained resolute. However, it's been a year and some months, and Umma and her family are yet to get justice. Overwhelmed by the unending judicial processes, she can't help but doubt if she will ever get justice.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	The VAPP and Child Rights Protection Laws are in force, but public awareness remains low (55%), with rural communities least informed.	Intensify community-level sensitization through radio, town halls, and traditional leaders to improve law awareness and accessibility.
	Conviction rates have improved, yet justice outcomes are not well-publicized, reducing public confidence.	Establish a communication mechanism between courts and the Ministry of Information to publish conviction data regularly.
	Customary and religious leaders still settle GBV cases informally, undermining formal justice.	Strengthen engagement with traditional and faith leaders through structured referral agreements and training on GBV laws.
Access to Legal Justice	Formal justice use is declining as more survivors revert to informal systems due to court delays and costs.	Deploy mobile courts or GBV-dedicated sessions to fast-track hearings and reduce costs.
	Legal aid coverage is limited to few LGAs, restricting access to justice in rural areas.	Expand Legal Aid Council offices and integrate paralegal services at community level.
	Weak coordination between police, health, and justice delays case handling.	Formalize referral protocols and create a digital case-tracking system linking SARC, police, and Ministry of Justice.
Support Services	Only one functional SARC exists, with limited staff and space.	Complete planned SARCs in Gumel, Hadejia, Ringim, and Kazaure to achieve statewide coverage.
	No formal government shelter for survivors.	Establish at least one state-managed safe shelter and partner with NGOs for temporary survivor housing.
	Referral mechanisms work but remain urban-centred.	Integrate GBV response into primary healthcare centers and community security groups in all LGAs.
Information and Awareness	Public awareness of GBV issues declined from 70% (2023) to 48% (2025).	Introduce sustained annual GBV communication plans with state budget allocations, not donor dependency.
	Schools and healthcare workers play minimal roles in sensitization.	Integrate GBV and CSA education into school curricula and train teachers and health workers as community advocates.
	Persons with disabilities not adequately reached by information materials.	Develop disability-inclusive IEC materials, especially in braille, sign language, simplified audio formats.
Budget and Spending	Jigawa State's 50.7% implementation rate means ₦1.78 billion in allocated GBV funds remained unutilized in 2024, falling short of the 85% benchmark despite improvement from previous years.	Conduct a bottleneck analysis to identify barriers to budget utilization and establish quarterly performance reviews with corrective action plans to achieve at least 85% implementation rate by 2025.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | Invictus AFRICA



Kaduna State

Centre of Learning

Kowa River

Kaduna State

Population: 10,490,813

50.7% Female | Male 49.3%

Overall Grade 62.1%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,109)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

49.1% | 50.9%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

64.0% | 36.0%

AGE

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

2.8% | 30.2% | 32.9% | 18.9% | 10.8% | 4.4%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

6.9% | 93.1%

SARCs: 4

Shelters: 5

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦3.54bn

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

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦495.40m

(This accounts for **14.0%** of total allocation to the ministry)

14.0%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

33.6% | 60.7% | 5.7%

Per Capita Spending

₦93.09

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	62.5%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	68.8%
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 ■

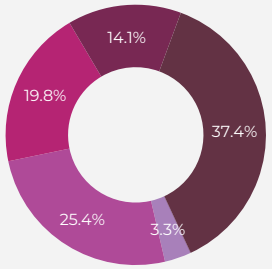
49.7% | 50.3%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

76.2% | 31.3% | 15.8% | 13.0% | 4.7%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

43.9% | 50.5% | 25.5% | 46.0% | 20.9% | 6.9%

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

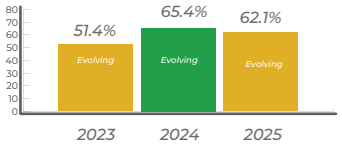
Where did you or the person first seek help?

35.8% | 19.9% | 10.8% | 10.6% | 4.7% | 10.4% | 4.7% | 3.2%

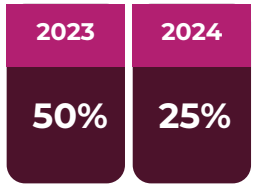
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ I did not seek help ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



36%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 25.0%	+1 ▲ LP 58.3%	+1 ▲ LP 66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 56.3%	ALJ 62.5%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	+1 ▲ SS 81.3%	−1 ▼ SS 62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3%	+1 ▲ IA 81.3%	−1 ▼ IA 68.8%
Budget and Spending	BS 48.3%	BS 50.0%	BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Improved perceived usefulness of GBV awareness materials – "mostly useful" responses increased from 48.6% (2023) to 67.2% (2025).
- Institutional coordination has strengthened, with clearer roles for SARCs, MoJ, and MHSSD.
- Public trust in formal mechanisms is growing – 63.3% view SARCs and government facilities as more effective.
- 24/7 functional SARCs offering free medical, psychosocial, and legal support.
- Emerging M&E frameworks and inclusion of social inclusion policies signal maturing GBV response systems.

Areas of Concern

- Overall GBV awareness declined from 60% (2023) to 48.2% (2025).
- Rural survivors still unaware of SARCs and rely on informal leaders for mediation.
- Accessibility gaps for persons with disabilities – awareness of Braille materials dropped to 4.9%, and sign interpretation to 16.9%.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Kaduna State sustained enforcement of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Law (2018) and the Child Welfare and Protection Law (2018), while also integrating disability and social inclusion principles to ensure the participation of women, youths, and persons with disabilities in GBV policies and programs.

Access to Legal Justice

- Legal aid desks, through the Ministry of Justice and Legal Aid Council, provide free representation to survivors.
- Informal justice actors received capacity building on survivor-centered mediation.

Support Services

- The Ministry of Human Services and Social Development, in partnership with security agencies, SARCs, and the Ministry of Health, strengthened the GBV referral directory.
- SARCs disseminated hotline contacts for emergency response during outreach programs and distributed hygiene kits to survivors in vulnerable communities.

Information and Awareness

- The state sustained annual 16 Days of Activism Against GBV campaigns through radio, television, and community outreaches
- The Ministry of Human Services and Social Development produced and distributed pamphlets, posters, handouts, and radio jingles across LGAs.
- Sensitization programs in collaboration with the Disability Affairs Board adopted inclusive approaches, such as sign interpretation, spoken content, and picture-based messages.
- Implementation of sectoral reporting mechanism where MDAs present quarterly reports on GBV awareness and impact by Ministry of Human Services and Social Development. .

Change Spotlight

Kaduna State established the Children Diversion Programme, a groundbreaking initiative that redirects children in conflict with the law away from conventional Remand Homes. Instead of confinement, the programme allows 135 children (across three cohorts as of 2025) to live at home while attending daily sessions for three months, where they receive psycho-social counselling, skills acquisition training, numeracy and literacy education, stipends, and recreational activities in a child-friendly environment.

This friendly-child justice approach prioritizes rehabilitation over punishment by addressing the root causes of behaviour through counselling, community service, skills training, and mentorship. As the first Children Diversion Centre in Northern Nigeria and the second nationwide, it represents a significant advancement in child protection, social inclusion, and the broader framework of gender-based violence prevention and social protection initiatives.

Kaduna State GBV Assessment Survey

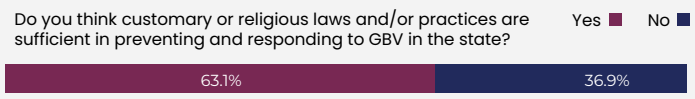
Overall Grade 62.1%

LAWS AND POLICIES

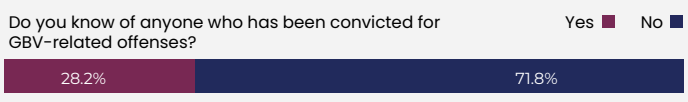
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

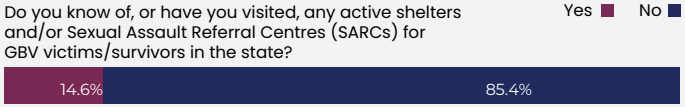


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

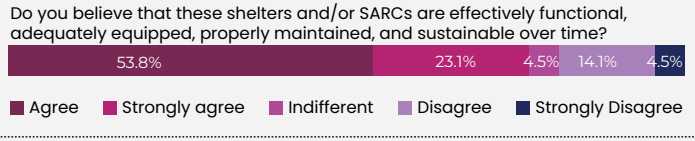


SUPPORT SERVICES

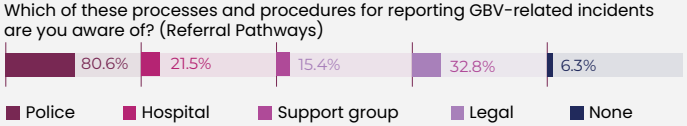
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



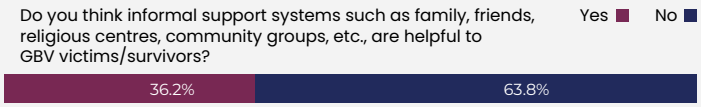
Do you believe that these shelters and/or SARCs are effectively functional, adequately equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable over time?



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

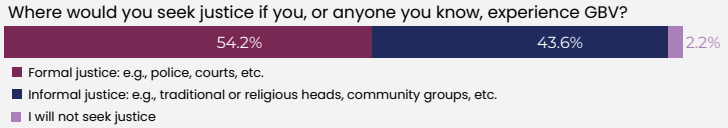


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

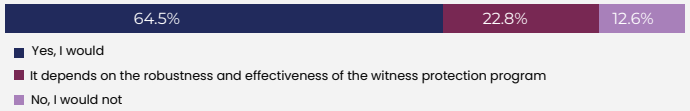


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

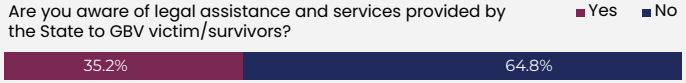
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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?

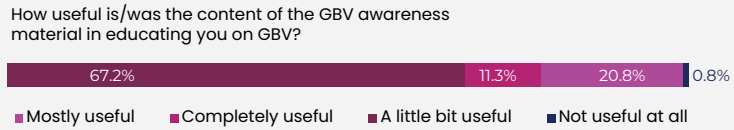


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

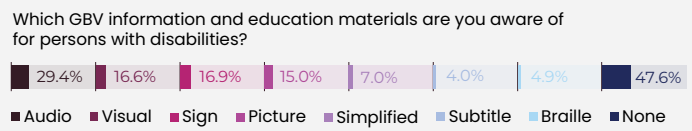
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?



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



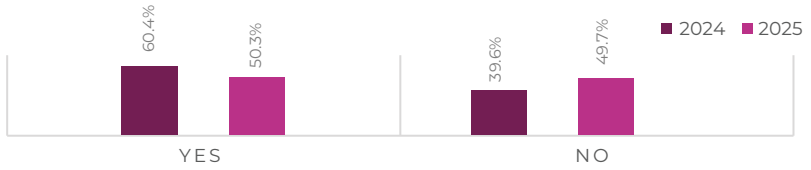
Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Kaduna State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 62.1%

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



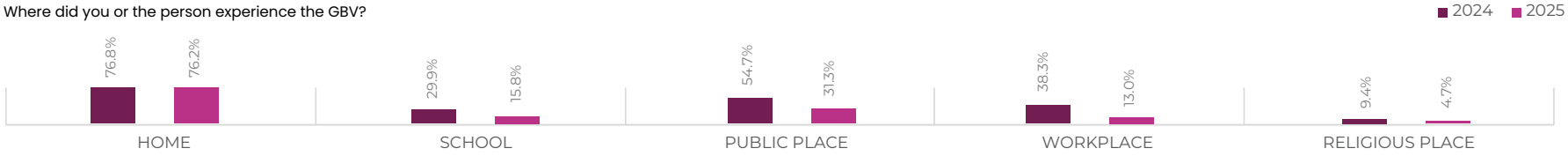
50.3%

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

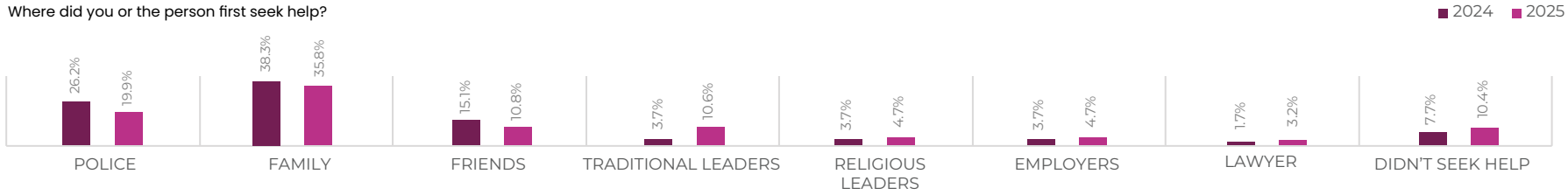
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



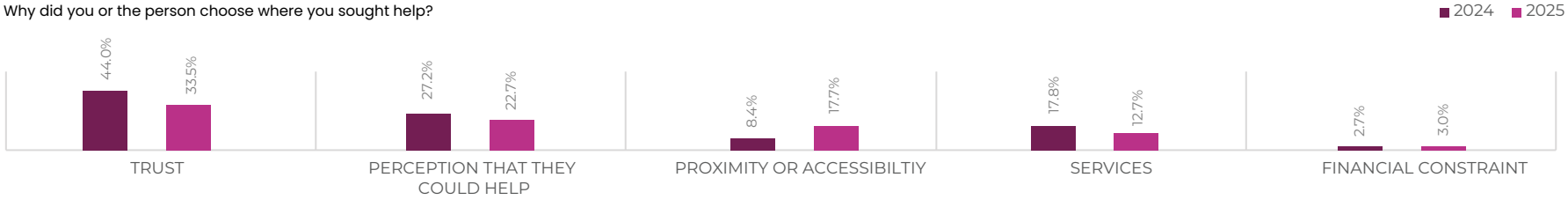
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

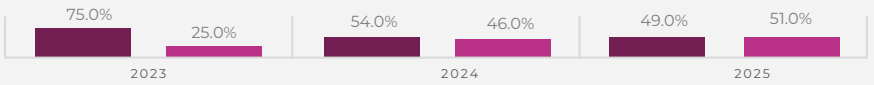


State Data Trend (2023-2025)

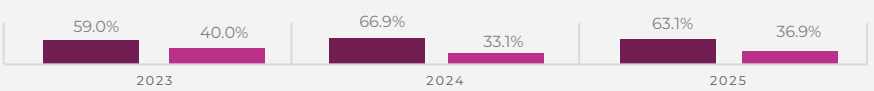
Overall Grade 62.1%

LAWS AND POLICIES

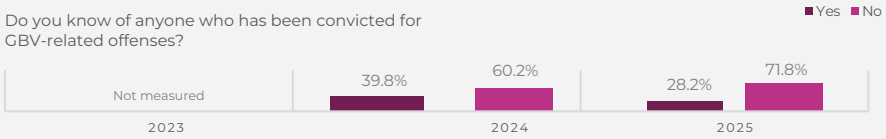
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

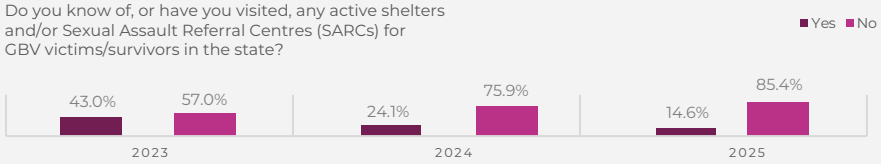


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

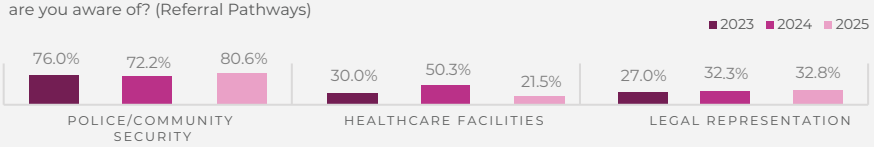


SUPPORT SERVICES

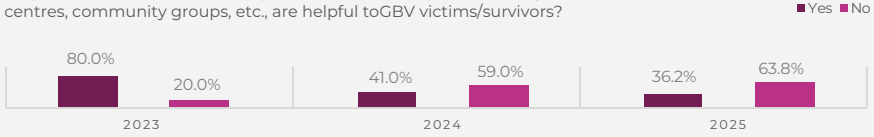
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

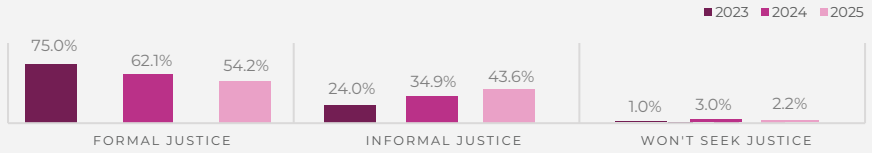


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

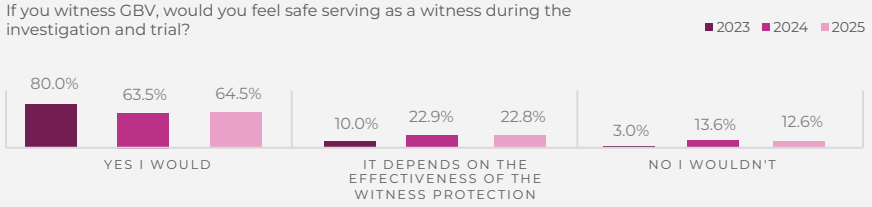


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

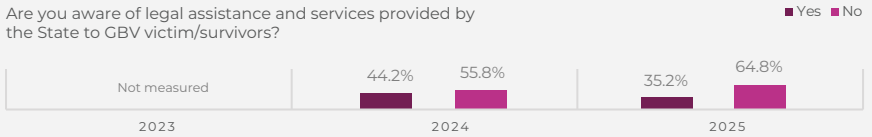
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

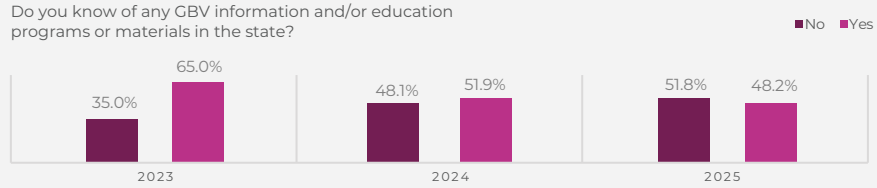


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

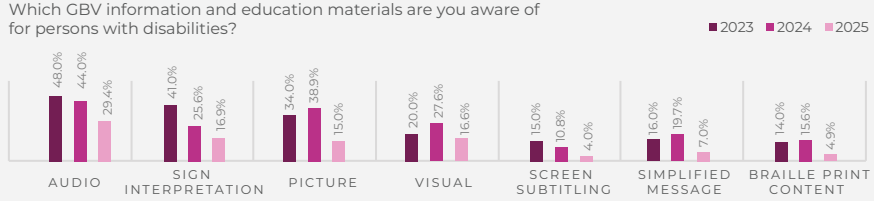


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

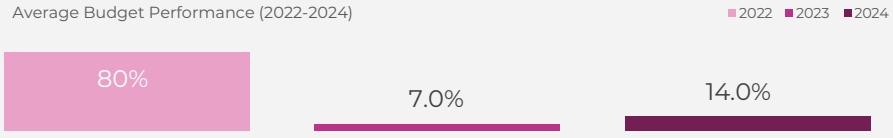


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

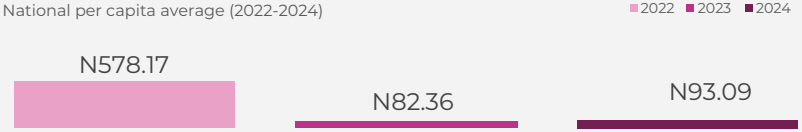


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Kaduna State's legal framework for addressing gender-based violence (GBV) is anchored on the domesticated Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Law (VAPP Law, 2018), complemented by the Penal Code and the Child Welfare Protection Law. Key stakeholder from the Ministry of Justice confirmed that these laws are widely used in various courts including high courts, Sharia courts, and magistrate courts, with most provisions retained from the Federal VAPP Act, adapted slightly for local contexts.

Awareness of these legal frameworks remains limited among the public; survey data indicates only 49.0% of respondents are aware of GBV laws. Despite the low awareness, confidence in the effectiveness of existing laws remains relatively high, with 63.1% believing laws successfully curb GBV. In 2025, convictions under these laws numbered two for the VAPP Law and about fourteen under the Penal Code. Judicial stakeholders attribute improved prosecution rates to more expeditious case handling, aided by accelerated hearings and dedicated magistrates trained on GBV laws. These efforts reflect a stronger commitment by judges and prosecutors to ensure justice for survivors.

Traditional and religious justice systems continue to influence community responses to GBV significantly. Though 63.1% of respondents recognize customary frameworks and 63.6% view them as helpful, stakeholders reveal that these systems can both assist and undermine formal justice – with some community and religious leaders actively referring cases to police, while others favor quiet settlements to avoid communal disharmony. Ongoing advocacy and sensitization aim to improve linkages between customary practice and statutory laws to enhance survivor protection.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public familiarity with GBV laws declined sharply from 75.0% in 2023 to 49.0% in 2025, even as reliance on traditional informal justice grew. Awareness of conviction outcomes also fell from 67% to 28%, signalling weak communication about justice achievements. This trend underlines the critical need to power legal reforms with sustained legal literacy, public education, and transparent reporting of case outcomes to build trust and accountability

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Formal justice avenues remain important, with 54.2% of respondents opting for police and courts, yet a significant 43.6% still prefer informal traditional or religious mediation. Stakeholder insights show that while family support units and gender desks in police stations are functional and improving, legal aid services remain concentrated in urban areas, with many rural survivors unaware or unable to access them. There is also an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Centre at the Ministry of Justice that is also an alternative for survivors to report especially intimate-partner violence in the State. Additionally, two GBV Courts and two GBV Judges alongside Four Family Courts with four Judges have been established.

Confidence in witness protection and judicial confidentiality has grown sharply, reflected in 64.6% of respondents willing to serve as GBV case witnesses. This improvement corresponds with reforms to enhance security and privacy in court settings. Partnerships between the Ministry of Justice, Legal Aid Council, SARCs, and NGOs like FIDA form a coordinated referral and prosecution system supported by a new state-level GBV case tracking dashboard.

Nonetheless, the growing preference for informal justice systems (now 44%) and low awareness of legal aid (35%) highlight challenges in extending formal justice outreach and sustaining public trust outside urban centers

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, Kaduna State strengthened its justice system for GBV survivors through the establishment of specialized GBV courts, functional police gender desks, and closer collaboration among the Ministry of Justice, Legal Aid Council, SARCs, and FIDA. These efforts led to faster case resolution, improved referrals, and better coordination, supported by a new state-level GBV case-tracking dashboard that enhances transparency. However, reliance on formal justice systems declined sharply from 75.0% in 2023 to 54.2% in 2025, while preference for informal mechanisms rose from 24.0% to 43.6%.

Willingness to serve as witnesses in GBV cases improved significantly from 80.0% in 2023 to 64.5% in 2025 indicating growing trust in confidentiality and judicial protection. Yet awareness of state-

provided legal aid declined from 44.2% to 35.2%, while confidence in informal systems rose from 24.0% to 43.6%, reflecting their deep social roots.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Kaduna operates four SARCs and two functional Shelters for boys and girls and two functional Children Homes, alongside three private shelters providing free 24/7 medical, psychosocial, and legal support. At each LGA, there is a social welfare office, with at least a Social Welfare Officer that receives GBV reports, provide services and refer survivors to appropriate services or the nearest SARC. Despite these infrastructures, only 14.6% of respondents were aware of or had utilized these facilities, consistent with key informants' observation of prevailing stigma and limited access, particularly in remote LGAs. Survivors frequently seek informal support from family or community leaders instead.

Formal pathways are most recognized for law enforcement (80.6% awareness), but less for legal (32.8%), health (21.5%), and psychosocial services (15.1%). Support services while improving are unevenly spread, highlighting the need to raise community awareness and outreach. Nonetheless, a majority see formal support structures as more effective than informal alternatives.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Despite establishment of additional centres across the state and functional facilities offering free 24/7 medical, psychosocial, and legal support, awareness of SARCs and shelters has declined markedly from 43.0% in 2023 to 24.1% in 2024 and further to just 14.6% in 2025. As a stakeholder explained, "we have more centres now than ever before, but people don't know about them."

Awareness of police and security reporting pathways improved significantly, rising from 76.0% in 2023 to 80.6% in 2025, reflecting greater visibility of police gender desks. However, awareness of healthcare facility pathways declined sharply from 50.3% in 2024 to 21.5% in 2025, while knowledge of legal and psychosocial support channels remained low at 32% and 15.1%, respectively. Preference for informal support systems also fell from 80.0% in 2023 to 36.2% in 2025, suggesting gradual acceptance of formal mechanisms.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Public knowledge of GBV programs remains limited with only 48.2% aware. Radio remains the dominant information source (63.2%), followed by social media and NGOs. Key stakeholder reported that the Ministry of Education disseminates gender education materials in schools, including formats for people with disabilities such as audio and videos. The Ministry has established a formal Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system since last year to track awareness efforts, though community reach beyond schools remains limited.

Encouragingly, 67% of respondents rated GBV materials as "mostly useful," and 11.5% as "completely useful," suggesting improved quality and relevance of awareness tools. MHSSD officials confirmed that sensitization efforts have begun to yield positive results, with a noticeable rise in case reporting. However, inclusivity in information delivery remains weak; only 29.4% of respondents received GBV information through audio formats, 16.9% through sign interpretation, 16.6% through visual materials, and just 4.9% through braille, indicating that disability-friendly communication channels are still limited and underutilized. While schools participate in awareness drives, GBV education has yet to be formally integrated into the curriculum.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

GBV awareness over the three-year period declined from 65% to 48.2%, showing reduced public exposure to GBV programs despite improvements in institutional coordination. However, perceptions of content quality improved notably, as those rating materials as "mostly useful" increased from 48.6% to 67%, while negative ratings dropped significantly. This suggests that although fewer people are being reached, the information disseminated is becoming more effective and relevant.

Awareness of disability-accessible materials showed an inconsistent pattern: knowledge of braille increased from 14.0% in 2023 to 15.6% in 2024 but fell to 4.9% in 2025, while the use of sign interpretation as an information channel increased to 25.6% in 2024 before declining to 16.9% in 2025. These fluctuations indicate that inclusion efforts are often short-term and dependent on donor funding rather than state-driven continuity. Radio and community sensitization remain the dominant outreach methods, with gradual institutional progress seen through emerging M&E systems and social inclusion policies introduced in 2025.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Kaduna State allocated ₦3.54 billion to GBV interventions in 2024, accounting for 0.53% of its total budget, yet managed to spend only ₦495.40 million, a disappointing 14.0% execution rate. This represents one of the most significant gaps between commitment and delivery among states with specific GBV budget lines, resulting in a per capita expenditure of just ₦93.09, well below what the population size and initial allocation should have yielded. Given Kaduna's status as one of Nigeria's most populous states, this minimal per capita investment suggests that most residents had limited access to funded GBV services.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Across the last three years of the Womanity Index, Kaduna State consistently included GBV-specific line items in its approved budgets for 2022, 2023, and 2024. Several of these items recurred across the three budget cycles, including "Vesico-Vaginal Fistula (VVF) Intervention," "Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs)," and the "Construction of Shelter for Women and Children in Zones 1, 2, and 3." These items received allocations of ₦66.00 million in 2022, ₦63.58 million in 2023, and ₦70.02 million in 2024. Despite their repeated inclusion, each of these line items recorded 0% implementation across all three years. The state also experienced a significant decline in overall budget performance during the review period. Actual spending decreased sharply from ₦2.89 billion in 2022 to ₦425.35

million in 2023, before rising slightly to ₦495.40 million in 2024. Per capita spending stood at ₦93.09 in 2024, ₦82.36 in 2023, and ₦578.17 in 2022. The sharp decline after 2022 indicates a reversal in per capita investment and highlights inconsistent prioritization of GBV-related spending across the period.

Human Angle Stories

Her daughter was raped by her Islamic teacher. Even though she knew what to do - take her to the hospital and go to the police, she approached the mosque's committee. The teacher admitted it, but the committee said it was Satan's doing and not his fault. They told her reporting would shame the school, the religion, and her family. They suggested that the cleric could marry the girl instead. When she mentioned the police, neighbours started avoiding her. Her husband urged her to leave the matter to God, like the leaders said.

"I wish I knew who to call for help. I wish I knew that even religious leaders cannot stop me from going to the police." Her daughter's rapist faced no consequences. Community pressure and the absence of information about legal rights silenced them both, and justice never came.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	Awareness and understanding of GBV laws remain low across rural LGAs.	Develop and distribute simplified, translated versions of the VAPP Law in Hausa and other local languages, with targeted training for community leaders and law enforcement.
	Public awareness of GBV convictions is very low despite recorded convictions.	Establish a public communication platform to share GBV conviction outcomes through radio and community programs as a way of building community trust in the formal justice system.
	Traditional and religious justice systems influence GBV case outcomes, sometimes favouring quiet settlements.	Strengthen linkages between statutory legal frameworks and traditional justice systems through advocacy and sensitization programs.
 Access to Legal Justice	Survivors abandon cases due to cost, stigma, family pressure, and low awareness of free legal aid.	Expand legal aid awareness via radio, paralegal outreaches, and community legal literacy sessions by partnering with NBA and Legal Aid Council, focusing on rural areas.
	Court delays and limited specialized GBV courts restrict fast case resolution.	Fully operationalize Family Support Units and GBV courts in all senatorial districts, with trained judges and prosecutors, to ensure faster and survivor-friendly hearings.
	Increasing willingness to serve as GBV case witnesses reflects growing trust, though informal justice systems remain popular.	Sustain judicial confidentiality and security reforms to further increase public trust and encourage formal justice access.
 Support Services	SARCs and shelters are present mainly in urban areas; rural survivors face access barriers and stigma.	Establish mobile SARCs or satellite outreach centers in underserved LGAs alongside community awareness campaigns to reduce stigma and improve access.
	Funding shortages and donor dependence limit the sustainability of SARCs and shelter operations.	Create a dedicated GBV funding line within the MHSSD's annual budget to provide consistent resources for SARCs, shelters, and related support services.
	Stigma and limited public awareness inhibit survivors' utilization of formal support services.	Invest in broad community sensitization to increase awareness and acceptance of formal support mechanisms to improve survivor engagement.
 Information and Awareness	GBV awareness declined significantly; radio and social media dominate access, schools and health facilities play minor roles.	Launch a comprehensive state-wide multimedia awareness campaign integrating radio broadcasts, school programs, and health centre outreach for broader impact.
	Disability-accessible IEC materials are scarce and unevenly known, limiting inclusivity.	Scale up the production and state-wide distribution of inclusive IEC materials including braille, audio, and pictorial formats, while collaborating with the Disability Affairs Board.
	Formal GBV and child protection education in schools is sporadic and not yet institutionalized.	Institutionalize GBV and child protection education within school curricula supported by teacher training and student-led awareness clubs for sustainability and wider reach.
 Budget and Spending	Kaduna's GBV spending collapsed from ₦2.89 billion in 2022 to ₦495.40 million in 2024, dropping per capita investment from ₦578.17 to ₦93.09. Despite consistent budget allocations, execution rate plummeted to 14%, with zero spending on shelters, VVF treatment, and SARCs for three consecutive years.	Conduct urgent financial audit to identify bottlenecks in fund disbursement and implement quarterly release schedules tied to implementation milestones. Prioritize operationalizing already-allocated shelters and SARCs to address the 0% implementation crisis.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | Invictus AFRICA



Katsina State

Home of Hospitality

Katsina Emir Palace

Katsina State

Population: 9,955,558

50.2% Female | Male 49.8%

Overall Grade 50.0%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,052)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

61.5% | 38.5%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

57.5% | 42.5%

AGE

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

4.7% | 30.2% | 24.2% | 15.3% | 17.7% | 8.0%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

31.7% | 68.3%

SARCs	Shelters
2	0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦6.68bn

(This accounts for **1.27%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦798.19m

(This accounts for **11.9%** of total allocation to the ministry)

11.9%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

81.7% | 12.1% | 6.1%

Per Capita Spending

₦159.76

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	62.5%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	43.8%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	56.3%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	25.0%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

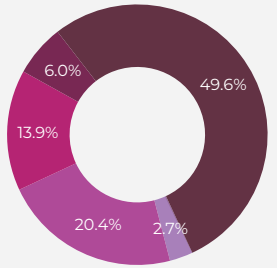
36.3% | 63.7%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

60.0% | 33.1% | 27.3% | 22.4% | 3.4%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

44.2% | 50.9% | 25.5% | 16.9% | 16.1% | 6.9%

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

Where did you or the person first seek help?

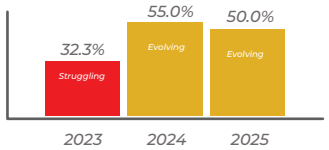
32.8% | 24.8% | 10.7% | 15.1% | 4.3% | 7.5% | 3.6% | 1.2%

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 ■

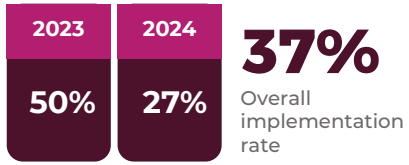
Trust ■ Services ■ Proximity or accessibility ■ Perception that they could help ■ Financial constraint ■

Overall Grade 50.0%

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



37%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

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?

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)

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?

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?

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?

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?

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

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

1

Katsina State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 50.0%

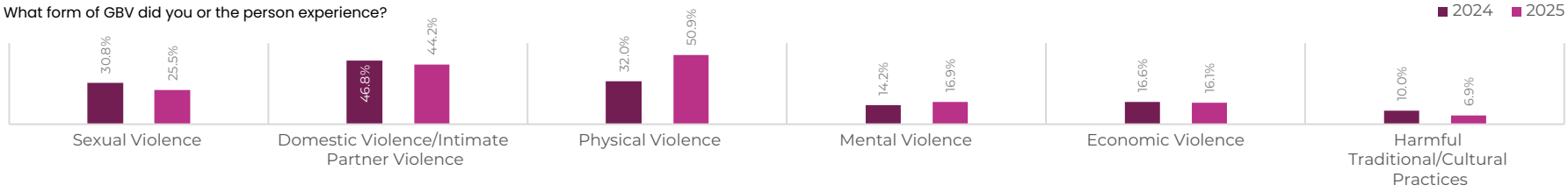
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



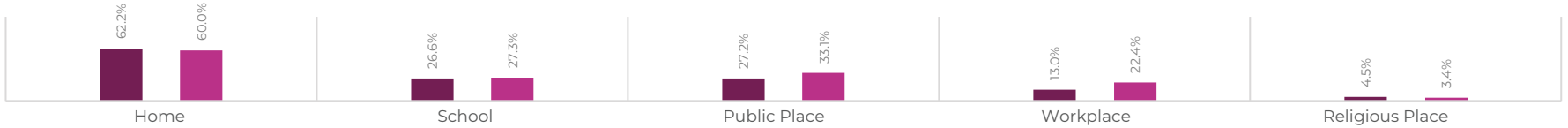
63.7%

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

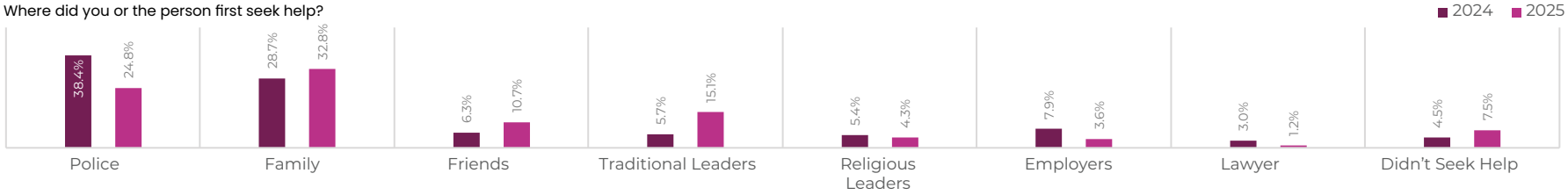
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



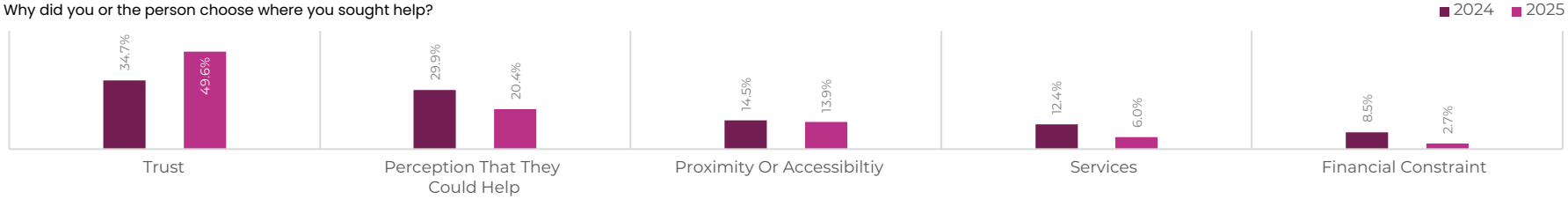
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

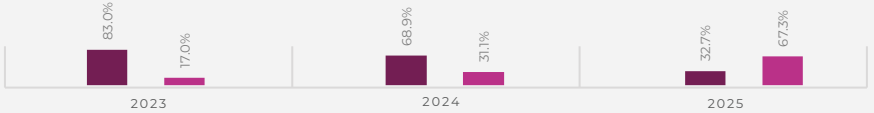


Katsina State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

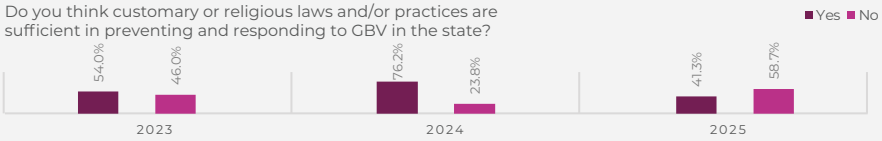
Overall Grade 50.0%

LAWS AND POLICIES

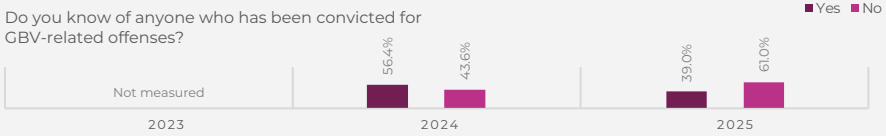
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

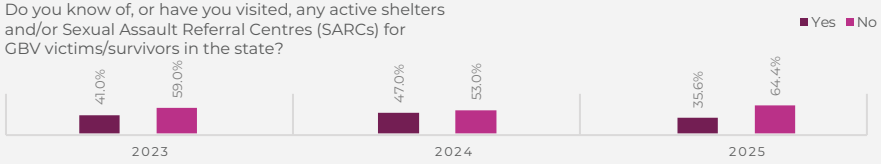


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

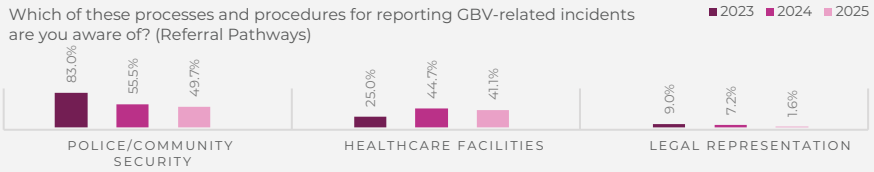


SUPPORT SERVICES

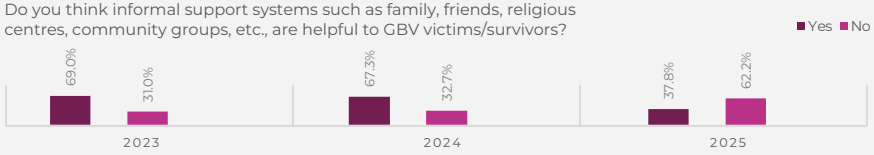
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

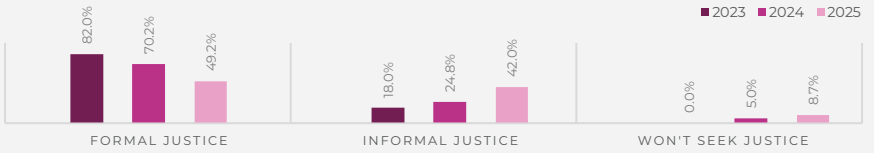


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

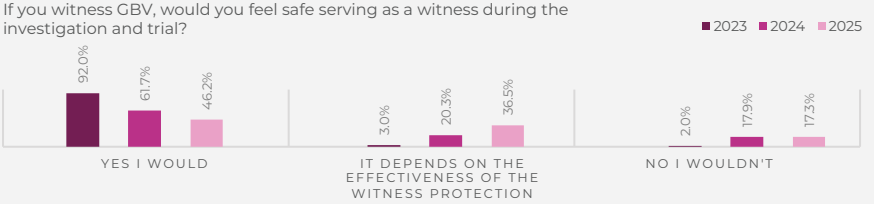


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

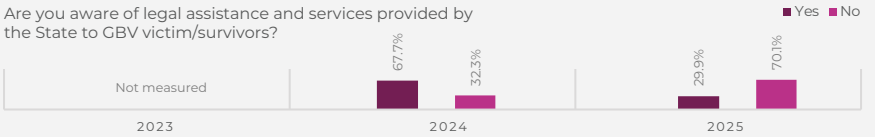
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

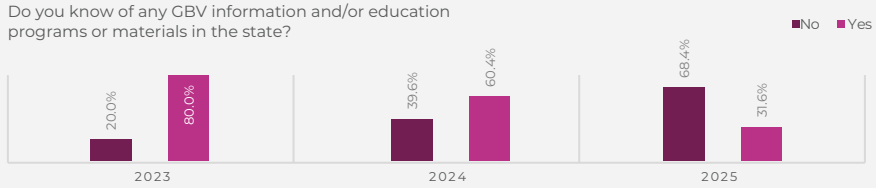


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

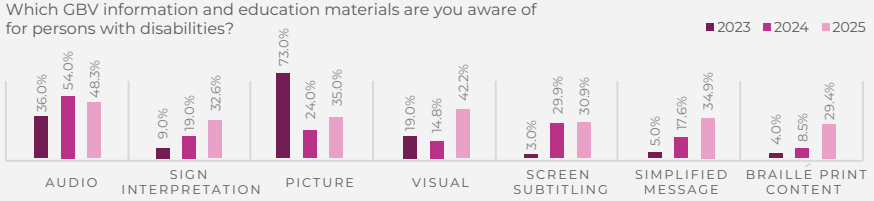


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

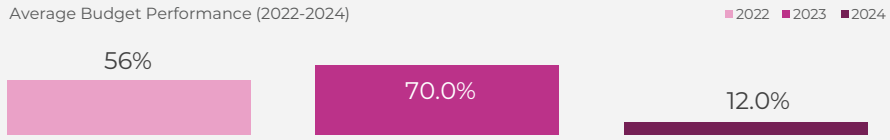


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

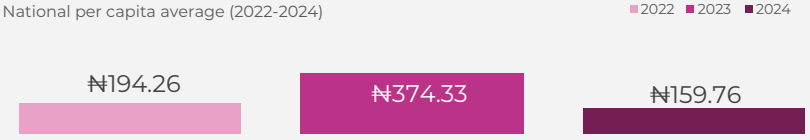


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

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.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



Kano State

Centre of Commerce

Emir palace

Kano State

Population: 17,027,790

48.1% Female | Male 51.9%

Overall Grade 55%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,016)*

GENDER — Female ■ Male ■



AREA — Rural ■ Urban ■



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



DISABILITY STATUS — Yes ■ No ■



SARCs: 1

Shelters: 1

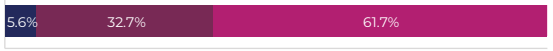
Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION — ₦3.66bn (This accounts for **0.7%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE — ₦461.12m (This accounts for **12.6%** of total allocation to the ministry)



Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■



Per Capita Spending

₦56.31

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	50.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	62.5%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	50.0%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	50.0%

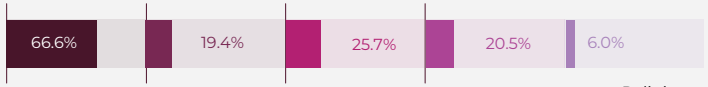
GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

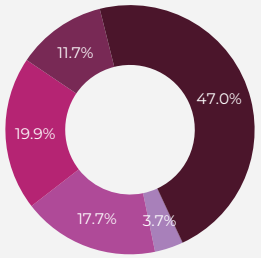


Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

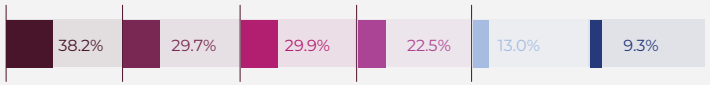


Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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

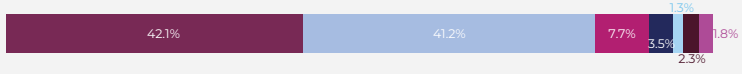


What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



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

Where did you or the person first seek help?



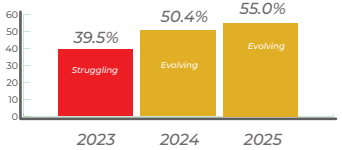
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

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

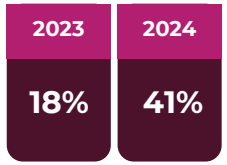
STATE PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD (2023-2025)

Overall Grade 55%

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



31%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 25.0%	+1 ▲ LP 58.3%	LP 50.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 62.5%	ALJ 62.5%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	−1 ▼ SS 31.3%	SS 50.0%
Information and Awareness	IA 25.0%	+1 ▲ IA 50.0%	IA 62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 50.0%	BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- The proportion of residents who would seek help from police or courts rose significantly from 48.2% to 76.8%.
- Awareness of healthcare-based reporting options increased dramatically from 10.5% in 2023 to 59.2% in 2025.
- Knowledge of state-provided legal assistance increased from 49% in 2024 to 59.2% in 2025.

Areas of Concern

- The VAPP law has yet to be domesticated, so GBV cases continue to be prosecuted under the Northern Nigerian Penal Code and Shari'a Law.
- Awareness of GBV-related convictions dropped sharply from 84% in 2024 to 51.9% in 2025.
- The proportion of residents unwilling to serve as witnesses more than doubled from 9.8% to 27.3%.
- Perception of informal support systems as helpful dropped from 89% in 2023 to 50.6% in 2025.
- GBV awareness programs dropped from 60.8% in 2023 to 45% in 2024 before recovering to 58.6% in 2025.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The Ministry of Justice has maintained ongoing advocacy for VAPP Act domestication

Access to Legal Justice

- A sex offender register was established for naming and shaming perpetrators.
- Four judges were designated specifically for GBV cases under the previous administration.
- Shari'a Family Court Practice Directions were introduced to guide judges in handling family and GBV matters.
- Family Support Units and Human Rights Desks were established across police commands and divisions, with every unit having a GBV desk.

Support Services

- Construction of SARCs commenced in Rano, Gaya, Bichi, and Karaye to expand coverage across emirate zones.
- The Vesicovaginal Fistula Centre was repurposed to accommodate SGBV survivors in addition to VVF cases.
- Standard Operating Procedure on SARC WARAKA has been validated.

Information and Awareness

- A School Safety and Security Desk was established in schools with trained teachers handling GBV cases.

Change Spotlight

Kano State has established a sex offenders' register to enhance community safety and support the enforcement of GBV laws. This publicly accessible record aims to "name and shame" convicted sexual offenders, allowing communities to verify individuals' backgrounds for employment and social interactions. A representative noted that the register could deter potential offenders by raising awareness of the consequences.

Additionally, the register addresses concerns from survivors and their families about convicted offenders returning to communities without notice. By providing crucial transparency, it empowers communities to take protective measures and helps reduce the chances of repeat offenses. However, its success will depend on regular updates, accessibility, and integration with broader support and prevention efforts.

Kano State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 55%

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

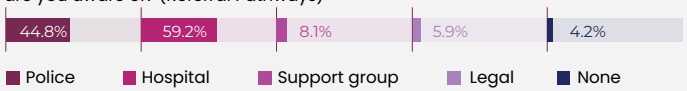
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state? Yes ■ No ■



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)

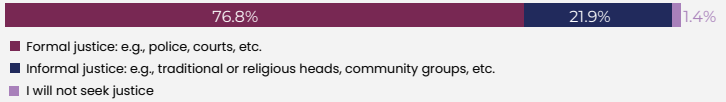


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors? Yes ■ No ■

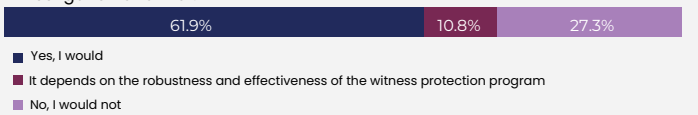


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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? Yes ■ No ■

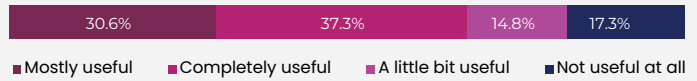


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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?



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



Kano State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 55%

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



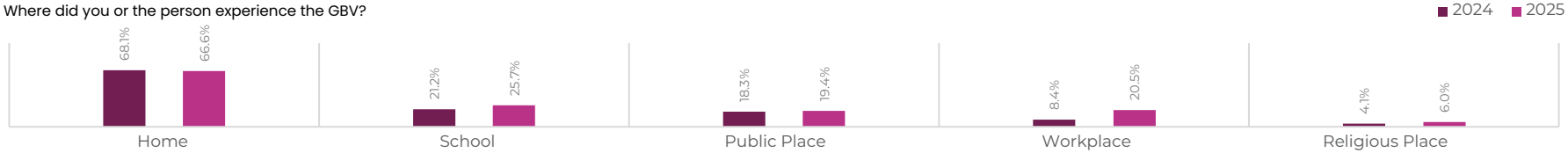
59.0%

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

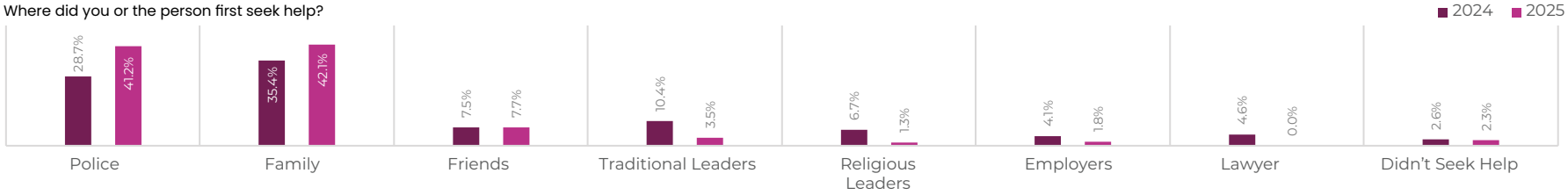
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



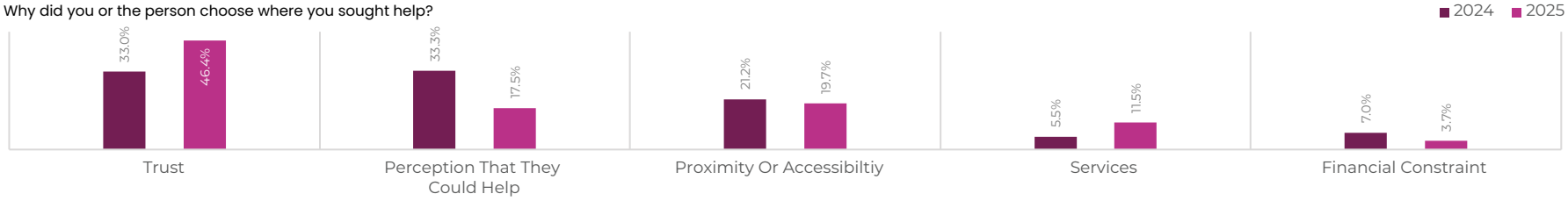
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

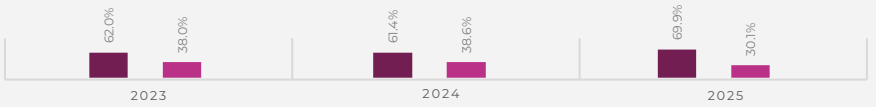


Kano State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

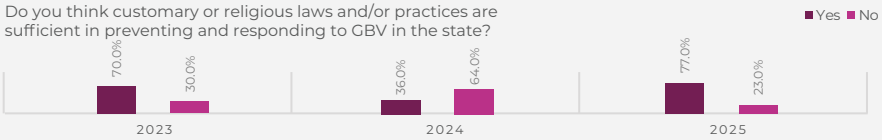
Overall Grade 55%

LAWS AND POLICIES

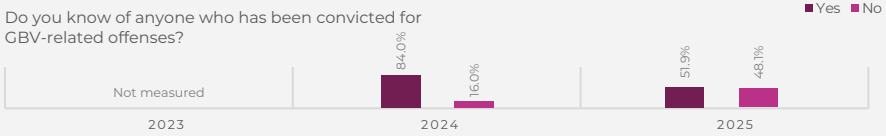
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

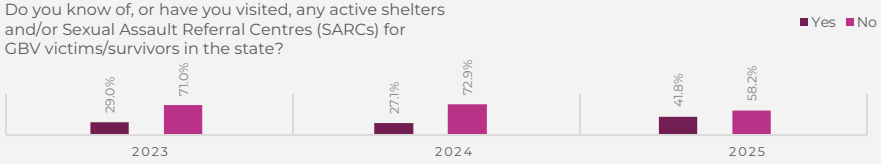


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

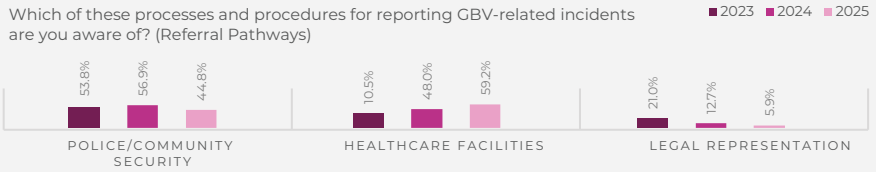


SUPPORT SERVICES

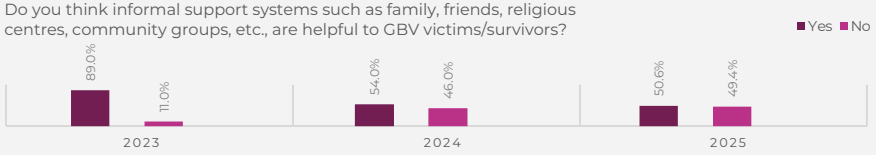
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

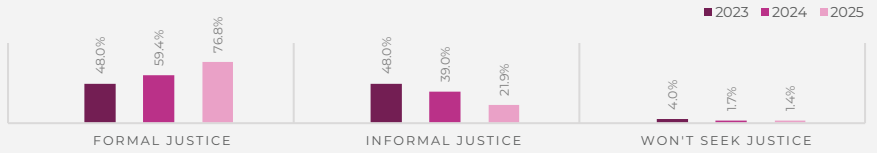


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

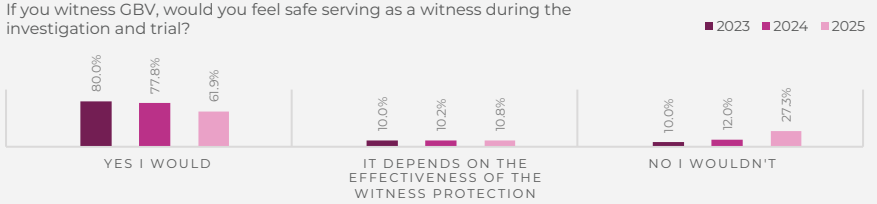


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

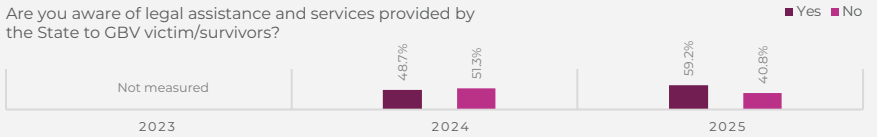
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

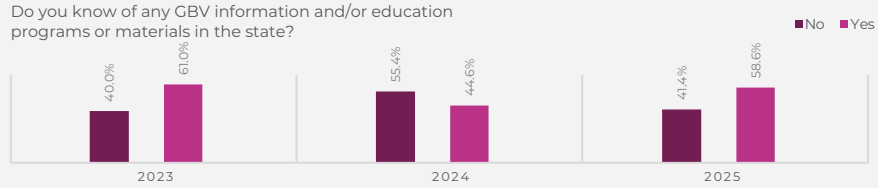


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

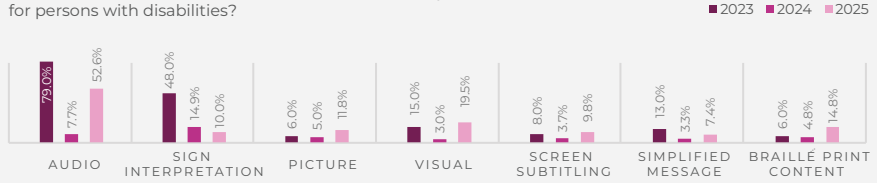


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

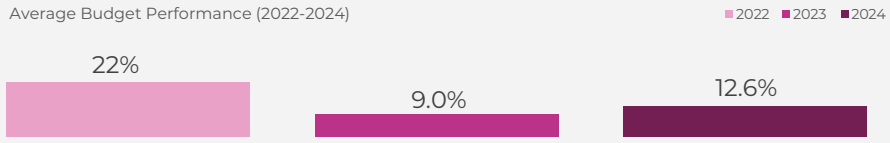


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

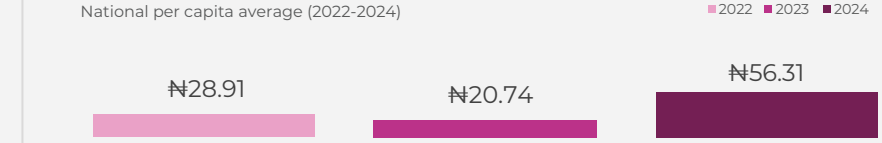


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

As of 2025, Kano State has not domesticated the VAPP Act. GBV cases continue to be prosecuted under the Northern Nigerian Penal Code and Shari'a Law through the Shari'a Courts. While these frameworks address physical violence, they lack the broader, survivor-centered protections offered by the VAPP Act. According to the Ministry of Justice, advocacy for the Act's domestication is ongoing, alongside efforts to introduce Shari'a Family Court Practice Directions to guide judges in handling family and GBV-related matters. A notable initiative is the establishment of a sex offenders' register, an initiative aligned with VAPP provisions, aimed at deterring future offenses and enabling communities to make informed decisions about employment and social engagement with convicted offenders.

Despite the legal limitations of existing laws, public confidence in them remains high. Nearly 70% of residents report being familiar with current legal frameworks, and 74.3% believe they are effective and sufficient in addressing GBV. This perception may reflect the visibility of recent legal reforms or the influence of religious and cultural legitimacy associated with Shari'a-based adjudication.

Informal systems, such as community, religious, and traditional practices, remain deeply embedded in GBV response. Two-thirds of respondents (67%) are aware of these mechanisms, and 77% believe they play a helpful role. However, stakeholder feedback reveals that these same systems can perpetuate harmful norms. Early marriage, often justified through religious or cultural expectations, remains prevalent in rural areas. Encouragingly, civil society organizations, religious leaders, and traditional rulers are increasingly engaged in reform efforts, including sensitization campaigns aimed at challenging these norms from within.

Official records show that 16 GBV convictions were secured in the past year under the Penal Code and related laws. While slightly more than half of residents (51.9%) report knowing about these convictions, the fact that 48.1% remain unaware could still undermine public confidence in enforcement and reduce the deterrent effect.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of laws and policies addressing GBV remained consistently high, rising modestly from 62.3% in 2023 and 61% in 2024, to 69.9% in 2025. Perceptions of customary and religious laws as effective tools rose sharply, after dipping from 69.9% in 2023 to 36% in 2024, confidence rebounded to 77% in 2025. These trends suggest growing public engagement with both formal and informal justice systems, despite the absence of the VAPP Act.

However, the decline in awareness of GBV-related convictions, from 84% in 2024 to 51.9% in 2025, raises concerns about the visibility and communication of justice outcomes. This disconnect between legal action and public perception may undermine the credibility of enforcement efforts and highlights the need for more reporting and public education on case resolutions.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Access to justice for GBV survivors in Kano State is primarily routed through formal institutions. Over three-quarters of residents (76.8%) say they would seek help from the police, courts, or similar structures. This preference reflects strong public confidence in formal laws and policies, reinforced by the fact that 61.9% of respondents feel safe participating as witnesses during investigations and trials.

The typical reporting journey begins at police stations, although cases are sometimes first reported to Hisbah (Islamic enforcement) or vigilante offices. Police investigations form the foundation of legal proceedings, which are then transferred to the Ministry of Justice for legal advice and charge filing. Court officials report that public awareness has improved, with more survivors coming forward, largely due to sensitization efforts by civil society organizations and NGOs.

Specialized infrastructure for GBV response has expanded. Four judges were designated for GBV cases under the previous administration, and Family Support Units or Human Rights Desks now exist across police divisions. Police officials confirm that every unit has a GBV desk to oversee case management. Although dedicated GBV courts are not yet operational, plans are underway to establish them. Judicial officers have received extensive training through multiple engagement programs, equipping them to handle GBV cases more professionally.

Despite these advancements, enforcement challenges persist. Weak implementation structures, inadequate training of police officers, poor forensic capacity, and underfunding of GBV units hinder effective response. Additional barriers include pressure to settle cases out of court, stigma, victim-blaming, trial delays due to adjournments, and low conviction rates linked to weak evidence

and witness intimidation. Police stakeholders also cite lack of mobility, insufficient funding, and inadequate office equipment as key operational constraints.

Informal justice mechanisms remain widely used and valued. A large majority of residents (85.4%) believe they help ensure justice for GBV survivors, indicating a dual reliance on both formal and community-based systems. However, qualitative evidence reveals that traditional and religious mechanisms often prioritize reconciliation and family unity over prosecution. Survivors frequently withdraw cases due to social pressure, and cultural norms, such as preserving family honor and religious misinterpretations, contribute to underreporting and reinforce male dominance.

Legal aid is primarily delivered through the Citizens' Rights, Mediation and Reconciliation Department and the Legal Aid Council of Nigeria. However, resource constraints limit coverage to only about seven of the state's 44 LGAs, mostly in urban areas. No expansion of legal aid services occurred in the past year, leaving rural communities underserved. Awareness of state-provided legal assistance remains moderate, with 59.2% of residents indicating familiarity. Bridging this gap is critical to ensuring survivors can access timely and appropriate support, especially in remote areas.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, there was a marked shift toward formal justice mechanisms. The proportion of residents who would seek help from police or courts rose from 48.2% in 2023 to 59% in 2024, and then to 76.8% in 2025, suggesting growing trust in institutional responses. However, perceptions of safety when serving as a witness declined steadily, from 79.7% in 2023 to 78% in 2024, and further to 61.9% in 2025. The proportion of those who would not feel safe more than doubled, rising from 9.8% to 27.3%. This trend signals increasing concern about personal risk and underscores the urgent need to strengthen witness protection programs to sustain public trust.

Awareness of state-provided legal assistance improved from 49% in 2024 to 59.2% in 2025. While this is a positive development, over 40% of residents remain unaware of available services. Without targeted outreach and expansion, especially in rural LGAs, many survivors may continue to face barriers in accessing justice.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Kano State currently has only one government-owned SARC, the WARAKA Centre located at Murtala Muhammad General Hospital in the metropolitan area. Stakeholders report that the center is not fully functional due to the absence of medical personnel and the lack of free services. Survivors are required to pay for serologies and medications, which discourages use. Two additional SARCs in Rano and Gaya have been structurally completed but remain non-operational due to inadequate equipment and staffing. Two more centers in Bichi and Karaye are still under construction.

Shelter services are similarly constrained. The state has two facilities: one at Nasarawa Orphanage, intended for SGBV survivors but currently non-functional, and another at Kwalli, originally for Vesico-Vaginal Fistula (VVF) survivors, now repurposed to accommodate SGBV cases. Despite the critical role these facilities play, public awareness remains limited, as only 41.8% of residents are aware of or have visited a SARC or shelter, while 58.2% remain unaware. This gap suggests that survivor support infrastructure is not only underdeveloped but also poorly publicized and inaccessible to many.

Government-provided support services include medical and psychosocial care, legal representation, shelter, and limited economic empowerment programs. However, these services are not holistic and are concentrated in urban centres. Public awareness is relatively balanced, with 51.3% of residents indicating familiarity, but the near-equal split underscores the need for consistent outreach and education. Stakeholders identify the shortage of SARCs and trained personnel as the most pressing gap, compounded by the absence of a dedicated GBV budget line in relevant ministries – a challenge attributed to "lack of interest and political will."

The GBV referral pathway in Kano includes medical, psychosocial, legal, and security support, as well as shelter referrals. However, communities are largely unfamiliar with referral directory, limiting its effectiveness. Survey data confirms this: hospitals and healthcare facilities are the most recognized entry point (59.2%), followed by police or community security options (44.8%). In contrast, awareness of support groups (8.1%) and legal representation (5.9%) remain extremely low, indicating that key components of survivor support are underutilized or poorly communicated.

Informal support systems, such as family, religious centers, and community groups, primarily offer counseling and referrals. While these systems aim to protect survivors from stigma, they are often rated as "not very effective" by stakeholders due to limited knowledge of formal referral pathways. In some cases, families contribute to case withdrawal, especially when minors are involved, driven by social pressure and concerns about family reputation. Public opinion is divided on the effectiveness of informal support, with 50.6% of residents viewing it as helpful and 49.4% expressing doubt, suggesting both reliance and growing skepticism.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness and engagement with SARCs and shelters for GBV survivors have improved over the three-year period, from 29.4% in 2023 and 27% in 2024, to 41.8% in 2025. While this upward trend is encouraging, the fact that nearly 60% of residents remain unaware indicates persistent gaps in access and visibility.

The most notable progress was in the integration of healthcare into GBV response systems. Awareness of healthcare-based reporting options rose dramatically from 10.5% in 2023 to 48% in 2024, and further to 59.2% in 2025, however, awareness of police declined, from 53.8% in 2023 to 56.9% in 2024, and further to 44.8% in 2025, while legal pathway awareness fell sharply from 21% in 2023 to 12.7% in 2024, and further down to just 5.9% in 2025. These declines may reflect reduced public confidence or limited visibility of these channels, and they highlight the need to reinforce formal reporting mechanisms alongside healthcare options.

Perceptions of informal support systems shifted significantly between 2023 and 2025. In 2023, nearly 89% of respondents viewed family, friends, religious centers, and community groups as helpful to GBV survivors. This dropped to 54% in 2024 and further to 50.6% in 2025, suggesting growing skepticism about their effectiveness. This shift may reflect increased awareness of the limitations of informal systems and a gradual move toward formal services.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

The state educates the public about GBV mostly through media, town-hall meetings, and workshops, but materials are not adequately disseminated. Pamphlets and posters from past campaigns are still visible in strategic locations. Jingles, once used for awareness, are no longer aired due to funding constraints. In the past year, the state led awareness activities during the 16 Days of Activism in collaboration with NGOs such as NAPTIP, GGHN, Mercy Corps, and CITAD, focusing on LGAs like Ungogo, Fagge, and Kano Municipal Council. Officials acknowledge that this coverage is insufficient, and no new IEC materials have been developed or distributed by the government in the past year. CSOs and NGOs continue to fill this gap.

Public awareness of GBV programs is moderate. In 2025, 58.6% of respondents reported familiarity with GBV information efforts. While this reflects some progress, the remaining 41.4% who are unaware highlight the need for broader outreach and more inclusive communication strategies. Among those who accessed GBV information, radio (43.4%) and social media (34.8%) were the most common sources. Traditional platforms such as television, newspapers, and schools were less frequently cited, suggesting a shift in preferred communication channels.

There is strong public support for integrating GBV and child sexual abuse education into school curricula, with 74.3% of residents in favor. This presents a clear opportunity for policy action in the education sector. Currently, schools in Kano State address GBV informally through clubs such as Peace Clubs, Health Clubs and GBV clubs established under AGILE project. Posters explaining GBV, appropriate responses, and reporting mechanisms are displayed in schools, but no standardized curriculum exists. However, a School Safety and Security Desk has been established in schools, with trained teachers handling reported cases. Students can report incidents directly to teachers, the safety desk, friends, or school authorities.

Efforts to include persons with disabilities in GBV programs have improved. Stakeholders confirm that PWDs are now actively involved, with materials adapted to various disability types: audio, visual, simplified messages, and pictorial formats. CSO actors note that all committees include PWD representatives. Despite these efforts, awareness of tailored GBV materials remains low. While audio content is relatively well-known (52.6%), formats such as braille (14.8%), sign interpretation (10%), and picture-based messages (11.8%) are significantly less recognized. This suggests that outreach efforts are not yet fully inclusive and require more targeted strategies to reach individuals with sensory or cognitive impairments.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of GBV education programs fluctuated over the past three years. It declined from 60.8% in 2023 to 45% in 2024, before rebounding to 58.6% in 2025. While the recovery is encouraging, the volatility underscores the need for consistent and sustained public engagement to maintain long-term awareness. Awareness of GBV materials tailored for persons with disabilities showed mixed progress. While some formats gained visibility, others remained obscure. These inconsistent trends point to the need for a more inclusive and balanced approach, one that ensures accessibility across all disability groups and maintains steady public awareness over time.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

In 2024, Kano State allocated ₦3.7 billion to GBV programs, representing 0.68% of its total state budget. However, the state spent only ₦461.12 million of the allocated amount, achieving a 12.59% implementation rate, which means 87% of budgeted resources remained unutilized by the end of the fiscal year. The actual GBV expenditure constituted just 0.14% of the state's total spending. On a per capita basis, Kano State spent approximately ₦56.31 per female resident on GBV-related programs, among the lowest in Nigeria despite having a population of over 17 million people.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Kano State had actual GBV expenditures of ₦461.12 million in 2024, ₦164.32 million in 2023, and ₦221.66 million in 2022. These figures correspond to performance rates of 12.59%, 9%, and 22% respectively. In 2024, Kano State included three GBV-specific line items in its budget: "Provision of Economic Empowerment for Victims of Sexual Gender-Based Violence" (sic) with an allocation of ₦600 million; "Establishment of Sexual Assault Referral Centres Across Four Emirates" with ₦50 million; and "Provision of Free Services (Screening, Treatment, Counselling, etc.) for Victims of Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)" (sic) with an allocation of ₦10 million. None of these line items recorded any implementation. Per capita spending stood at ₦56.31 in 2024, ₦20.74 in 2023, and ₦28.91 in 2022. While the three-year figures are very low, the sharp increase in 2024 after very low figures in the prior two years suggests a recent but uneven intensification of fiscal attention to GBV-related interventions.

Human Angle Stories

Given away in early marriage, 35-year-old Aisha constantly faces domestic violence from her husband. Her husband deliberately withholds food, clothing, and basic care from her. He does not allow her to go out. She doesn't own a phone or a radio, and people avoid her because of his behavior.

When asked why she never reported him, her answer lays bare the weakness of legal justice structures: "Even if I report him, I'll still end up back in his house. Whenever I try to seek help, he still comes back and beats me again. I have nowhere else to go." Aisha's story underscores systemic failures in access to information and awareness. It is a call to action for awareness campaigns to reach even the most isolated homes.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	Kano State has not domesticated the VAPP Act as of November 2025. GBV cases are prosecuted under the Northern Nigerian Penal Code and Shari'a Law, which focus primarily on physical violence and lack the broader, survivor-centered protections of the VAPP Act.	Fast-track the domestication of the VAPP Act through collaboration of relevant stakeholders including the State House of Assembly, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Women Affairs, religious leaders, and civil society organizations to finalize and pass the bill into law.
	Early marriage remains prevalent in rural communities with religious backing, and cultural expectations around preserving family honor contribute to underreporting and perpetuate GBV.	Intensify community engagement and reform efforts by expanding sensitization campaigns through religious leaders, traditional rulers, and community structures to challenge harmful norms while respecting cultural contexts.
 Access to Legal Justice	Legal aid services are available in only seven of the state's 44 LGAs (16%), concentrated primarily in metropolitan areas, leaving rural communities underserved.	Expand legal aid services to cover at least 50% of LGAs by establishing satellite legal aid offices in underserved areas, deploying mobile legal aid units to rural communities, and partnering with CSOs to provide paralegal support in remote locations.
	The proportion of residents who would not feel safe serving as witnesses more than doubled over three years, from 9.8% in 2023 to 12% in 2024, and then to 27.3% in 2025, indicating growing concerns about personal risk and potential retaliation.	Establish a comprehensive witness protection program that includes physical protection measures, confidentiality protocols, and psychological support for witnesses and survivors. Conduct public awareness campaigns to communicate available protections and build confidence in the system.
 Support Services	Kano State has only one operational SARC (WARAKA Centre) serving all 44 LGAs, and it is reportedly not fully functional due to the absence of medical personnel and the lack of free services. Two completed SARCs at Rano and Gaya remain non-functional due to lack of equipment and staffing.	Immediately equip proposed Rano and Gaya SARCs with necessary medical supplies and deploy trained personnel. Fast-track construction of the proposed Bichi and Karaye SARCs, ensuring adequate budget allocation for operational costs including staff salaries, medical supplies, and facility maintenance.
	Communities are largely unfamiliar with the referral directory, limiting effectiveness of the pathway. Only 8.1% of residents are aware of support groups, and 5.9% know about legal representation as referral options.	Develop and widely disseminate simplified referral pathway information by creating user-friendly materials (posters, flyers, digital content) showing step-by-step reporting and support options with contact information.
 Information and Awareness	The state does not currently have GBV IEC materials available. Existing pamphlets and posters are from past NGO interventions, and jingles are no longer aired due to funding constraints. No new materials were developed or distributed by the government in the past year.	Develop and distribute comprehensive GBV IEC materials by allocating specific budgets for production of pamphlets, posters, radio jingles, and digital content. Establish a sustainable distribution plan covering all 44 LGAs with particular focus on rural communities.
	Public awareness of GBV education programs fluctuated from 60.8% in 2023 to 45% in 2024, then rebounded to 58.6% in 2025. Only 3 LGAs (Ungogo, Fagge, KMC) were specifically mentioned as covered by recent awareness programs, representing less than 7% of the state's 44 LGAs.	Institutionalize continuous awareness programs by developing an annual GBV awareness calendar with activities distributed across all LGAs throughout the year rather than concentrated around periods like the 16 Days of Activism. Establish partnerships with community-based organizations to ensure sustained presence at the grassroots level.
	While audio content is relatively well-known (52.6%), other formats such as braille, visual aids, and sign interpretation are significantly less recognized.	Produce GBV materials in multiple formats including braille, large prints, audio, sign language videos, simplified language, and pictorial content. Train awareness program facilitators on disability inclusion and ensure sign language (and other inclusive methods) are available at all public sensitization events.
 Budget and Spending	Kano State left 87% of its ₦3.7 billion GBV budget unspent in 2024, with all three specific GBV line items—economic empowerment (₦600M), referral centres (₦50M), and victim services (₦10M)—recording zero implementation.	Create a GBV Budget Implementation Task Force with quarterly fund release authority to immediately activate the three dormant line items, prioritizing the ₦50 million referral centres as a quick-win pilot program.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



Kebbi State

Land of Equity

Statue of Liberty

Kebbi State

Population: 5,689,746



Overall Grade 57.9%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,089)*

GENDER



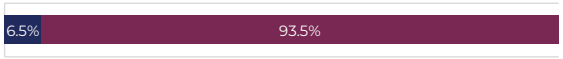
AREA



AGE



DISABILITY STATUS



SARCs: 1

Shelters: 0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

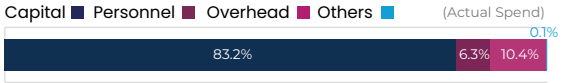
BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦4.21bn
(This accounts for **1.4%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦1.11bn
(This accounts for **26.3%** of total allocation to the ministry)





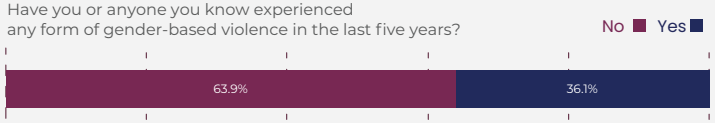
Per Capita Spending

₦383.63

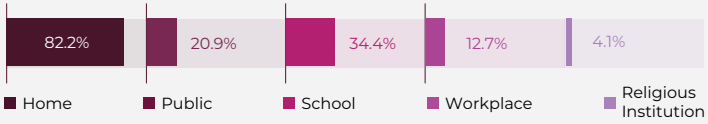
Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	83.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	50.0%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	43.8%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	50.0%

GBV Context 2025

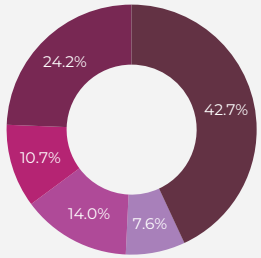
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



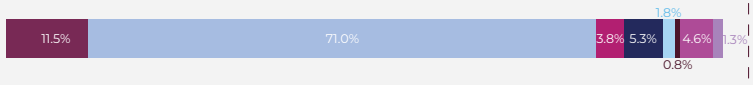
Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



Where did you or the person first seek help?

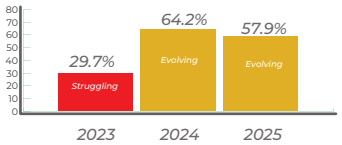


Domestic
Physical
Sexual
Mental
Economic
Cultural practices

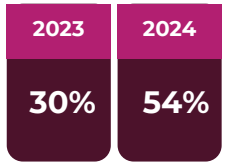
Family/relatives
Police/law enforcement authority
Friends/neighbors
Traditional/community leader or group
Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity)
Employer/Work colleague/Labour group
I did not seek help
Lawyer

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



43%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 48.3%	+1 ▲ LP 75.0%	LP 83.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 25.0%	+1 ▲ ALJ 68.8%	ALJ 50.0%
Support Services	SS 25.0%	+1 ▲ SS 56.3%	−1 ▼ SS 43.8%
Information and Awareness	IA 25.0%	+1 ▲ IA 62.5%	IA 62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 58.3%	BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Establishment of two specialized GBV courts established which conclude cases within 3-4 months, with 85-90% prosecution success rates
- Increase in witness confidence rebounded from 47% (2024) to 65.9% (2025)
- Quality of GBV information materials improved substantially; those finding content "completely useful" rose from 10.8% (2023) to 39.8% (2025)
- The proportion finding GBV educational materials completely useful rose from 9.2% in 2023 to 27.9%, showing better quality and relevance

Areas of Concern

- Public knowledge of GBV laws collapsed from 83.0% (2023) to 37.7% (2025)
- Awareness of GBV convictions plummeted from 53.0% (2024) to 15.6% (2025) - shows enforcement outcomes are not being communicated, undermining deterrence
- There is a disconnect between system capacity and public knowledge. Only 39.5% know specialized GBV courts exist, and just 52.8% believe survivors can access legal justice despite 85-90% court success rates.
- Improving services remains unknown and underutilized. Awareness of shelters and SARCs fell from 53.0% (2023) to 21.6% (2025), even as perceived functionality rose from 39% (2024) to 45.5% (2025)
- There is a severe geographic inequality in service distribution. Only 36.6% report services are accessible in rural area

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The Ministry of Justice, in partnership with CSOs (e.g., WRAPA), led advocacy engagements with policymakers to promote the adoption and review of GBV laws and guidelines.
- Government and CSOs conducted targeted legal-literacy campaigns (e.g., scheduled radio segments and community townhalls) to increase public awareness of GBV laws.

Access to Legal Justice

- The Legal Aid Council facilitated free legal representation for survivors, particularly prioritizing indigent women and girls in rural LGAs.

Support Services

- In collaboration with the TWG, the Ministry of Women Affairs facilitated structured partnerships between SARCs and health facilities to streamline survivor referral and case monitoring.

Information and Awareness

- Communication teams implemented periodic GBV awareness programs through radio and social media to provide information on available services and GBV reporting channels.
- Under the AGILE initiative, the Ministry of Education worked with schools to integrate GBV/child-protection messaging into student safety sessions and orientation programs.

Change Spotlight

Kebbi State's most notable achievement between 2023 and 2025 is the establishment and effective operation of two specialized GBV courts, which have significantly strengthened accountability and accelerated justice for survivors. These courts, staffed by both male and female judges, concluded about 50 cases in 2024 and secured 21 additional convictions in 2025, with officials reporting 85–90% conviction rates for well-investigated cases. This marks a major shift from previous years when cases were often delayed or dismissed due to weak evidence and community interference.

The courts have also reduced case timelines to 3–4 months, easing the burden on survivors and improving public trust—reflected in witness confidence rising from 47% in 2024 to 65.9% in 2025. Overall, the specialized GBV courts represent a transformative reform in Kebbi State's GBV response system.

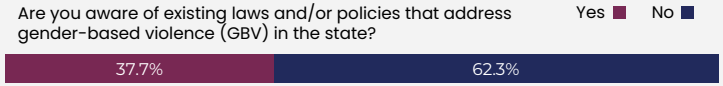
Kebbi State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 57.9%

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 ■

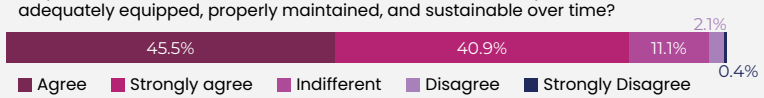
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

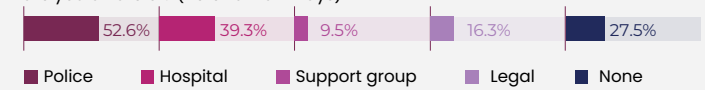
Yes ■ No ■



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)



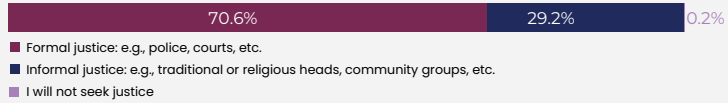
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

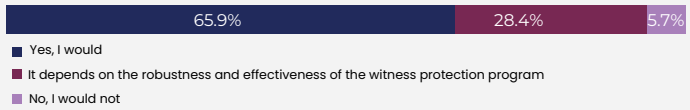


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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?

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?



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



Kebbi State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 57.9%

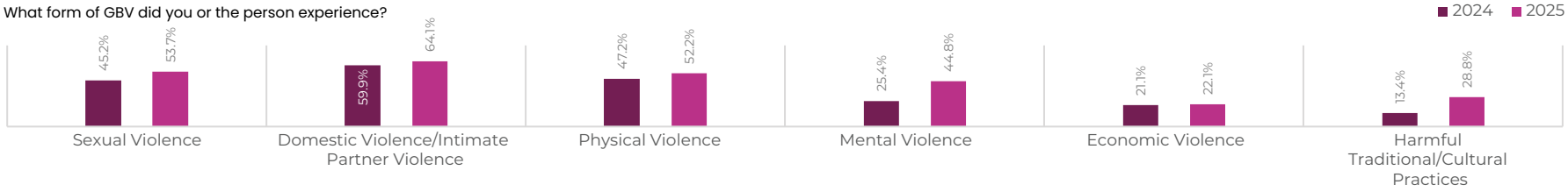
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



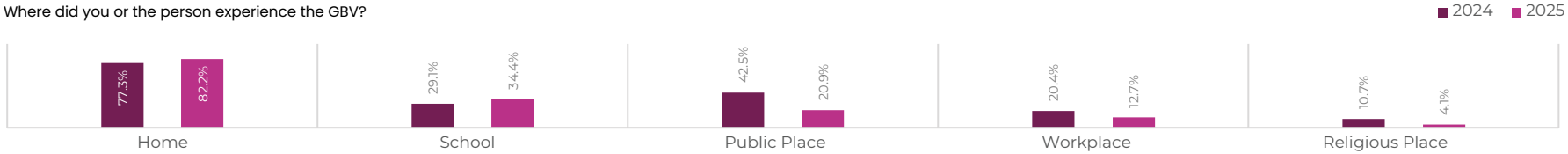
36.1%

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

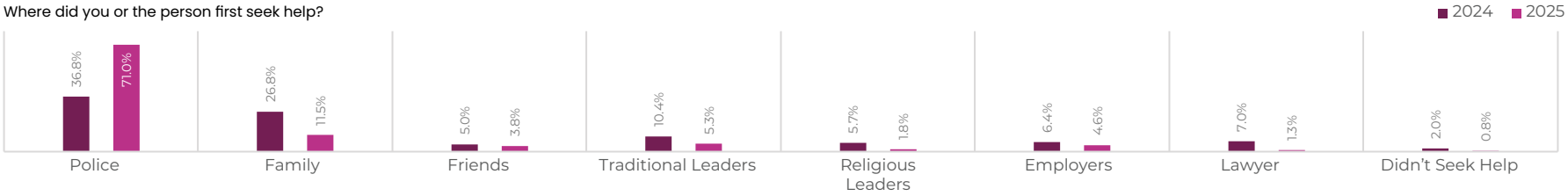
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



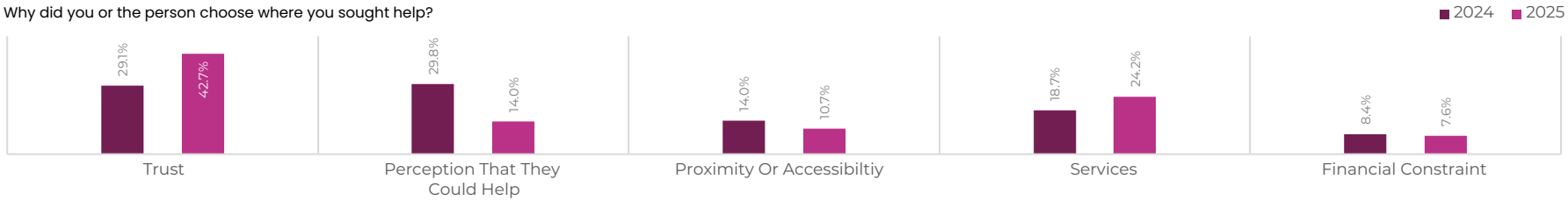
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

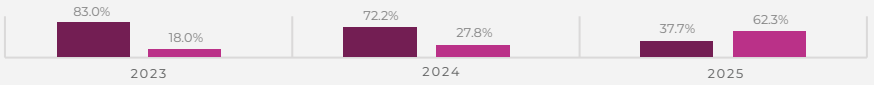


Kebbi State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

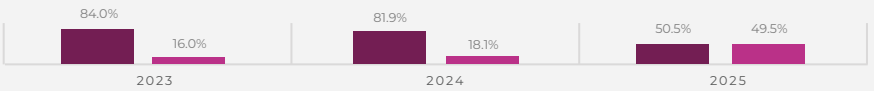
Overall Grade 57.9%

LAWS AND POLICIES

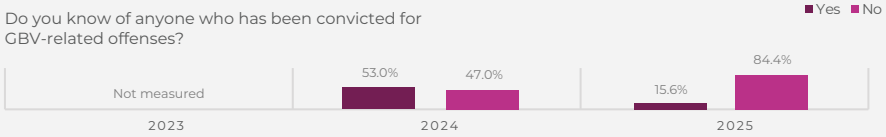
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

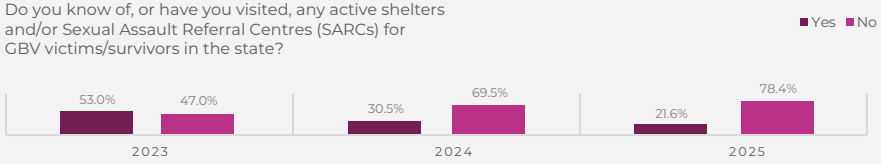


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

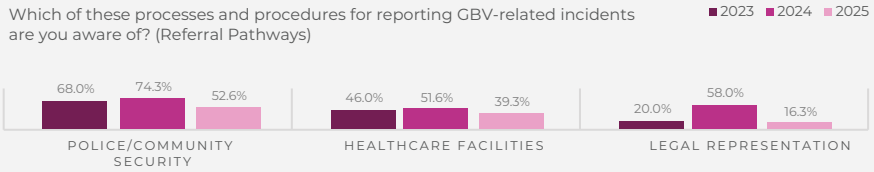


SUPPORT SERVICES

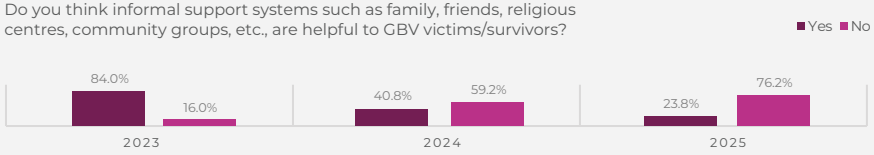
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

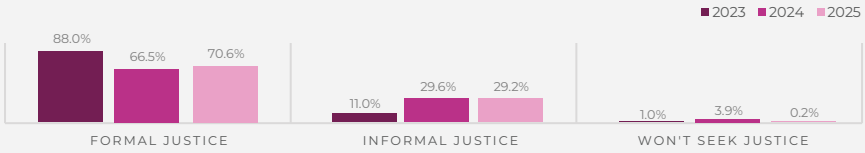


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

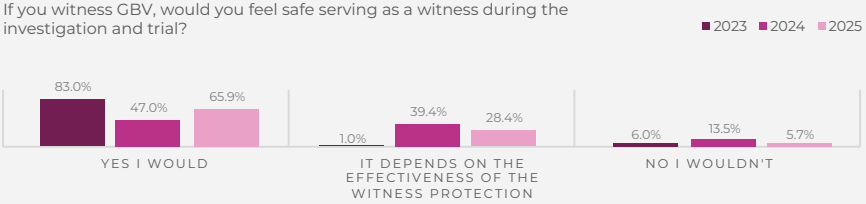


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

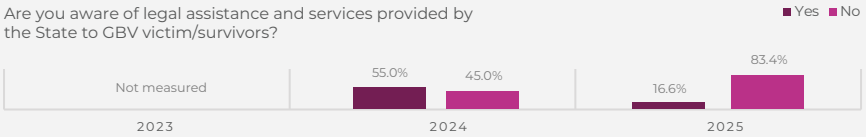
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

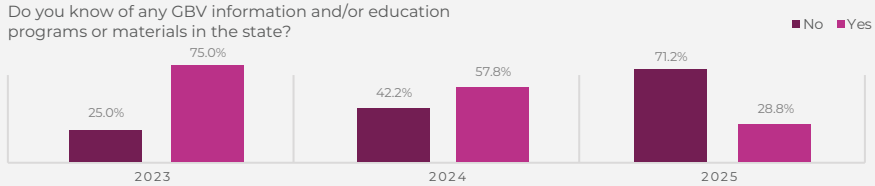


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

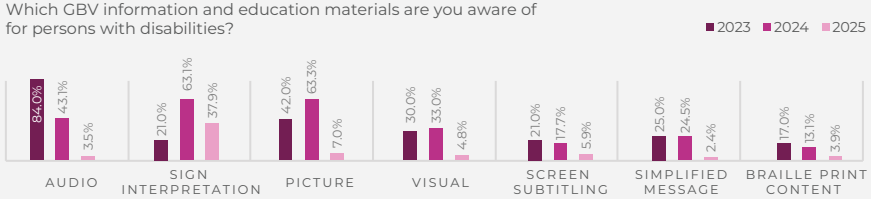


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

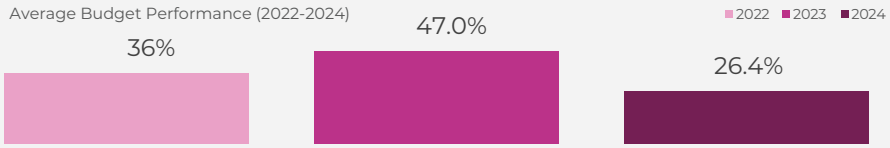


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

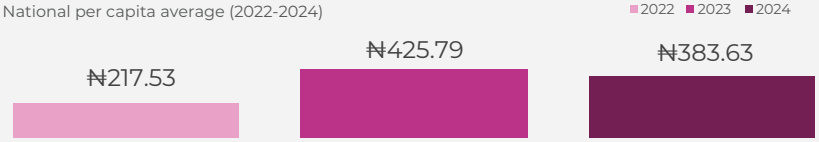


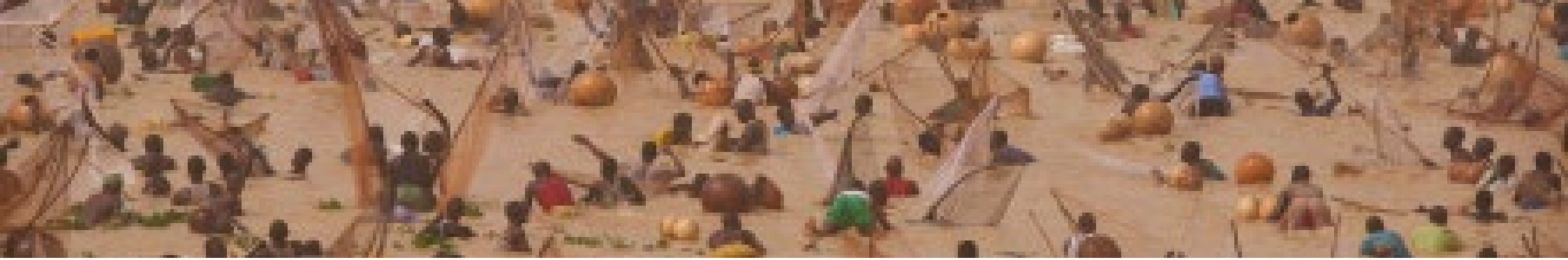
BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Kebbi State domesticated the VAPP Act in 2021, reducing the age of consent from 18 to 14 years, and introducing a survivor-compensation clause that specifies how victims should be compensated, a provision previously left ambiguous. Religious and traditional leaders participated in public hearings to align the law with local values. Two specialized GBV courts established by the Chief Judge handle cases exclusively, with dedicated male and female judges ensuring gender balance. In 2024, approximately 50 cases resulted in life imprisonment convictions; by mid-2025, 21 additional cases had secured similar sentences. Officials report that well-investigated cases now achieve 85–90% conviction rates, a significant improvement from previous years when investigative gaps undermined prosecutions. The Legal Aid Council also files civil damages to secure compensation for survivors beyond criminal convictions.

However, public awareness remains limited: only 37.7% of respondents knew GBV laws exist, and just 15.6% were aware of any convictions. Interviews reveal that many survivors still approach community or religious leaders first, leading to delayed reporting, evidence loss, or informal settlements that obstruct formal justice. While Sharia and customary practices do not inherently conflict with GBV laws, traditional leaders sometimes discourage formal reporting to preserve community harmony, perpetuating harmful practices like forced marriage and child marriage that fuel GBV incidents.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

The state strengthened its legal framework on GBV through domestication of the VAPP and Child Rights Acts and the creation of two specialized GBV courts. Despite these reforms, public awareness of formal GBV laws has declined steadily: from 83.0% in 2023 to 72% in 2024, dropping further to 37.7% in 2025. This pattern suggests that legal provisions are not reaching the broader population effectively. Confidence in customary and religious laws to prevent or respond to GBV fell sharply from 84.0% in 2023 to 81.9% in 2024, then stabilized at 50.5% in 2025, highlighting an increasing reliance on formal legal frameworks as informal mechanisms are perceived as insufficient.

Knowledge of GBV convictions showed a notable drop: 53.0% in 2024 reported knowing someone convicted, but this fell to 15.6% in 2025, reflecting weak dissemination of enforcement outcomes. Overall, these trends point to a widening gap between legal reforms and public awareness, emphasizing the need for sustained outreach and enhanced visibility of GBV enforcement activities.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

GBV survivors access justice through multiple entry points: police Gender Desks, Legal Aid Council, vigilante groups, Hisbah, and the Ministry of Justice's GBV unit. The two specialized courts resolve cases within three to six months, achieving 85–90% conviction rates. The Legal Aid Council, now staffed by three officers (up from one) plus 15 volunteer lawyers, provides free representation, civil damages claim, and transportation support. However, only 52.8% of respondents believe survivors can access legal justice, and just 39.5% are aware of specialized GBV courts. Coverage remains concentrated in urban areas like Birnin Kebbi, Argungu, and Kalgo, while distant LGAs like Zuru, Yauri, and Sakaba, some over 200km away, remain underserved due to insecurity and distance.

Enforcement challenges persist: families withdraw cases under pressure or for out-of-court settlements; influential perpetrators bribe victims' families; police investigations suffer from inadequate resources and manpower; and stigmatization discourages reporting. Informal justice systems, traditional and religious leaders, often resolve cases through reconciliation or compensation rather than prosecution, obstructing formal processes. One case involving a teenage girl was settled financially by a district head, resulting in lost forensic evidence by the time police intervened. While informal systems sometimes refer serious cases to authorities and mobilize communities, they frequently prioritize family honor over survivor justice, leading to underreporting and weakened prosecutions.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, notable changes were observed in the access to legal justice for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV). In 2023, 88.0% of respondents expressed a preference for formal justice mechanisms. However, this figure dropped to 66.5% in 2024 before experiencing a slight increase to 70.6% in 2025. In contrast, the reliance on informal justice systems rose substantially, starting at 11.0% in 2023 and reaching nearly 30% by 2025. This trend indicates a growing engagement with alternative pathways alongside traditional legal institutions. Furthermore, confidence among survivors in serving as witnesses showed considerable fluctuation. In 2023, 83.3% felt safe to participate as witnesses; this number sharply declined to 47% in 2024 but rebounded to 65.9% in 2025. A significant portion of respondents (28.4% in 2025) highlighted that their confidence was conditional on the perceived effectiveness of witness protection measures.

Additionally, awareness of state-provided legal assistance saw a dramatic decline, plummeting from 55% in 2024 to just 16.6% in 2025. This suggests a critical gap in communication and outreach efforts aimed at survivors of GBV. Overall, while the preference for formal justice mechanisms remains significant, the declining awareness and fluctuating trust levels underscore the urgent need for improved information dissemination and support systems for survivors.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Kebbi State operates one functional Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) at Kalgo Medical Centre, providing free medical treatment, psychosocial counseling, transportation, feeding, and legal services to survivors and one guardian. The SARC receives ₦500,000 monthly from the First Lady's office (increased from ₦250,000) to support operations. In 2025, 67.4% of survivors accessed medical care and 59.7% received counseling. However, services are centralized: survivors from distant LGAs like Yauri (200km) and Sakaba (270km) must travel to Kalgo, with staff also commuting from Birnin Kebbi, causing delays that exacerbate trauma. Three additional SARCs in Yauri, Zuru, and Argungu have received government approval and are undergoing civil service procurement processes. Each of the 225 primary health care facilities across 21 LGAs has trained Gender Desk Officers (GDOs) who provide first-line response and referrals, though only 36.6% of respondents reported rural accessibility.

A multi-sectoral referral pathway developed by IHP includes contact numbers for facility in-charges, police, Hisbah, Civil Defence, and gender desk officers across health, justice, and women affairs ministries, though it requires updating due to staff retirements and transfers. Shelters remain non-functional: one in Aliero Rukwata and one at the Ministry of Women Affairs exist but lack resources; 12 LGA-level shelters are dilapidated. The Ministry of Women Affairs provides vocational training and recently empowered 50 survivors with ₦50,000 each. Major gaps include absent shelter infrastructure, inadequate medical consumables requiring staff to self-fund supplies, and families/community leaders who discourage reporting, prioritizing stigma avoidance over survivor support.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness and utilization of shelters and SARCs have declined sharply between 2023 and 2025. In 2023, 53.0% of respondents knew of or had visited these facilities, dropping to 30.5% in 2024 and 21.6% in 2025, despite a slight increase in perceived functionality from 39% in 2024 to 45.5% in 2025.

Knowledge of formal referral pathways fluctuated: awareness of police reporting rose from 68.3% in 2023 to 74.3% in 2024 before falling to 52.5% in 2025, while healthcare and legal channels showed inconsistent patterns. Reliance on informal support systems also declined significantly, from 84.0% in 2023 to 40.8% in 2024 and then to 23.8% in 2025, indicating decreasing confidence in family, community, and religious networks. These trends highlight gaps in outreach, awareness, and accessibility, suggesting that even functional facilities remain underutilized, particularly in rural or hard-to-reach areas.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

GBV awareness campaigns reach 59.3% of respondents through radio (63.8%), television (54.6%), social media (48.2%), and schools (38.5%). The Ministry of Education integrates GBV content into curricula through Family Life and HIV Education, Social Studies, and Basic Science from primary through tertiary levels, with every school displaying GBV awareness indicators and designating focal officers from committees comprising principals, teachers, students, mothers' associations, and PTAs. The Ministry developed training manuals and conducts annual sensitization across all 21 LGAs through six zonal education offices. The Ministry of Women Affairs, TWG, and Ministry of Justice distribute IEC materials, banners, flyers, t-shirts, and keyholders, reaching approximately 60–70% of communities during the 16 Days of Activism, with LGA chairmen's wives mobilizing grassroots participation.

However, awareness remains uneven: the Ministry of Justice claimed that some workplaces now have GBV desk officers following increased domestic violence cases, but traditional leaders and health facilities receive less coverage. For persons with disabilities, professional teachers use audio, sign language, and picture-based formats, with sign language interpreters brought in as needed, though the Ministry lacks in-house capacity. The TWG includes disability representatives and collaborates with the State Commission for Disabled Persons. Despite these efforts, 37.7% awareness of GBV laws and limited reach to remote areas indicate need for updated, disability-inclusive communication strategies and stronger engagement with religious and traditional institutions to ensure equitable information access.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV information and education programs has declined sharply between 2023 and 2025. In 2023, 75.0% of respondents were aware of such programs, dropping to 57.8% in 2024 and just 28.8% in 2025, highlighting a significant reduction in outreach. Despite this, the perceived usefulness of materials has improved, with those finding content completely useful rising from 10.8% in 2023 to 16% in 2024 and 39.8% in 2025, suggesting improvements in the quality or clarity of the materials.

Awareness of disability-inclusive materials has declined even more dramatically, from 84.2% in 2023 to 58% in 2024 and 3.5% in 2025, indicating almost total neglect of accessible formats. These trends show that while content quality may be improving, overall reach and inclusivity have weakened, requiring targeted strategies to ensure equitable access to GBV information.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Kebbi State's 2024 GBV budget performance reflects moderate commitment with mixed implementation results. The state allocated ₦4.21 billion to GBV programs, representing 1.4% of its total budget. However, actual spending of ₦1.10 billion represents only 26.4% of the allocated amount, meaning nearly three-quarters of designated GBV funds remained unspent by year-end.

This 0.58% share of total actual expenditure indicates that GBV programs received less priority during implementation than during planning. The per capita expenditure of ₦383.63 suggests some investment reached communities, but the substantial unspent balance points to systemic bottlenecks, whether in fund release procedures, implementation capacity, or project readiness that prevented the state from fully deploying resources to address gender-based violence as originally intended.

Changes Over Time (2022 to 2024)

The Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Kalgo Medical Centre has appeared repeatedly in Kebbi State's budget over the last three years. In 2022, the centre received an allocation of ₦37 million for equipping, yet actual spending amounted to only ₦4 million, representing a performance of 10.8%. In 2023, the same amount was allocated for the same purpose, but no implementation was recorded. In 2024, the centre received an increased allocation of ₦50 million for rehabilitation and equipping, yet again there was no record of implementation. Kebbi State continues to fall short in overall budget performance. In 2024, the state allocated ₦4.21 billion, but only ₦1.10 billion was expended, resulting in a performance rate of 26.4%. This figure is significantly low and underscores the state's persistent difficulty in executing projects and prioritising GBV-related spending. Per capita spending stood at ₦383.63 in 2024, ₦425.79 in 2023, and ₦217.53 in 2022. The substantial increase from 2022 to 2023 followed by a slight decline in 2024 suggests improved but uneven fiscal commitment to GBV-related interventions during the review period.

Human Angle Stories

When Amina (pseudonym) discovered that her young daughter had been sexually assaulted by a close family member, she turned first to the hospital and then the police, determined to seek justice. "I went to every office I knew, but after almost two years, nothing has changed."

After the alleged perpetrator's arrest, she recalls spending days at the State CID without updates, and the suspect was released. "Each time I go, they say the case file is missing or the hearing is postponed," she explained. Her persistence cost her everything: her savings, her marriage, and peace of mind. While she received minimal assistance of ₦50,000 in relief funds from the technical working group of the wife of the governor of Kebbi State and a sewing machine from a local NGO, her greater need remains unresolved: "I just want justice," she said. "If justice is done, my daughter will heal."

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	Legal reforms exist but are invisible to citizens. Only 37.7% are aware in 2025.	Integrate GBV legal literacy into routine community engagement using media, schools, religious institutions, and community influencers.
	Legal enforcement lacks visibility. 15.6% (2025) know that convictions occur.	Publish periodic updates on concluded GBV cases (anonymized) through state-led media briefings to demonstrate enforcement and build public confidence.
 Access to Legal Justice	Justice mechanisms are operational but poorly accessed.	Establish GBV desk officers at police stations and courts, with visible signage showing reporting steps and available support.
	Survivor participation is inconsistent due to safety concerns. Confidence in serving as witnesses dropped to 47% (2024) and only partially recovered to 65.9% (2025) from 83.0% in 2023.	Institutionalize a survivor-and-witness protection protocol, including anonymity options and safe transportation where necessary.
 Support Services	Support facilities exist but are not reaching users.	Conduct systematic referrals and awareness outreach through health workers, schools, and community structures, not only through media.
	Service access is geographically uneven. Only 36.6% (2025) of respondents say services are available in rural areas; delays occur because staff commute across multiple LGAs.	Deploy permanent multidisciplinary teams and fast-track the planned establishment of SARCs in Yauri, Zuru, and Argungu to improve rural access.
 Information and Awareness	Awareness of GBV information programs has collapsed, even though material quality has improved. Awareness fell from 84.2% (2023) to 58% (2024) and 3.5% (2025).	Allocate dedicated year-round budgets for sustained multi-channel awareness campaigns across all 21 LGAs. Recruit in-house sign language interpreters and establish mandatory accessibility standards for all GBV communication materials to ensure equitable access for persons with disabilities.
	Awareness of disability-inclusive GBV materials dropped drastically from 75.0% in 2023 to just 28.8% in 2025, showing a severe gap in accessible communication formats.	Prioritize disability-inclusive communication by investing in in-house capacity (e.g., sign language interpreters, accessible content production) and ensuring consistent distribution of adapted materials across all LGAs.
 Budget and Spending	Kebbi State allocated ₦4.21 billion (1.4% of total budget) to GBV programs in 2024 but spent only ₦1.11 billion, achieving a 26.3% implementation rate and leaving nearly three-quarters of designated GBV funds unspent	Establish a GBV Budget Implementation Task Force comprising the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Women Affairs, and relevant agencies to conduct quarterly expenditure reviews, fast-track approval processes, and provide technical support for improved project execution, targeting at least 60% budget implementation within 12 months.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



Kogi State

Confluence State

Lord Lugard's Rest House

Kogi State

Population: 5,686,921

50.3% Female | Male 49.7%

Overall Grade 54.6%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,068)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

71.4% | 28.6%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

73.2% | 26.8%

AGE

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

3.8% | 29.9% | 31.5% | 20.2% | 10.0% | 4.5%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

6.3% | 93.7%

SARCs

0

Shelters

0

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)

64.1%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ (Actual Spend)

3.6% | 10.0% | 86.4%

Per Capita Spending

₦421.01

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	75.0%
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	37.5%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	66.7%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

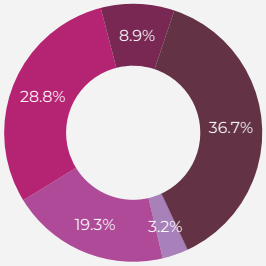
35.0% | 65.0%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

89.9% | 39.6% | 32.3% | 30.5% | 16.3%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

74.5% | 55.8% | 41.8% | 59.4% | 21.6% | 12.7%

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

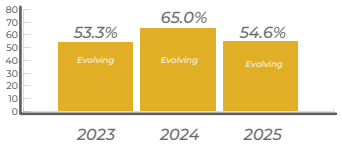
Where did you or the person first seek help?

41.9% | 38.8% | 5.6% | 5.9% | 3.0% | 2.6% | 1.2% | 1.0%

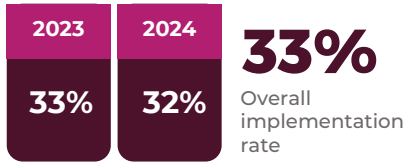
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



33%
Overall implementation rate

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%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- 37-3B GBV convictions secured in 2025 under the VAPP Law, a significant increase from negligible pre-VAPP rates, attributed to heightened judicial awareness and protection officer deployment.
- Nine dedicated family courts established at the magistrate and high court levels specifically for expediting GBV cases.
- VAPP Law expanded the rape definition to include "any form of penetration," making it gender-neutral and criminalizing conspiracy to rape as equivalent to the act itself.
- Gender desks now exist in all police divisions statewide, with hotlines for direct reporting all 21 LGAs.

Areas of Concern

- Harmful customary practices persist, particularly rituals in Kogi East (property disinheritance, forced isolation) and child marriage in uneducated communities
- Police cite severe logistic constraints, no vehicles for arrests, and limited access to forensic facilities.
- The state's only SARC remains non-operational as of 2025, despite being established in 2024 with assigned staff
- No government-run shelter exists; survivors relied on CSO staff personally acccmmodated them in private homes.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The state government produced and distributed simplified hard copies of the Kogi State VAPP Law across select LGAs to enhance grassroots understanding.
- The Kogi State House of Assembly reviewed mechanisms to harmonize traditional and formal GBV justice systems to improve rural access to redress.

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



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

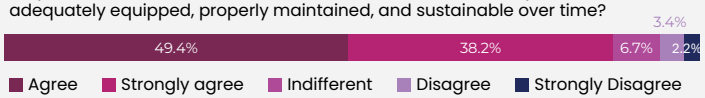


SUPPORT SERVICES

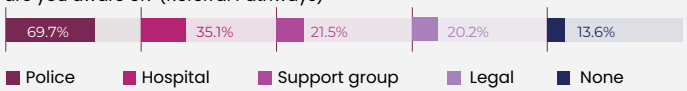
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state? — Yes / No



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)

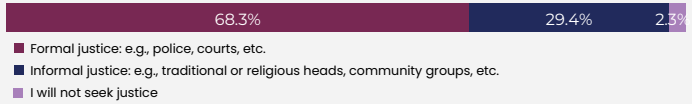


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors? — Yes / No

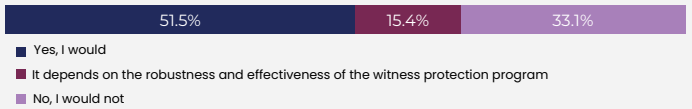


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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? — Yes / No



INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

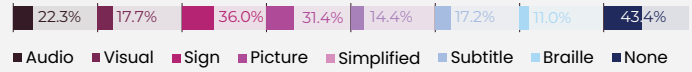
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state? — Yes / No



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



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



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?



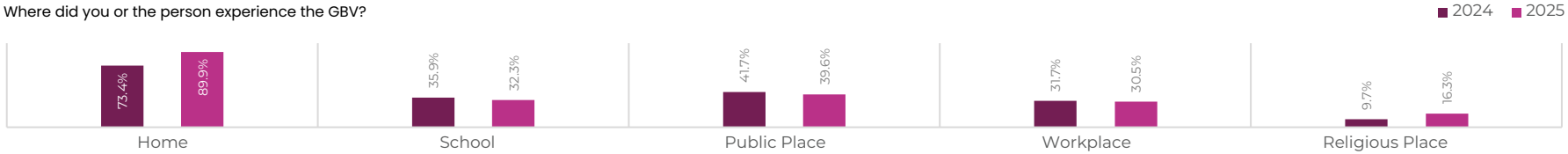
65.0%

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

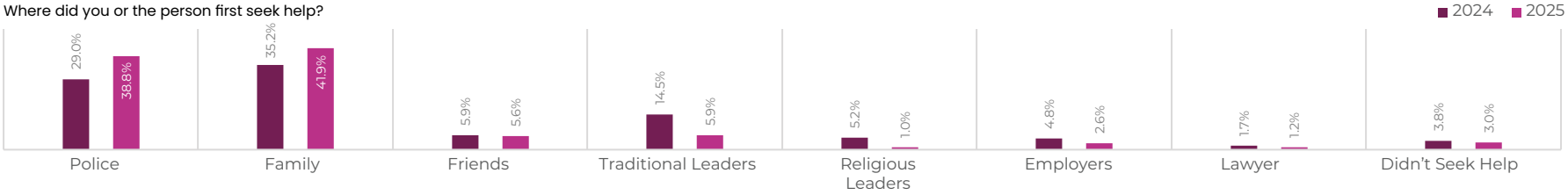
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



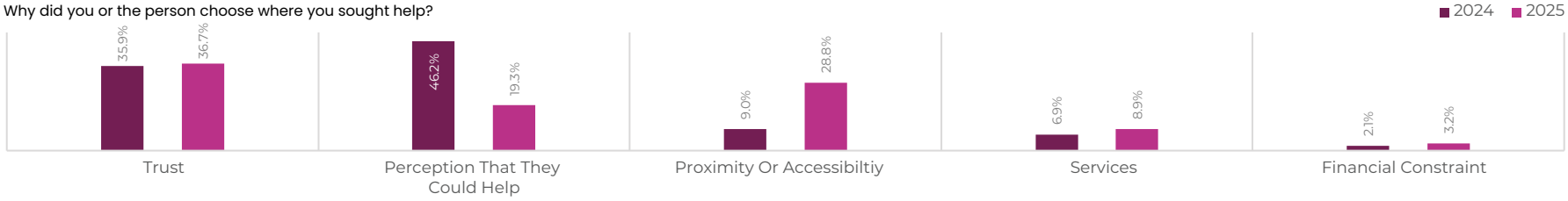
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

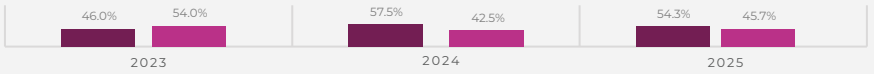


Kogi State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

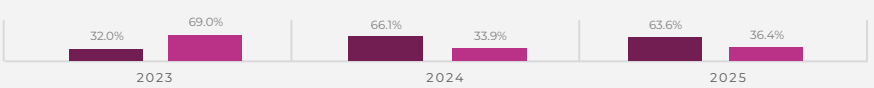
Overall Grade 54.6%

LAWS AND POLICIES

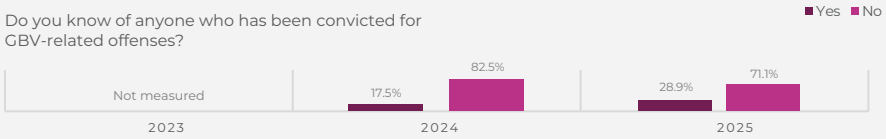
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

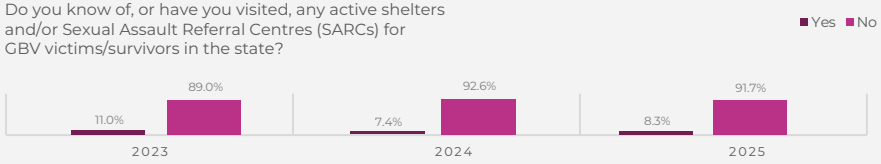


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

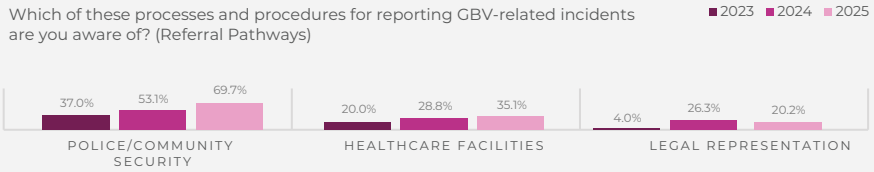


SUPPORT SERVICES

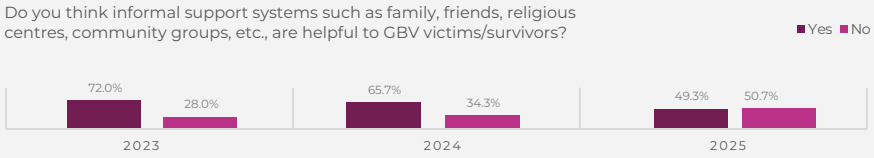
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

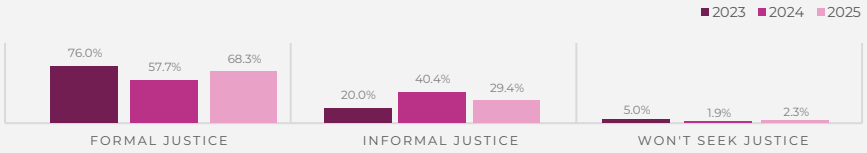


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

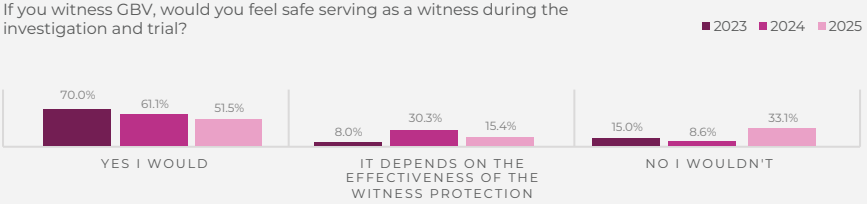


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

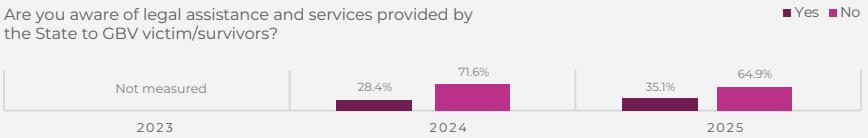
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

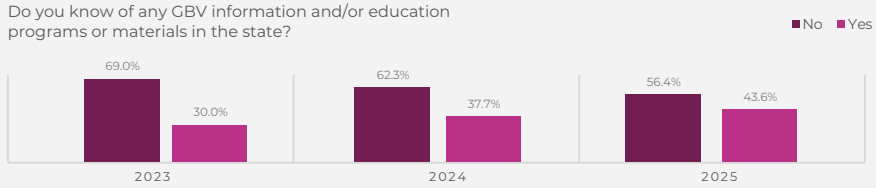


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

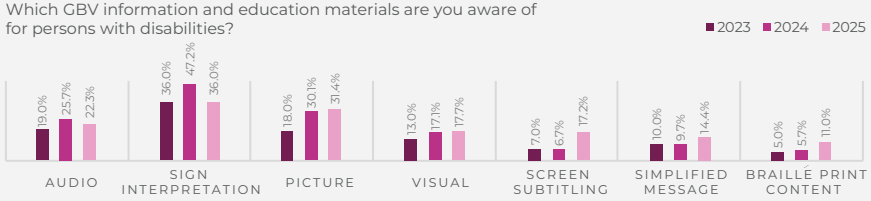


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

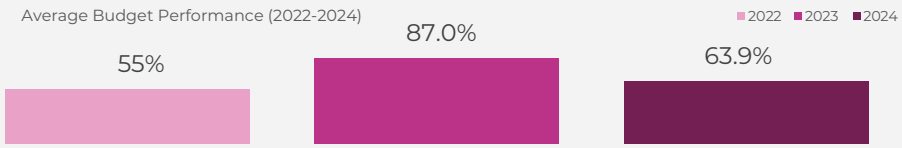


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

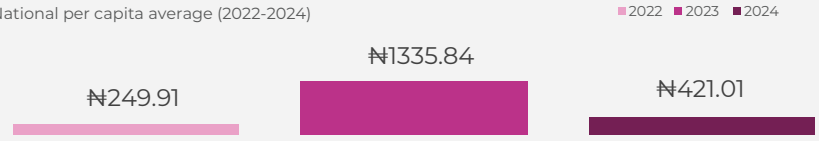


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

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 increase 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.



Kwara State

Confluence State

Owu Fall

Kwara State

Population: 4,058,962

50.5% Female | Male 49.5%

Overall Grade 69.6%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,038)*

GENDER — Female ■ Male ■

64.1% | 35.9%

AREA — Rural ■ Urban ■

47.8% | 52.2%

AGE

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

2.3% | 18.7% | 35.0% | 22.1% | 13.7% | 8.2%

DISABILITY STATUS — Yes ■ No ■

6.1% | 93.9%

SARCs: 5

Shelters: 4

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦326.33m

(This accounts for **0.1%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦100.54m

(This accounts for **30.8%** of total allocation to the ministry)

30.8%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ (Actual Spend)

19.8% | 44.8% | 35.4%

Per Capita Spending

₦49.09

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	75.0%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	93.8%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	58.3%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

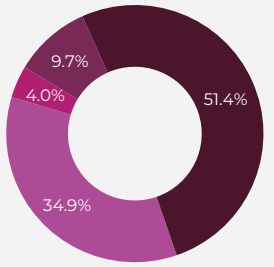
4.1% | 95.9%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

77.2% | 39.1% | 10.1% | 10.6% | 1.4%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

56.9% | 50.1% | 18.6% | 14.5% | 13.7% | 0.7%

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

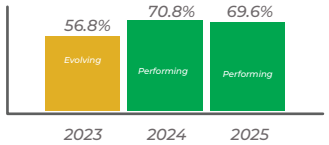
Where did you or the person first seek help?

41.3% | 32.3% | 9.3% | 8.5% | 7.6% | 0.4% | 0.2% | 0.3%

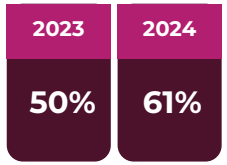
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



56%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	LP 75.0%	-1 ▼ LP 58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 62.5%	+1 ▲ ALJ 75.0%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	+1 ▲ SS 75.0%	-1 ▼ SS 62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3%	+1 ▲ IA 75.0%	+1 ▲ IA 93.8%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+2 ▲ BS 66.7%	-1 ▼ BS 58.3%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- The VAPP law amendment process is underway, with provisions for survivor funds, witness protection, and formal recognition of the GBV committee being drafted.
- Trust in formal justice systems remains high, with 84.7% of residents willing to report GBV through official channels and 74.1% willing to serve as witnesses.
- Traditional and religious leaders are increasingly referring GBV cases to formal authorities rather than settling them privately.

Areas of Concern

- Awareness of GBV laws dropped sharply from 53.3% in 2023 to 24.4% in 2025, despite ongoing sensitization efforts.
- Knowledge of available support services declined from 35.8% in 2023 to 17.6% in 2025, indicating weakened outreach.
- The toll-free GBV helpline has lapsed and remains inactive, reducing access to emergency services.
- Legal aid services and support facilities remain concentrated in only two of sixteen LGAs, leaving most areas underserved.
- Awareness of GBV education programs fell dramatically from 70.8% in 2023 to 16.3% in 2025, showing inconsistent community engagement.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The state government partnered with NGOs and the Ministry of Justice to draft amendments to the VAPP law, adding provisions for survivor funds, witness protection, and formal recognition of the GBV committee.
- Joint advocacy sessions were conducted with traditional and religious rulers across all senatorial districts to address harmful cultural practices..

Access to Legal Justice

- A rapid response team was established through collaboration between government and NGOs to investigate GBV cases and hold perpetrators accountable.
- Courts began issuing protection orders under the VAPP law to safeguard survivors and witnesses during legal proceedings, coordinated by the State Ministry of Justice.

Support Services

- Relevant staff in Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) across multiple LGAs received training on first-line response to provide immediate medical care to GBV survivors within 12 hours of reporting.
- Toll-free hotlines were deployed and promoted through radio, social media, and public events to facilitate direct access to emergency services.

Information and Awareness

- GBV awareness was integrated into the Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment (AGILE) program in secondary and tertiary schools, with a structured manual on GBV prevention, personal protection, and reporting mechanisms.
- The Classroom-to-Commissioner initiative was launched to create a direct channel for students to engage with policymakers on GBV and other issues.
- GBV-focused clubs were established in secondary schools by NGOs such as Abubaganli Foundation and OCDI to provide peer-led education and discussion

Change Spotlight

Kwara State has integrated GBV prevention into the World Bank-supported AGILE program, transforming how young people learn about gender-based violence. A structured manual on GBV and personal protection was developed, guiding extracurricular clubs and life-skills sessions in 100 secondary schools across 16 LGAs, reaching 27,000+ students. The program teaches practical skills on reporting, safety, and support services. Students now speak confidently about GBV issues and know where to report cases. The program is a model for peer-led awareness, replicable elsewhere. Training of Grievance Redress Committees and Focal Persons is ongoing in 898 schools statewide.

Kwara State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 69.6%

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?



Agree Strongly agree Indifferent Disagree Strongly Disagree

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



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



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

Kwara State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 69.6%

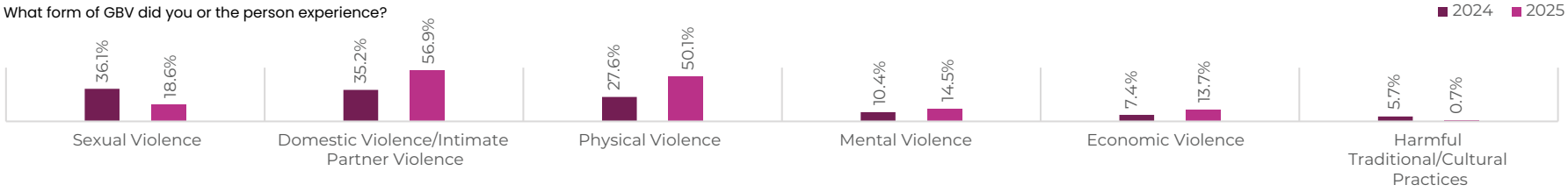
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



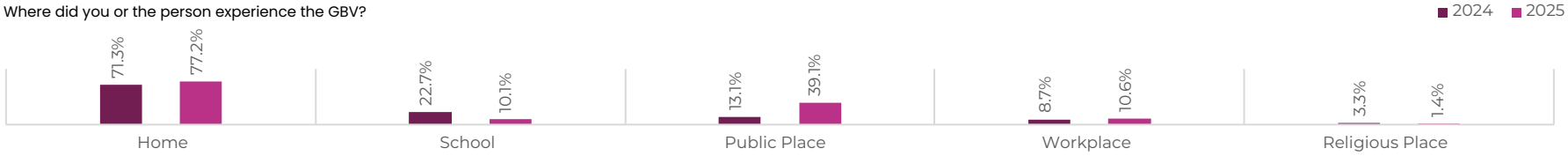
95.9%

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

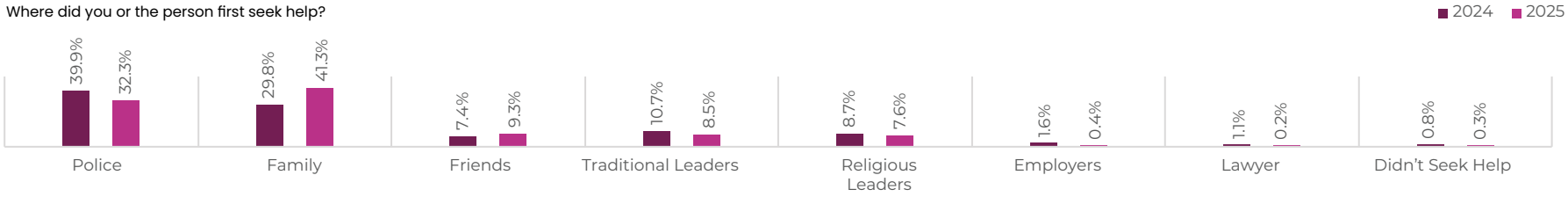
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



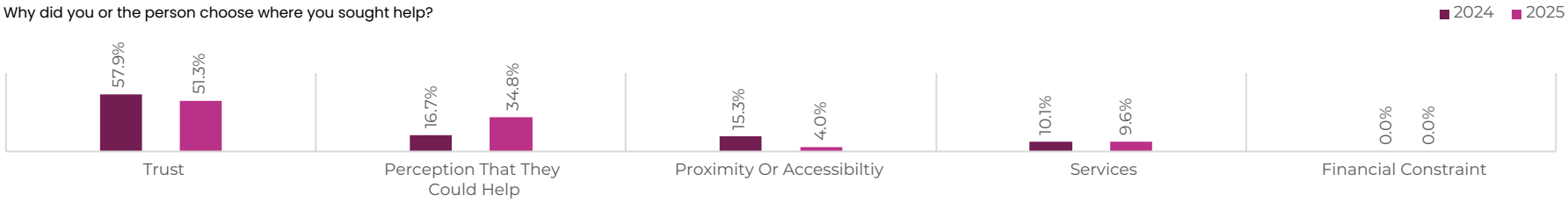
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

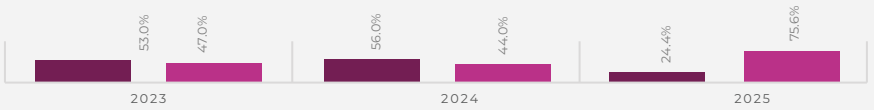


Kwara State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

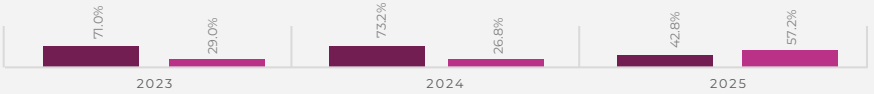
Overall Grade 69.6%

LAWS AND POLICIES

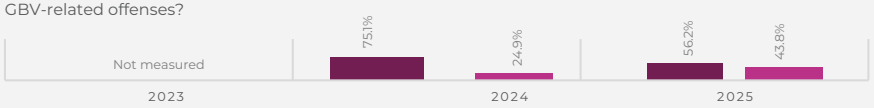
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

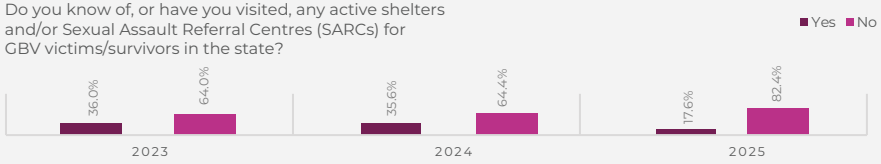


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

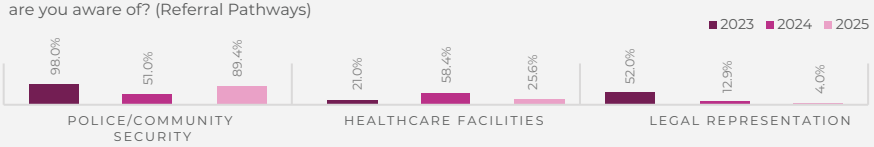


SUPPORT SERVICES

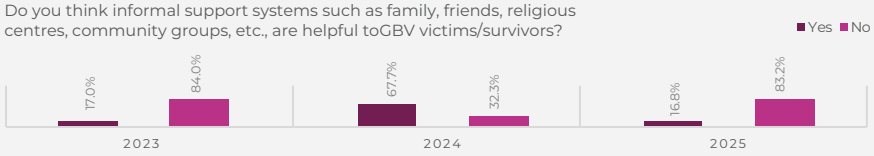
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

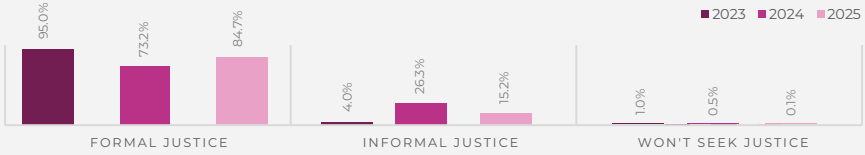


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

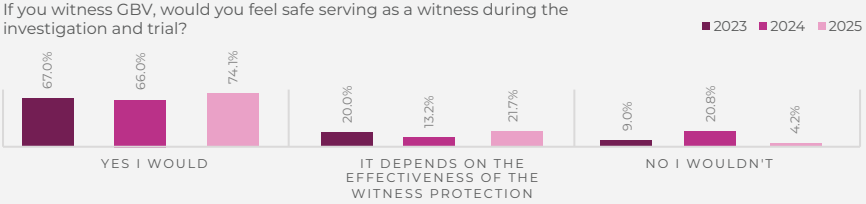


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

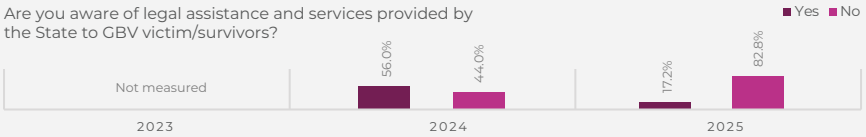
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

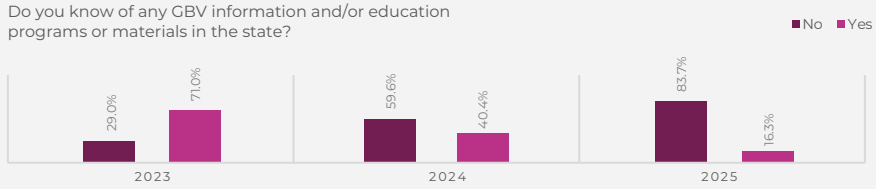


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

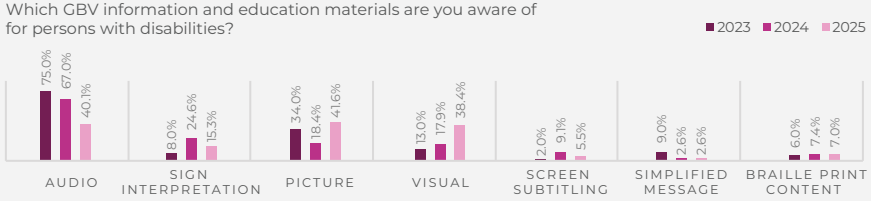


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

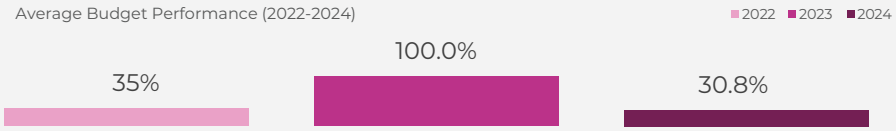


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

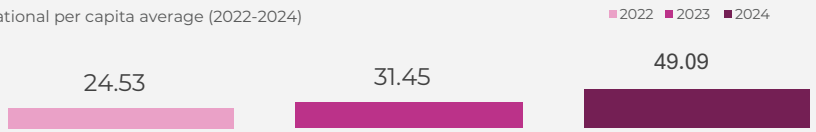


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

The Kwara State VAPP law retains most core elements of the federal VAPP Act. The Ministry of Women Affairs has produced simplified copies of VAPP law and translated into six indigenous languages in the state and distributed at the launch of SGBV committee in Moro, Ifelodun and Ilorin West of Kwara North, South Central of the state respectively. However, it reduces the punishment for rape to 20 years in prison, instead of life imprisonment as prescribed by the federal law. Other missing provisions, such as witness protection, a survivor fund, and a formal committee structure, further weaken its effectiveness. Government and civil society groups have acknowledged these gaps and are working with the Ministry of Justice to strengthen support for survivors.

While many residents (57.2%) believe that formal laws are effective in addressing GBV, only a small number (24.4%) are aware of specific existing laws. This shows a gap between public confidence and actual understanding.

Between January and October 2025, the state recorded approximately five GBV convictions under the VAPP law. Stakeholders noted this as a significant improvement compared to previous years. Perception survey data shows moderate awareness, with 56.2% of residents aware of GBV-related convictions. While this reflects a slight majority, a large portion of the population remains unaware, which may reduce the potential deterrent effect of these legal outcomes.

Customary and religious systems are not widely trusted for handling GBV cases in the state: only 42.8% could point to any customary and religious laws and practices that address GBV in the state, and 42.8% find them helpful, while 57.2% view them as ineffective. The state has formally outlawed negative customary practices, but they persist in practice. The primary obstacle is interference from religious and traditional authorities who often pressure survivors to drop cases, which can cause lasting harm. As one stakeholder noted, “They will always say settle out of court, and the survivors tend to suffer in pain, in trauma for life.”

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Kwara State witnessed a sharp decline across multiple indicators between 2023 and 2025. Awareness of GBV laws dropped from 53.3% in 2023 to just 24.4% in 2025. Similarly, knowledge of GBV-related convictions fell from 75.1% in 2024 to 56.2% in 2025. These trends show that progress is not self-sustaining. Without continued investment in public awareness and accountability, even strong legal frameworks risk losing their impact.

Trust in customary and religious systems also declined, from 70.8% in 2023 to 42.8% in 2025, reflecting growing skepticism about their ability to deliver justice. More traditional and religious leaders are beginning to refer cases to formal systems rather than suppressing them, and awareness of harmful practices as criminal offenses is spreading, particularly regarding female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Unfortunately, this shift was not matched by stronger engagement from the formal system, which struggled with inconsistent legal implementation and missed the opportunity to reinforce its role.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Kwara State has built a relatively strong system for reporting, prosecuting, and enforcing GBV cases, with documented convictions and minimal procedural delays. Once a case is reported, it is referred to the police, who investigate, invite the suspect, prepare a First Information Report (FIR), and proceed to court.

Public trust in formal systems is also high. Most respondents in Kwara State (84.7%) say they would seek justice for GBV through formal channels. This trust is further reflected in the 74.1% who expressed willingness to serve as witnesses. Confidence in formal systems is also evident in the low proportion of residents (15.2%) who believe informal justice mechanisms help survivors access justice, compared to the 82.8% who do not share that view. However, this trust is fragile and not fully supported by awareness or access to legal support services.

Only 17.2% of respondents are aware of state-sponsored legal aid, which shows weak institutional communication. Many residents may be willing to report but lack information on where to go or how to access help, even though services are available through the Legal Aid Council, National Human Rights Commission, Ministry of Justice, and FIDA. However, operational challenges persist. Fuel scarcity and high transport costs make it difficult to reach remote areas, and legal aid services remain concentrated in Kwara Central. Kwara North and Kwara South are underserved, although the Legal Aid Council is beginning to expand to places like Omu Aran.

Kwara State has functional Family Support Units/Gender Desks in police commands and divisions,

and some designated structures for GBV cases, but lacks dedicated GBV courts and judges at the High Court level. The Nigeria Security and Civil Defense also have a dedicated unit for reported cases of GBV. In addition, the Ministry has launched GBV committee across the 3 senatorial districts of the state namely; Kwara South (Ifelodun), Kwara North (Moro), Kwara Central (Ilorin West)

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Although formal justice systems remain the preferred option for most survivors, the shift in trust over time (from 95% in 2023 to 84.7% in 2025) shows that confidence is fragile. Meanwhile, there was a steady rise in willingness to serve as witnesses: from 66.7% in 2023 to 74.1% in 2025. However, awareness remains the weakest link. Despite improvements in trust and safety, awareness of legal support services has dropped sharply, from 56% in 2024 to 17.2% in 2025. This disconnect suggests that institutional communication is not reaching new audiences.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Kwara State has two operational SARCs: Ajike Care Centre in Ilorin West and Sobi Specialist Centre in Ilorin East. However, only the Ajike Care Centre appears fully functional. Additionally, two shelters exist, one at Amayo in Ifelodun LGA (reported to have been closed as a result of its remote location), and a newer one at Stella Obasanjo Hall in Ilorin West. All these facilities are government-owned but supported by NGOs. The state has holistic support services (medical, legal, psychosocial, economic) through the 21-person committee and various stakeholders. However, these services are not equally accessible due to geographic concentration, lack of trained personnel in LGAs, transportation barriers, and inadequate funding.

Despite the availability of these services, public awareness remains low. Only a small portion of the population is aware of or has accessed these facilities (17.6%). Similarly, knowledge of broader support services for GBV survivors is limited (16.8%). This low awareness contradicts claims of frequent sensitization efforts, suggesting that outreach strategies may not be effectively reaching the intended audiences. While those familiar with the services express strong confidence in their functionality, the limited public knowledge remains a major barrier to access.

Referral pathways are in place and generally operate through NGO coordination, but access is uneven due to geographic concentration in only two out of 16 local government areas. The toll-free helpline created to support reporting has lapsed following non-renewal by the government, leaving only the regular hotline functional. While most respondents are aware of police and community security options (89.4%), awareness of healthcare services (25.6%) and legal support (0.8%) remain low.

Formal support systems are preferred over informal ones (83.2% vs. 16.8%). While some families and community leaders genuinely support GBV survivors, they are not fully holistic with limited effectiveness in consistent support.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of shelters and SARCs remained steady between 2023 (35.8%) and 2024 (35.6%) but dropped significantly by 2025 (17.6%). This decline suggests that outreach efforts may have weakened or failed to engage new audiences, raising concerns about the sustainability and reach of existing sensitization strategies. The lapse of the toll-free helpline and reduced frequency of sensitization programs contribute to this decline. Stakeholders acknowledge that sensitization rates have decreased compared to previous periods.

While police referral pathways remained dominant throughout the period, awareness of non-police options such as healthcare, legal aid, and support groups remained low and declined over time.

Perceptions of informal support systems fluctuated during the assessment period. After a brief surge in positive views in 2024 (68%), confidence dropped again by 2025 (16.8%). This instability suggests that while communities may temporarily rely on informal networks, they ultimately view formal systems as more reliable. Strengthening formal services and ensuring they are visible, accessible, and trusted should remain a central focus of GBV response efforts.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

The Kwara State Government has taken steps to address GBV in secondary and tertiary schools through awareness programs and activities such as debates to encourage open discussion. The state also participates in the AGILE program, which supports girls' education and empowerment. Experts help develop learning materials, and NGOs, especially through the Ministry of Women Affairs, collaborate with the government to strengthen advocacy and education on GBV. Despite these coordinated efforts, public knowledge remains low. In 2025, only 16.3% of residents reported awareness of any GBV education programs, suggesting that current sensitization efforts are not reaching most of the population.

School-based programs such as AGILE and the Classroom-to-Commissioner initiative show promise in engaging students, especially girls, in GBV education. These efforts integrate GBV topics into extracurricular activities and promote peer-led messaging during school assemblies. Public support for GBV education is strong, with 88.2% of residents advocating for its inclusion at all school levels. However, the absence of GBV as a standalone topic and the limited reach to boys may reduce the long-term impact of these programs.

Persons with disabilities are represented in the 21-member GBV committee and actively involved in related programs. Stakeholders noted that awareness campaigns use various formats including audio, braille, sign language, and picture-based messages; however, actual usage and reach vary. Among these formats, awareness is highest for audio (40.1%) and picture-based messages (41.6%), while braille (7%), screen subtitling (5.5%), and simplified messages (2.6%) remain limited. Sign interpretation is moderately known (15.3%).

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, public awareness of GBV education programs in Kwara State declined sharply, from 70.8% in 2023 to just 16.3% in 2025, despite continued sensitization efforts. This drop

suggests that outreach strategies may not be effectively engaging new audiences or maintaining visibility. However, among those who accessed the programs, perceptions of usefulness improved. Fewer respondents rated the materials as "not at all useful," and more found them completely or mostly helpful.

Several factors contribute to declining awareness. The toll-free helpline has lapsed and remains dormant. Sensitization frequency has decreased, with stakeholders acknowledging that "the rates at which sensitization is being held now have reduced compared to before." While sensitization occurs during various events (FGM campaigns, Girl Child Day, International Women's Day, Hepatitis B Day), there are no scheduled regular sensitization programs. Individual organizations and government conduct sensitization "at one time or the other," but without consistency or coordination.

Regarding inclusive communication, while awareness of audio and spoken formats declined over time, visual and picture-based content saw steady improvement, suggesting progress in adopting more inclusive communication methods. However, formats like braille, simplified messages, and sign interpretation remain limited in reach and consistency.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Kwara State's 2024 GBV budget reveals minimal financial commitment to addressing gender-based violence. The state allocated just ₦326.33 million, representing only 0.07% of its total budget, among the lowest proportional allocations nationwide. Actual expenditure of ₦100.54 million reflected a 30.8% execution rate, resulting in a per capita spend of merely ₦49.09, one of the lowest in the country. This dual challenge of inadequate initial allocation combined with modest implementation means that Kwara's GBV response remains critically underfunded relative to the scale of need, suggesting that gender-based violence has not been prioritized as a significant policy concern despite the state having a specific GBV budget line.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Across the last three years of the Womanity Index, Kwara State has consistently included gender-based violence (GBV) specific line items in its approved budgets for 2022, 2023, and 2024, thereby earning full marks on this indicator. However, implementation has been uneven. The GBV line item for 2023 recorded no utilization, while the 2022 and 2024 allocations achieved only 10% and 64.70% performance respectively. Funding for the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare fluctuated significantly over the same period. The ministry received an allocation of ₦135.44 million in 2022, with only ₦47.32 million expended (35%). In 2023, the allocation fell to ₦110.02 million, though performance improved to 57% (₦62.51 million). In 2024, the allocation rose sharply to ₦326.33 million, but actual spending amounted to only ₦100.54 million, representing a performance rate of 30.8%. Per capita spending stood at ₦49.09 in 2024, ₦31.45 in 2023, and ₦24.53 in 2022. Although the figures show gradual year-on-year improvement, the overall levels remain critically low, indicating slow and incremental growth in GBV-related investment rather than sustained prioritization.

Human Angle Stories

42-year-old Hannah (not real name) was rushed to the hospital after a brutal beating from her abusive husband. Before that day, she never knew that physical violence was a crime, punishable by law. The only people she could confide in were her mother and older siblings. The incident that left her hospitalized was her wake-up call to act; she reported the case to the police, but the case stalled, and nothing was done.

Her husband suddenly disappeared, and there was no trace of him again. Although the Ministry of Justice got involved, nothing came out of it. Hannah notes that more information must reach women in vulnerable communities through radio and other platforms, so they know where to seek help.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
 Laws and Policies	Only 24.4% of residents are aware of specific GBV laws (down from 53.3% in 2023), despite 57.9% believing formal laws are effective. This demonstrates a significant gap between public confidence and actual legal knowledge.	Scale up multi-channel (radio, community town halls, social media) public sensitization campaigns to educate residents about the VAPP law and their legal rights under it.
	The state VAPP law lacks critical provisions including witness protection, survivor fund, and formal committee structure.	Fast-track the VAPP law amendment, ensure swift passage, and train law enforcement/judicial officers on new provisions, especially witness protection.
	57.2% view customary and religious systems as ineffective in handling GBV cases, yet traditional and religious leaders continue to pressure survivors to settle cases out of court, causing lasting harm.	Continue engagement with traditional and religious leaders through structured training programs to build their capacity as referral agents to formal systems rather than informal arbitrators of GBV cases.
 Access to Legal Justice	Only 17.2% of residents know about state-sponsored legal aid services (down from 56% in 2024), despite high willingness to report GBV (84.7%) and serve as witnesses (74.2%).	Scale up the existing multi-channel awareness campaigns to reach all 16 LGAs systematically, ensuring that information about free legal aid services is delivered quarterly in each local government area rather than only during commemorative events.
	Legal aid services are concentrated in Kwara Central, leaving Kwara North and South underserved. Fuel scarcity and high transport costs create additional barriers to accessing justice in remote areas.	Expand legal aid presence to underserved LGAs in Kwara North and South and provide transportation support or mobile legal clinics to reach remote communities.
	The state lacks dedicated GBV courts and judges at the High Court level, despite having functional Family Support Units and Gender Desks at police stations.	Designate specialized GBV courts and train dedicated judges to handle GBV cases, ensuring faster case resolution and more survivor-centered proceedings.
 Support Services	Only 17.6% of residents are aware of support facilities like SARCs and shelters (down from 35.8% in 2023). The Amayo shelter is reportedly in very bad shape, and services are concentrated in only two of sixteen LGAs.	Conduct quarterly community sensitization sessions in all 16 LGAs to increase awareness of available support services and rehabilitate the Amayo shelter to expand access options for survivors. In addition, establish more SARCs and shelters in all the state's LGAs.
	The toll-free GBV helpline has lapsed due to non-renewal by government, leaving only regular hotlines functional.	Reactivate the lapsed toll-free helpline immediately by securing government commitment for annual renewal and integrate it into the existing hotline promotion strategy that has already used radio and social media channels.
	Support services are geographically concentrated and inaccessible due to lack of trained personnel in most LGAs, transportation barriers, and inadequate funding.	Build on the existing PHC training program by expanding it to cover all remaining LGAs and ensure there is at least one trained GBV focal person in each local government area who can provide basic GBV support and referrals.
 Information and Awareness	Awareness of GBV education programs dropped dramatically from 70.8% in 2023 to 16.3% in 2025, despite continued sensitization efforts. Stakeholders acknowledge that "sensitization rates have reduced compared to before," and programs occur "at one time or the other" without consistency.	Develop a structured annual sensitization calendar with monthly activities coordinated across government agencies and NGOs to ensure consistent community engagement throughout the year.
	While 88.2% of residents support GBV education at all school levels, GBV is not taught as a standalone topic, and programs have limited reach to boys, reducing long-term impact.	Integrate GBV prevention into the official school curriculum as a distinct topic within civic education or life skills, ensuring equal participation of both boys and girls.
	Awareness of accessible communication formats for persons with disabilities remains limited: braille (7%), screen subtitling (5.5%), simplified messages (2.6%), and sign interpretation (15.3%), despite their representation on the GBV committee.	Standardize the use of multiple accessible formats in all GBV campaigns and materials, including mandatory sign interpretation at events, captioned videos, and braille versions of key documents distributed through disability organizations.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



Lagos State

Centre Of Excellence

Owu Fall

Lagos State

Population: 16,212,270

48.5% Female | Male 51.5%

Overall Grade 91.3%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,068)*

GENDER — Female ■ Male ■

72.2% | 27.8%

AREA — Rural ■ Urban ■

21.3% | 78.7%

AGE

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

1.6% | 13.8% | 46.2% | 26.1% | 10.8% | 1.5%

DISABILITY STATUS — Yes ■ No ■

1.6% | 98.4%

SARCs: 4

Shelters: 1

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦4.90bn

(This accounts for **0.2%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦4.26bn

(This accounts for **87.1%** of total allocation to the ministry)

87.1%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ (Actual Spend)

21.2% | 10.7% | 68.1%

Per Capita Spending

₦542.33

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	91.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	93.8%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	93.8%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	93.8%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	83.3%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

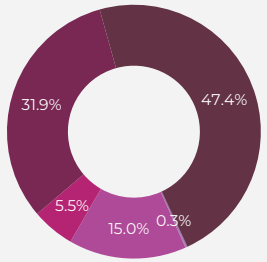
0.6% | 99.4%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

84.8% | 0.8% | 12.0% | 2.7% | 0.9%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

73.4% | 5.1% | 18.7% | 6.0% | 12.5% | 0.1%

Where did you or the person first seek help?

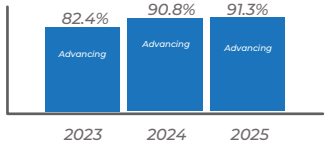
43.9% | 46.1% | 4.0% | 4.3% | 0.7% | 0.5% | 0.5%

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

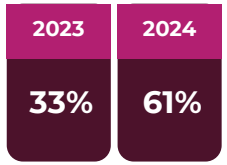
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



48%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 90.0%	LP 100%	LP 91.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 93.8%	-1 ▼ ALJ 93.8%	ALJ 93.8%
Support Services	SS 93.8%	SS 100%	-1 ▼ SS 93.8%
Information and Awareness	IA 86.3%	IA 93.8%	IA 93.8%
Budget and Spending	BS 48.3%	+1 ▲ BS 66.7%	BS 83.3%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Public awareness of GBV laws surged to 79.4% in 2025 (up from 63% in 2024), driven by intensified advocacy campaigns.
- Willingness to seek justice through formal channels reached 97.3%, up from 80.3% in 2023, showing strong public trust.
- Awareness of healthcare reporting options more than doubled from 39.4% to 70.5%, improving access to medical support.
- Conviction rates improved significantly with over 140 convictions in the past year.

Areas of Concern

- Public awareness of actual convictions remains critically low at 26.1% (2025), undermining the impact of improved prosecution.
- While SARCs are available and offer comprehensive services, geographic access remains limited in areas such as Badagry, Lagos Island, Epe, and communities bordering Ogun State. Awareness of these facilities is also low, with only 39.1% of respondents familiar with them.
- Over half of residents (53.1%) still do not feel safe serving as witnesses despite improvements in witness confidence.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- On August 14, 2025, the Lagos State Government, in collaboration with the Cece Yara Child Advocacy Centre, officially launched the Lagos State Child Sexual Abuse Investigative and Interview Protocol.

Access to Legal Justice

- The state launched an online reporting portal at www.lagosdsvcms.org, allowing survivors and mandated reporters to securely submit case details and upload evidence including pictures, audio recordings, video files, and medical reports.
- FIDA trained paralegals in communities including Makoko, Bariga, LASU axis, and Ikorodu to serve as first responders and connect survivors to formal services.
- The state established Family Support Units (FSUs) or Gender Desks in every police station across Lagos, staffed by trained personnel..

Support Services

- The Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA) opened "Eko Haven" 2023 – a 30-bed shelter located in Ikorodu to provide immediate accommodation and support services to high-risk survivors of domestic violence.

Information and Awareness

- The DSVA introduced "Ask INU" (I Need You), a WhatsApp-based AI Chatbot that provides immediate information and referrals by messaging 08128937058, offering timely, confidential, and accurate information about available support services.
- The DSVA established "King and Queens Clubs" in schools specifically to fight abuse, empowering students as advocates within their peer groups.
- The state conducts the annual "Purple the Environment" initiative every September, involving all Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) with mandatory participation across all local government areas.

Change Spotlight

On August 14, 2025, the Lagos State Government officially launched the Lagos State Child Sexual Abuse Investigative and Interview Protocol. The 41-page protocol represents a historic milestone in Nigeria's justice system, being the first of its kind in the country. The protocol introduces international best practices in forensic interviewing, tailored to the Nigerian context. Its goal is to reduce secondary trauma for child survivors, improve the quality of evidence, and strengthen the prosecution of perpetrators. By adopting this protocol, Lagos State becomes the first state in Nigeria to align its justice processes with globally recognized standards.

Lagos State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 91.3%

LAWS AND POLICIES

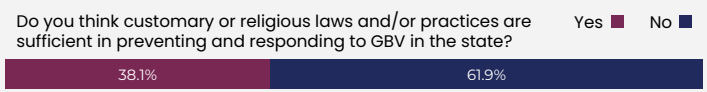
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?

Yes ■ No ■



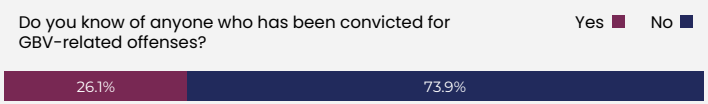
Do you think customary or religious laws and/or practices are sufficient in preventing and responding to GBV in the state?

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?

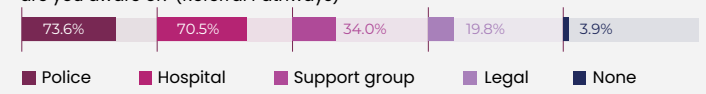
Yes ■ No ■



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)



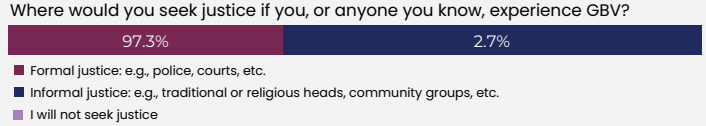
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

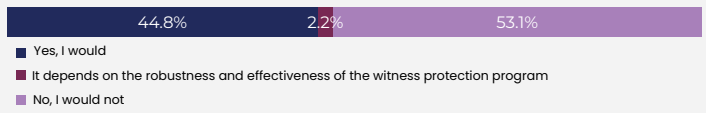


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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

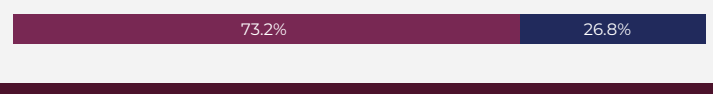


If you witness GBV, would you feel safe serving as a witness during the investigation and trial?



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

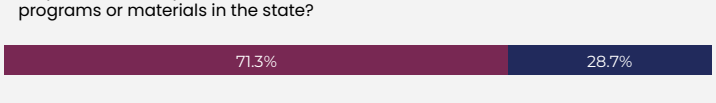
Yes ■ No ■



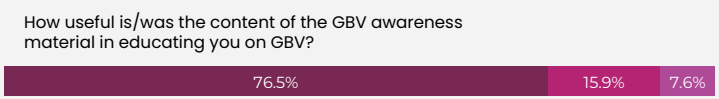
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

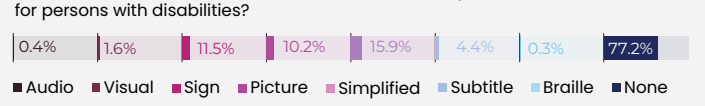
Yes ■ No ■



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



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



Lagos State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 91.3%

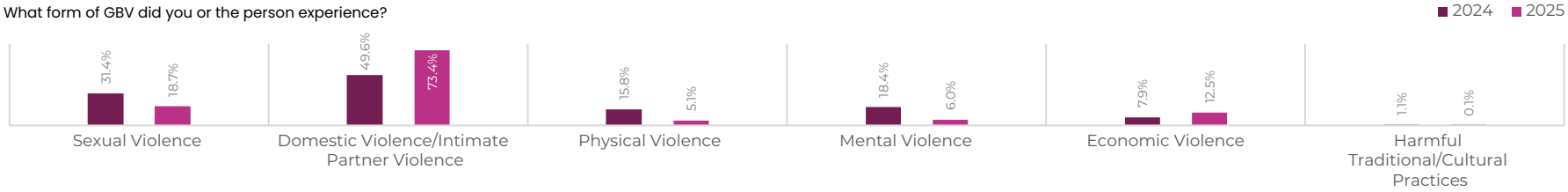
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



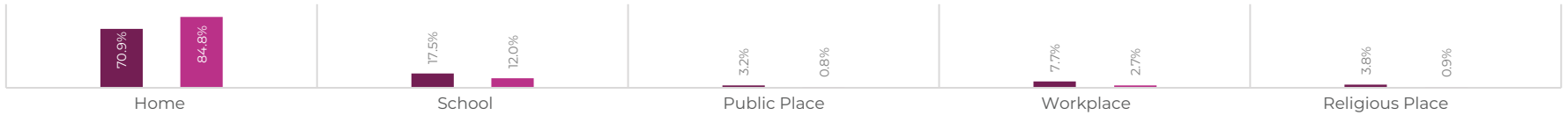
99.4%

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

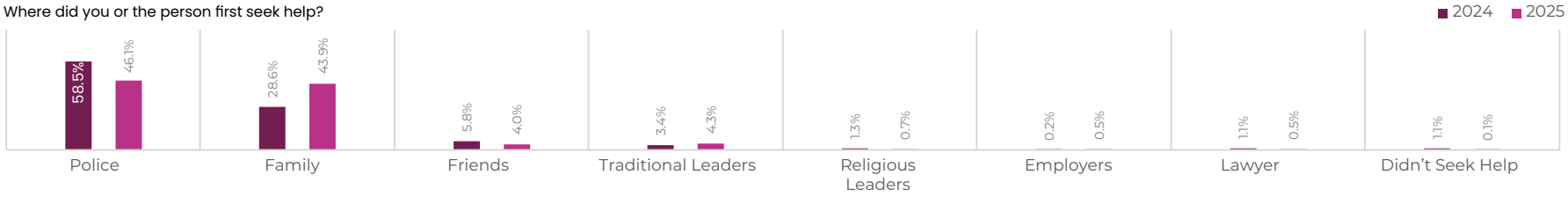
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



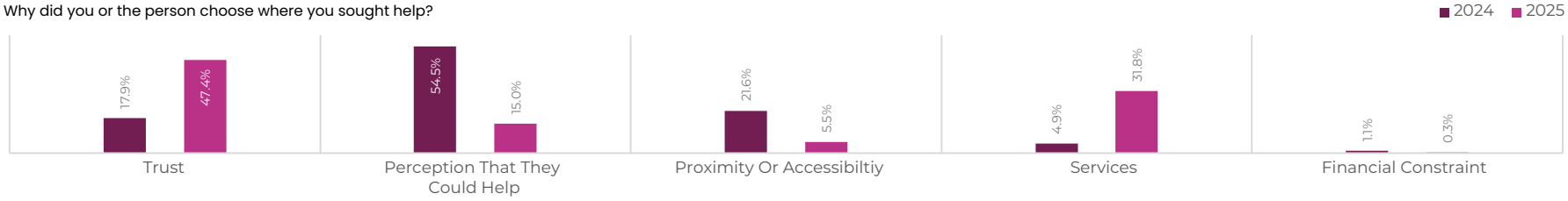
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

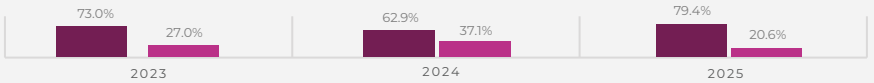


Lagos State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

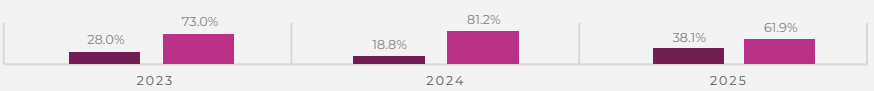
Overall Grade 91.3%

LAWS AND POLICIES

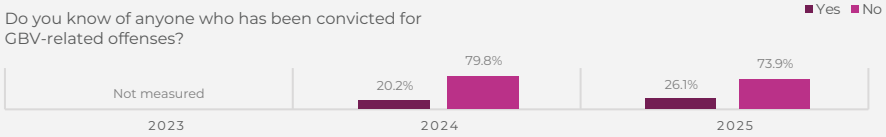
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

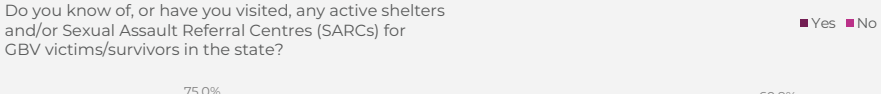


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

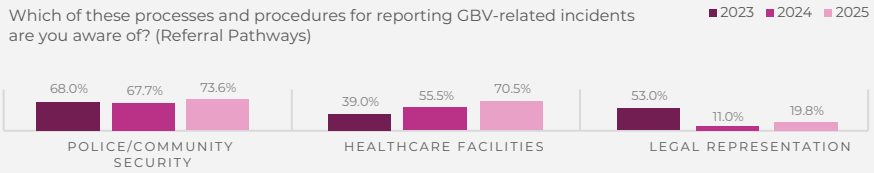


SUPPORT SERVICES

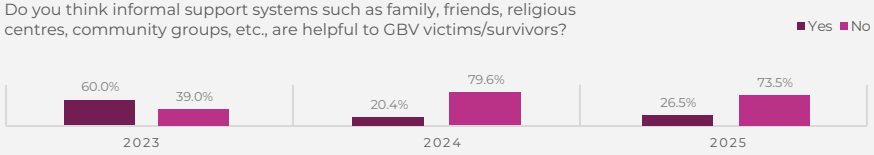
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Which of these processes and procedures for reporting GBV-related incidents are you aware of? (Referral Pathways)

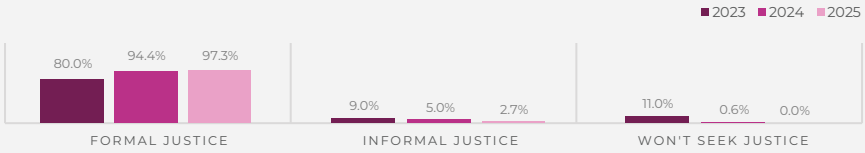


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

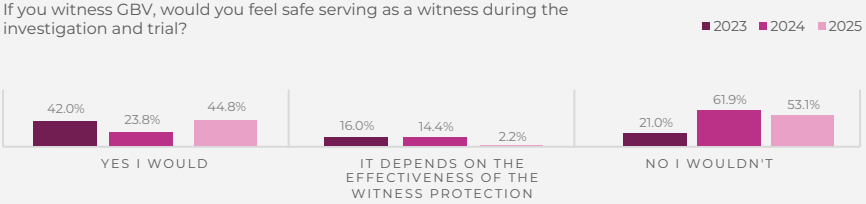


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

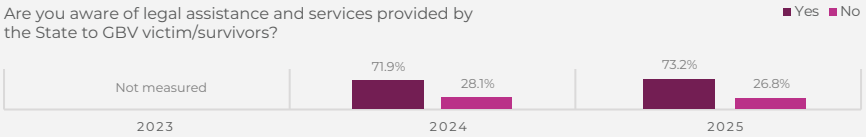
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

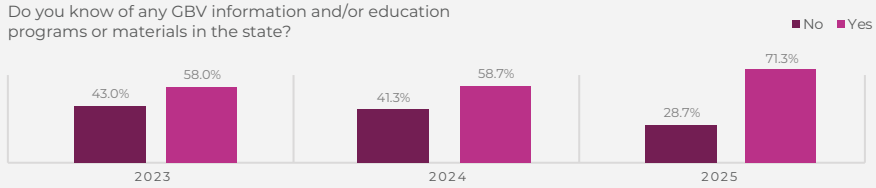


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

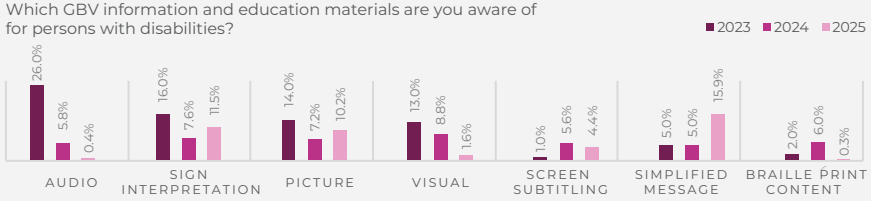


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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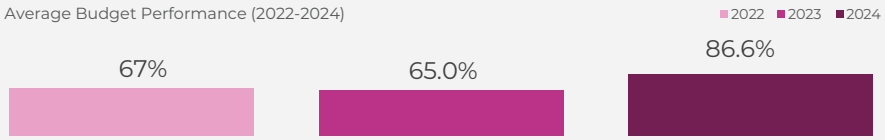


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

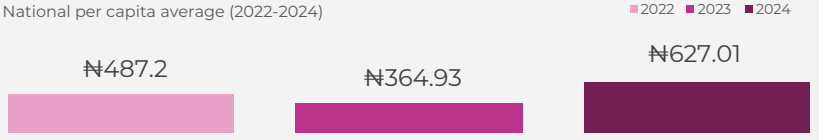


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Lagos State currently operates under the Domestic Violence Law of Lagos State rather than the VAPP Act. The state has not domesticated the VAPP Act because relevant provisions are already embedded across multiple laws, including the Criminal Law 2015, Administration of Criminal Justice Law, Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA) Law, Child Rights Law, and the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Unified Protocol and Referral Pathway. Public awareness of GBV laws in Lagos State is high (79.4%), and confidence in formal legal structures is strong, with most respondents (94%) viewing them as effective tools for GBV prevention and response.

Further strengthening its legal framework, the state government recently launched the Lagos State Guidelines for Preventing and Addressing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, aiming to promote safer, more inclusive work environments. Additionally, the DSVA Law is currently undergoing amendment, with a bill transmitted to the Lagos State House of Assembly in 2024. The proposed amendment introduces key provisions from the VAPP Act such as spousal battery, economic abuse, and forceful ejection from the home, alongside new elements like technology-facilitated sexual and gender-based violence.

Official records show marked improvement in conviction rates, over 140 convictions in the past year, and routinely updates its Sex Offenders Register. Yet, public awareness remains low, with only 26.1% of residents aware of these convictions, highlighting a disconnect between enforcement and visibility, and underscoring the need for greater transparency and public communication.

Customary and religious laws and practices appear to have limited influence in addressing GBV. Many residents are unaware of their existence (68%) and believe they do not contribute meaningfully to prevention or response efforts (61.9%). This reinforces strong public trust in formal legal frameworks in the state. However, key informant perspectives reveal a more nuanced reality: while formal systems are preferred, informal mechanisms remain influential at the community level, particularly in initial case handling before matters reach official channels. Recognizing their influence, the State Government has introduced policies to guide the response of religious institutions and customary courts, promoting more effective referrals.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

After a decline in 2024 (from 72.4% to 63%), public awareness of laws and policies addressing GBV rose to 79.4% in 2025, suggesting that renewed advocacy efforts by the DSVA have had a positive impact. This increase aligns with intensified awareness campaigns described by government officials, including the annual “Purple the Environment” initiative every September, which involves all MDAs. The Ministry of Education confirmed that this statewide program reaches all local government areas, with mandatory participation signaled through official circulars from the Head of Service.

Over the years, the majority of residents still view traditional frameworks as ineffective in addressing GBV. Although the proportion of residents expressing confidence in these informal systems increased slightly from 27.6% in 2023 to 38.1% in 2025, this shift highlights the need for sustained engagement. It is important to ensure that growing optimism about customary and religious practices does not erode strong public trust in the formal legal framework.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Lagos State has a well-structured and coordinated GBV response system, especially for sexual assault cases. Survivors follow a clear formal process involving petitioning, interviews, medical evaluation at SARCs, and police intervention through the Family Support Unit (FSU), leading to prosecution. Cases involving serious bodily harm are immediately escalated to police for investigation and prosecution, with the Office of Public Defender (OPD) providing support throughout the legal process. Stakeholders report seamless referrals between DSVA, OPD, FIDA, police FSUs, and NGOs, creating an interconnected support network. This reflects the state’s commitment to justice and aligns with strong public trust in formal systems, with 97.3% of residents preferring official channels over informal mechanisms.

Legal aid services are extensive and decentralized across the state. OPD officials confirmed offices covering “the whole length and breadth of Lagos State,” including remote areas like Badagry and Epe. Beyond OPD’s multiple sub-offices, services are available through the Federal Legal Aid Council, FIDA’s five Lagos branches, human rights offices at all local government headquarters, and specialized desks at police stations. FIDA has also trained paralegals in communities including Makoko, Bariga, LASU axis, and Ikorodu, who serve as first responders and connect survivors to formal services. Furthermore, DSVA in-house lawyers provide pro-bond legal advice and representation in cases requiring protection or restraining orders. The State also has private law firms signed on

to a pro bono scheme, with selected firms providing quality legal services to survivors at no cost. Awareness of these legal services is relatively high (73.2%); however, stakeholders noted that while awareness has grown, more can be done to expand geographic accessibility.

A major strength of Lagos State's justice system is its comprehensive network of specialized units. The state has 22 Family Support Units, coordinated by the Officer in Charge of the Gender Desk at the Lagos State Police Command, which is led by an Assistant Commissioner of Police. In addition, Lagos operates two dedicated GBV courts and has appointed two specialized judges to handle GBV-related cases. Additionally, there are over 40 Family Court Magistrates and Judges across the state, further strengthening access to justice for survivors.

Despite these strengths, serious challenges persist during legal proceedings ranging from lack of tracking for absconded defendants, to family interference, and police bureaucracy. Also, concerns about safety during legal proceedings persist. Over half of Lagos residents do not feel safe serving as witnesses (53.1%), pointing to a gap in the effectiveness of the witness protection unit.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

The state recorded steady progress in public confidence in the formal justice system for addressing GBV. The proportion of residents willing to seek justice through official channels rose from 80.0% in 2023 to 97.3% in 2025. This increase reflects both infrastructural improvements and attitudinal changes among justice sector actors, with training programs for police officers and judicial personnel conducted regularly.

Despite fear remaining a barrier over the years, public confidence in serving as a witness during GBV investigations and trials also improved. Although only 23.8% of respondents felt safe serving as witnesses in 2024, this figure rose to 44.8% in 2025. Further work is needed to ensure that more individuals feel secure participating in the justice process.

Awareness of legal assistance and services for GBV survivors remained relatively stable, with a slight increase from 72% in 2024 to 73.2% in 2025.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Lagos State currently operates four SARCs: Mirabel Center in Ikeja, Idera Center in Alimosho, WARIF in Yaba, and Cece Yara Center in Gbagada, Shomolu. Stakeholders confirmed these facilities' distribution but noted significant geographic gaps, with Badagry, Lagos Island, Epe, and areas bordering Ogun State remaining underserved. Despite their presence, only 39.1% of respondents reported knowing about or having visited these centers or shelters. Although, among those who are aware, confidence in the quality of these facilities is high, with 95.7% believing they are well-equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable. These formal support systems are seen as more reliable than informal ones, such as help from family, friends, religious centres, and community groups (73.5% vs. 26.5%). Beyond SARCs, shelter services are available through Project ALERT and DSVA's partner organizations, providing temporary accommodation when survivors cannot safely return home. Overall, while services are available and trusted, more work is needed to improve public awareness and access.

Awareness of broader support services is also strong. About 73.4% of residents know about available medical, legal, psychosocial, and economic support for GBV survivors. Similarly, most residents are familiar with formal reporting channels, especially through the police (73.6%) and hospitals (70.5%). However, fewer people know about other reporting options, such as support groups (34%) and legal representation (19.8%). Key informants confirmed these patterns, noting that police FSUs and hospitals serve as primary entry points, with strong referral mechanisms to legal services. However, they acknowledged that legal referral pathways are less visible to the public, despite being well-established among service providers. This suggests a need for targeted public education, specifically legal referral options.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Over the years, awareness and access to SARCs remained low, despite some positive gains (from 25% in 2023 to 39.1% in 2025). This suggests that while more residents are becoming aware of these services, continued outreach is needed to improve visibility and access.

Police reporting and referral channels remained the most recognized over time, rising from 67.8% in 2023 to 73.6% in 2025. Awareness of healthcare-based reporting options also grew significantly, from 39.0% in 2023 to 70.5% in 2025, showing increased visibility of medical support services. In contrast, awareness of legal referral pathways dropped sharply, from 53.0% in 2023 to just 19.8% in 2025. This indicates a major gap in public knowledge about legal referral options and highlights the need for targeted advocacy to promote legal referral options and ensure survivors can access the full range of available services.

Perceptions of informal support systems also changed significantly. In 2023, only about a quarter (26.0%) of Lagos residents viewed informal systems such as help from family, friends, and religious centres, as ineffective in supporting GBV survivors. By 2025, this figure rose sharply to 73.5%, likely influenced by state-led advocacy efforts. This shift reinforces the growing public trust in formal support structures and the importance of strengthening institutional responses to GBV.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Public exposure to GBV educational initiatives in Lagos State is relatively strong, with 71.3% of residents indicating familiarity with GBV information and awareness programs, and 92.4% noting their usefulness. The DSVA plays a central role in this effort, conducting sensitization campaigns across local government areas, markets, and schools using simplified IEC materials translated into major local languages. These materials are widely distributed during community outreach, helping to improve public understanding of GBV issues.

There is overwhelming public support (93%) for teaching GBV and child sexual abuse topics at all levels of education, from nursery to tertiary institutions. This support aligns with existing practices. The Ministry of Education confirmed that while no formal curriculum exists, a comprehensive Child Protection Policy serves as the guiding document for all schools. This policy informs the work of school counselors who systematically address student welfare, including GBV prevention.

Additionally, DSVA established "King and Queens Clubs" in schools not just as peer advocacy groups, but as a means of mainstreaming GBV prevention into the education sector.

The Lagos State Office for Disability Affairs works to ensure inclusive access to GBV information for persons with disabilities. However, awareness of these inclusive formats remains low, with only 15.9% of residents aware of simplified messages, 11.5% aware of sign interpretation, and 10.2% aware of picture-based messages. A key challenge is the lack of trained officers in government ministries and agencies who can respond to GBV cases involving persons with disabilities. The absence of staff skilled in sign interpretation and other inclusive practices may hinder access to justice for this group.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, Lagos State recorded steady improvements in public awareness and engagement with GBV education programs. Awareness rose from 57.9% in 2023 to 71.3% in 2025, reflecting the impact of consistent sensitization efforts led by DSVA. The perceived usefulness of GBV materials also increased significantly, with 76.5% of respondents in 2025 finding the content mostly useful, compared to just 39.5% in 2023.

While awareness of disability-inclusive formats such as simplified messages, sign interpretation, and picture-based content has grown, overall visibility remains low. This highlights the need for more inclusive outreach and trained personnel across agencies to ensure that persons with disabilities can access and benefit from GBV educational and support services.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

With established GBV budget lines across the Ministry of Women Affairs, DSVA and the ministry of justice, Lagos State allocated ₦5.7 billion to GBV in 2025, representing 0.2% of the total state budget. Of this amount, ₦4.26 billion was spent, reflecting an impressive 87.1% budget performance, one of the highest among all states assessed. Actual GBV expenditure also accounted for 0.23% of total state spending. On a per capita basis, the state spent approximately ₦627.01 per female population on GBV-related programs, which is significantly higher than in most other states. While this reflects commendable commitment and strong budget implementation, it remains relatively low when compared to the size and needs of Lagos State's population.

Changes Over Time (2022 to 2024)

Since the establishment of the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA) in 2021, budgetary allocations to the agency have increased steadily. In 2022, DSVA received ₦100 million, of which 62.4% was expended. The allocation rose to ₦622.68 million in 2023, with an actual spend of ₦348.68 million (56.0%). In 2024, the agency received ₦520.92 million and recorded a significantly higher implementation rate, spending ₦497.19 million (95.4%). Improvements in Lagos State's GBV spending reflect the state's overall budget performance, rising from 65% to 86.6% across the review period.

The state also recorded two GBV-specific line items under the Ministry of Justice: "Furnishing and Equipping the DNA Forensic Centre with Specialised Equipment," allocated ₦22.59 million but implemented at ₦168.55 million (60.70%); and "Provision of IT Equipment for Database Development," budgeted at ₦47.39 million with an actual implementation of ₦29.62 million (62.50%). Despite these improvements, Lagos continues to underperform in per capita spending on GBV-related interventions. Per capita spending stood at ₦627.01 in 2024, ₦364.93 in 2023, and ₦487.20 in 2022. The increase in 2024, following a decline in 2023, reflects a rebound in investment, although the fluctuations across the three-year period point to inconsistent funding patterns for GBV-related interventions.

Human Angle Stories

A little girl was sexually assaulted by the security guard at her school. After finding out where to get help, her father was referred to the DSVA, which then connected him with the Police Family Support Unit (FSU).

After the statement was taken, the Police Investigative Officer swung into action and apprehended the alleged perpetrator. The young survivor was further assessed at a Sexual Assault Referral Centre, where it was medically established that she had been assaulted. The case was instituted in court, and the alleged perpetrator was remanded to a correctional facility.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Public awareness of GBV laws increased significantly from 63% in 2024 to 79.4% in 2025, following renewed advocacy efforts including the annual "Purple the Environment" initiative.	Sustain and expand the "Purple the Environment" campaign beyond September to ensure year-round visibility of GBV laws across all local government areas.
	Despite over 140 convictions in the past year, only 26.1% of residents are aware of actual convictions, revealing a critical gap between legal enforcement and public visibility.	Launch a systematic public communication strategy to publicize conviction outcomes through multiple channels, including traditional and social media, to strengthen public confidence in the justice system.
Access to Legal Justice	Only 44.8% of residents feel safe serving as witnesses in GBV cases, with over half (53.1%) still expressing safety concerns.	Strengthen the witness protection framework by conducting a comprehensive review of existing protocols and implementing visible security measures, including dedicated witness support officers at GBV courts.
	Stakeholders reported challenges including tracking of absconded defendants, family interference, and police bureaucracy during legal proceedings.	Establish a centralized digital case management system to track defendants and streamline police procedures, while developing clear protocols for managing family interference in GBV cases.
Support Services	Only 39.1% of residents know about or have visited the four operational SARCs, despite high confidence (95.7%) among those aware of them. Geographic gaps persist in Badagry, Lagos Island, Epe, and areas bordering Ogun State.	Expand SARC coverage by establishing at least two additional centers in underserved areas, prioritizing Badagry and Epe, while intensifying community-level awareness campaigns about existing facilities.
	Awareness of legal referral pathways dropped sharply from 53.3% in 2023 to 19.8% in 2025, indicating a major knowledge gap despite well-established referral systems among service providers.	Develop targeted public education campaigns specifically highlighting legal referral options, and ensure that all frontline service providers (police, responders, healthcare workers) actively inform survivors about available legal assistance.
Information and Awareness	Awareness of disability-inclusive formats remains critically low: only 15.9% know about simplified messages, 11.5% about sign interpretation, and 10.2% about picture-based messages.	Train designated GBV focal officers in all government ministries and agencies on disability-inclusive communication, including sign interpretation, and mandate the production of all GBV materials in accessible formats.
Budget and Spending	Despite strong budget performance and consistent increases in allocations to the DSVA, per capita spending on GBV services remains low (₦487.20 in 2022, ₦364.93 in 2023, and ₦627.01 in 2024) relative to the state's population of over 16 million and the high demand for services.	The State Executive Council should increase GBV budget allocations to at least 1% of the total state budget in the next cycle, targeting a minimum of ₦1,000 per capita spending to align service provision with the state's population size and growing demand.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



Nasarawa State

Home of Solid Minerals

Farin Ruwa Waterfall

Nasarawa State

Population: 3,207,864

50.7% Female | Male 49.3%

Overall Grade 52.1%

Respondents Demography *(n = 993)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■



AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■



AGE



DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■



SARCs: 5

Shelters: 4

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦1.35bn
(This accounts for **0.38%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦363.09m
(This accounts for **27.0%** of total allocation to the ministry)



Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ Others ■ (Actual Spend)



Per Capita Spending

₦223.21

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	50.0%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	50.0%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	43.8%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	50.0%

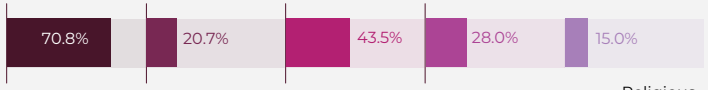
GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

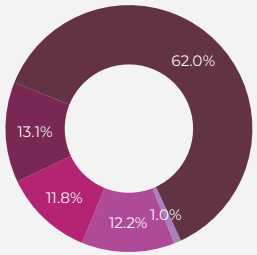


Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

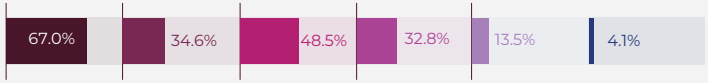


Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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

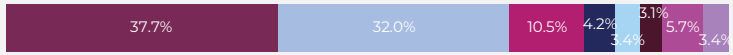


What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



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

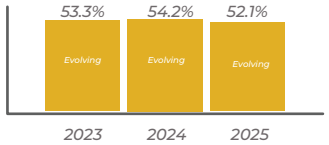
Where did you or the person first seek help?



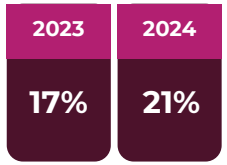
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



19%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	LP 75.0%	LP 66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 56.3%	ALJ 50.0%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	SS 50.0%	SS 50.0%
Information and Awareness	IA 43.8%	+1 ▲ IA 56.3%	−1 ▼ IA 43.8%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 33.3%	BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Establishment of 24-hour SARC at Federal University Teaching Hospital Lafia, providing free medical, psychosocial, and legal services with monthly government support.
- Creation of Public Defendant and Gender-Based Violence Department by the Chief Judge.
- Police officers receive regular GBV training multiple times annually.
- Expansion plans underway to establish SARCs in three senatorial zones (Northern, Southern, Western) for decentralized service delivery.

Areas of Concern

- Awareness of GBV laws declined sharply from 65% (2023) to 50% (2024)to 44.2% (2025).
- Preference for formal justice fell from 9236 (2024) to 68.2% (2025), while reliance on informal systems surged from 8% to 30.4%.
- Only one operational SARC statewide, serving fewer than 50% of LGAs; services concentrated in Lafia, Keffi, Karu, and Akwanga.
- Family Court exists but remains non-functional: judges, police, and civil defense officers lack the required training.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Established a Technical Working Group coordinated by the Ministry of Women Affairs, meeting monthly to harmonize GBV data across agencies including Civil Defense, Ministry of Justice, NAPTIP, NEPWAN, and Human Rights Office.
- Created a State Task Force on Violence Against Persons to strengthen enforcement mechanisms, though the offenders' register remains non-operational.

Access to Legal Justice

- Ministry of Justice established a dedicated Public Defender/Gender Based Violence department led by Barr. Justina Allu Alkali, making it easier for communities to approach the ministry with complaints.
- Expanded Family Support Units and GBV desks to all police divisions and outposts statewide, handling cases at primary and secondary levels before court referral.

Support Services

- Established one active government-funded Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) at the Dalhatu Araf Specialist Hospital (DASH), along Lafia-Makurdi Road, Lafia, providing food, clothing, weekly psychological support, and medical care.
- Ministry of Women Affairs provides monthly financial support to ensure survivors receive free services at the SARC.

Information and Awareness

- Distributed IEC materials and presented community dramas in LGAs for focal persons, schools, counseling centers, and referral centers.
- Engaged sign interpreters for persons with hearing impairment during awareness programs, though materials for visual impairment and other disabilities remain unavailable.

Change Spotlight

The establishment and operationalization of Nasarawa State's first SARC at Federal University Teaching Hospital, Lafia stands as the state's most significant achievement during the assessment period. Inaugurated on May 7, 2023, by the Honourable Commissioner for Women Affairs, this facility transformed GBV response in the state. Before 2023, survivors had nowhere to turn for comprehensive care. The SARC now operates 24 hours daily, providing integrated medical, psychological, and legal support services free of charge through monthly funding from the Ministry of Women Affairs. According to the SARC Manager, they have a robust referral system there that connects survivors to obstetrics and gynaecology units, emergency services, pharmacy, and other essential hospital sections. The centre's success has sparked advocacy for expanding SARC services to all three senatorial zones, demonstrating how one strategic intervention can catalyze systemic change across an entire state.

Nasarawa State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 52.1%

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 ■

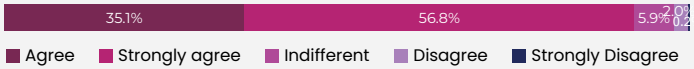


SUPPORT SERVICES

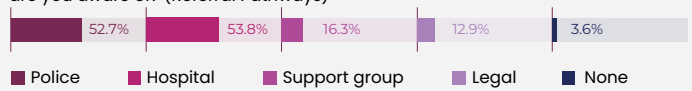
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state? Yes ■ No ■



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)

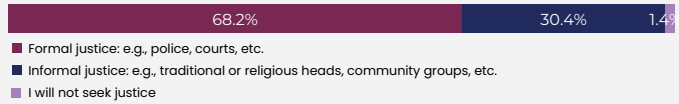


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors? Yes ■ No ■

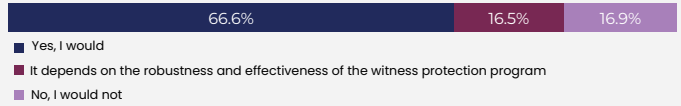


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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? Yes ■ No ■

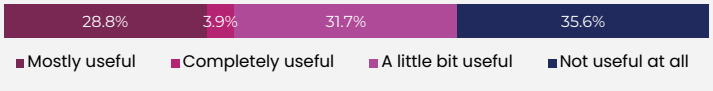


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

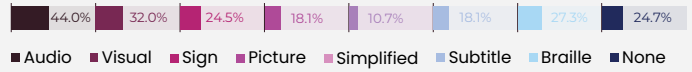
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state? Yes ■ No ■



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



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



Nasarawa State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 52.1%

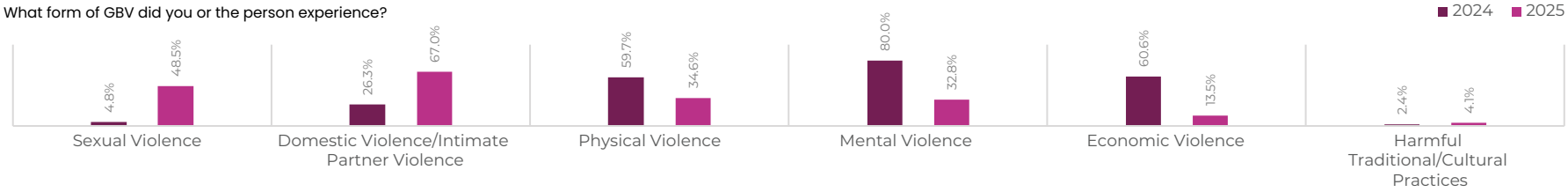
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



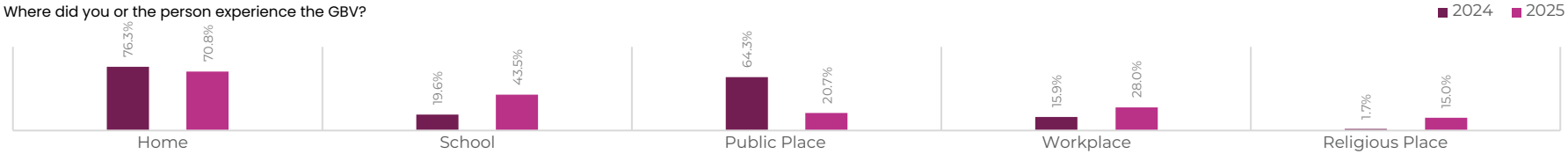
75.9%

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

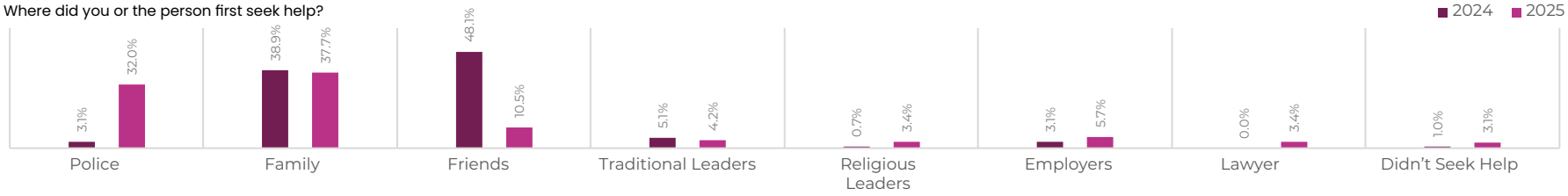
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



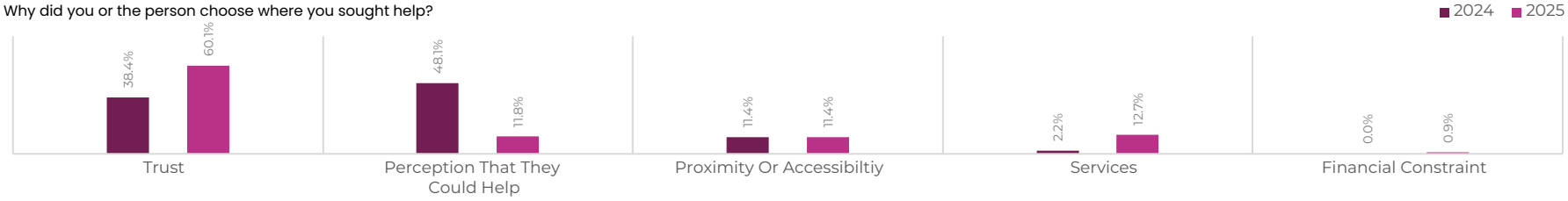
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

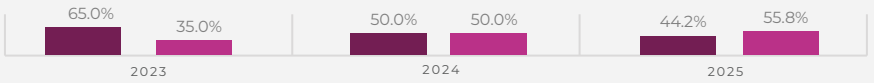


Nasarawa State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

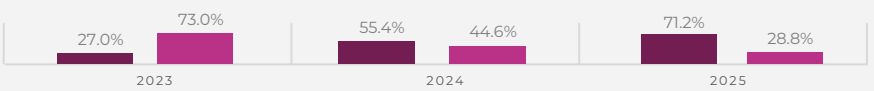
Overall Grade 52.1%

LAWS AND POLICIES

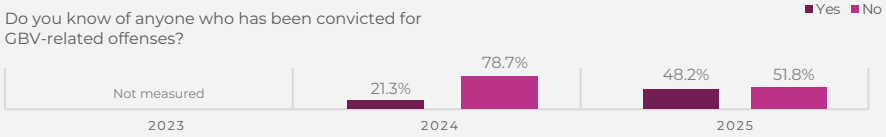
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

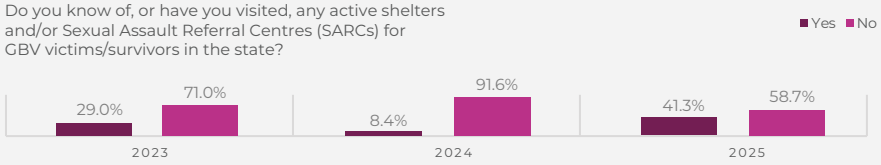


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

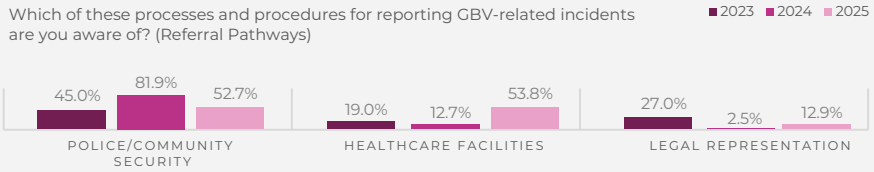


SUPPORT SERVICES

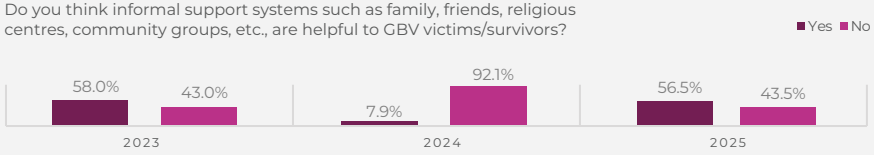
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

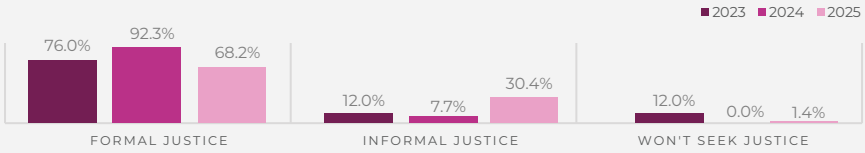


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

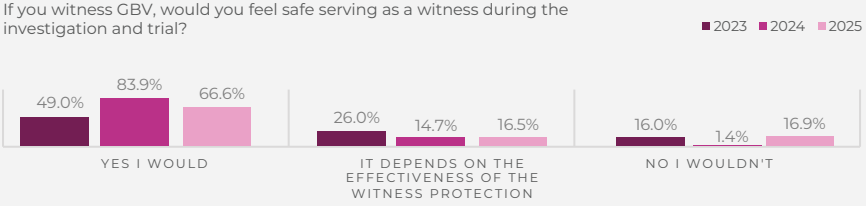


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

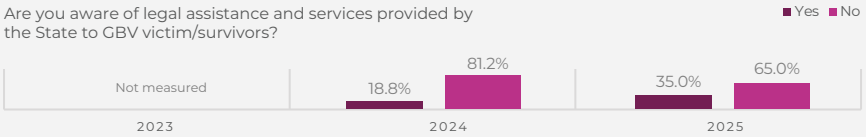
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

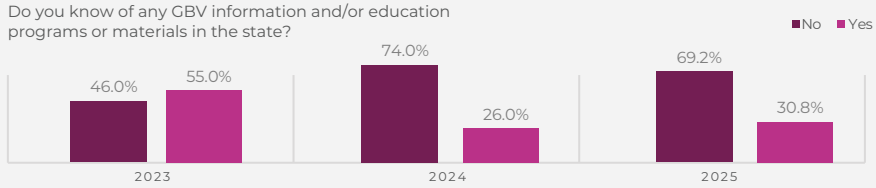


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

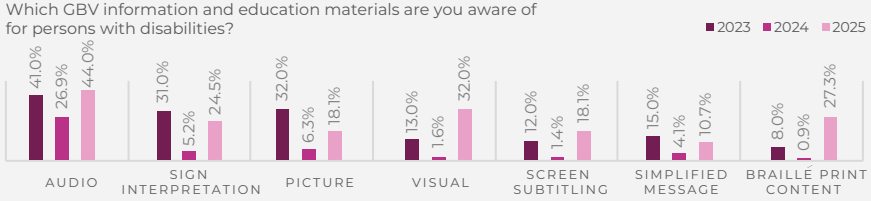


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

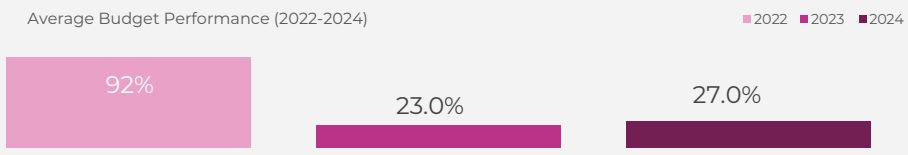


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

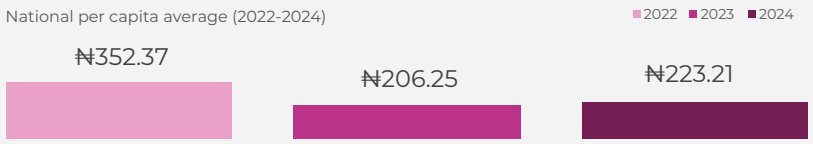


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Nasarawa State has established a legal framework to address gender-based violence through the domestication of key legislation, specifically the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Law and the Child's Rights Act, which serve as the state's primary statutory instruments. The Director of Public Defender described the VAPP Act as a comprehensive legislation covering multiple dimensions of abuse. However, when asked about enhanced provisions beyond the federal VAPP Act, officials confirmed "there is no additional clause added," indicating the state retained core elements without introducing relevant supplementary protections.

Despite this legal foundation, public awareness and effective implementation remain significantly limited. The 2025 Womanity Index data reveals that 44.2% of respondents are aware of existing GBV laws and policies in Nasarawa State, while 55.8% remain unaware. Among those aware, radio emerged as the primary information source (36%), followed by television (31.7%), and social media (24.4%). Notably, only 3% learned about these laws from traditional leaders, and a mere 0.5% from workplaces. Knowledge of GBV convictions stands at 48.2%, with 51.8% unaware of anyone convicted for GBV-related offenses. Justice officials attribute this awareness gap to limited judicial visibility, though they confirmed notable prosecution activity: "over 200 cases filed and more than 50 judgments secured during the review period."

The survey shows that 73.7% of respondents believe formal laws and policies are effective and sufficient in preventing and responding to GBV, while 26.3% disagree. On customary and religious laws, 59.3% of respondents are aware of such practices addressing GBV, and 71.2% believe they help prevent and respond to GBV in the state. However, stakeholders reveal a more complex reality. Officials from the state confirmed: "there is still Female Genital Mutilation practice widely across the state" and acknowledged that "there are a lot of efforts particularly against Female Genital Mutilation, but the issue is that most of the places are still doing it especially in remote areas of the state despite campaigns." Furthermore, critical implementation gaps persist, including the absence of an operational sex offenders' register and a fully functional Family Court.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV laws in Nasarawa State has declined over time, from 65% in 2023 to 50% in 2024 and further to 44.2% in 2025, showing a gradual reduction in public knowledge of existing protections. Knowledge of GBV convictions, first measured in 2024, stood at 55% but dropped slightly to 48.2% in 2025, suggesting inconsistent communication of judicial outcomes.

In contrast, awareness and reliance on customary or religious laws increased sharply from 27% in 2023 to 71.2% in 2025, indicating a shift toward community-based systems even as formal awareness wanes. This trend underscores the persistent influence of traditional mechanisms in shaping public perceptions and responses to GBV, despite the existence of formal statutory frameworks. Stakeholders observed this dynamic firsthand: "People are speaking out now unlike before." There is an inflow of complaints every day," suggesting growing willingness to report. Yet enforcement remains constrained as "It is the people themselves, the locals – they will be the one to bring a complaint when we file it to the court; they don't come to the court to testify or bear witness. Also, family and community are major challenges we are facing promoting the culture of silence for fear of stigmatization."

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Access to legal justice in Nasarawa State shows measurable institutional progress as 68.2% of respondents now prefer formal justice channels, reflecting increased trust in state-led mechanisms, while 30.4% still rely on informal systems led by traditional or religious heads. Stakeholders confirm that specialized GBV infrastructure exists across all police divisions through Family Support Units and gender desks, supported by the Ministry of Justice's Public Defender/Gender-Based Violence department, which enhances complaint handling and prosecution. However, access gaps remain especially at trial since survivors or witnesses often fail to appear in court, leading to stalled prosecutions.

Awareness of legal assistance services remains limited (35%), with radio (34.5%) and television (28.7%) serving as the dominant information sources. While 66.6% of respondents would willingly serve as witnesses, over 16% would not, citing safety concerns and limited witness protection. Informal justice systems remain socially influential, with 74.6% viewing them as helpful, yet stakeholders reveal these structures often obstruct formal processes through premature settlements or intimidation. The Police Gender Desk Officer explained how traditional mechanisms undermine formal justice: "They handle it casually because they don't know the implications and as well as the VAPP law. Their judgement is final, and nobody challenges it. Sometimes, they threatened people if they went forward with the case, and they also attempted to deal with or disown the person from the Community." Recent

reforms such as FIDA's legal aid expansion, regular police GBV training, and judicial recognition of VAPP jurisdiction represent progress, but cultural interference, poor coordination, and inadequate resources continue to weaken timely and survivor-centered justice delivery. .

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, access to legal justice in Nasarawa State showed mixed progress. Preference for formal justice rose from 76% in 2023 to 92% in 2024 but declined to 68.2% in 2025, while reliance on informal systems dropped from 12% to 8% before rising sharply to 30.4%. Those unwilling to seek justice fell from 12% to 1.4%, showing improved willingness to report. Awareness of state legal aid increased slightly from 19% in 2024 to 35% in 2025 but remains low, highlighting weak outreach. The period saw institutional strengthening, including the establishment of the Public Defender/ Gender-Based Violence office and functional Family Support Units in all police divisions. However, as highlighted by FIDA representatives, limited coordination among justice actors, particularly the Legal Aid Council, continues to constrain prosecution outcomes and sustained confidence in the system.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

The state currently operates one fully functional 24-hour SARC at the Federal University Teaching Hospital, Lafia offering free medical, psychosocial, and legal services supported monthly by the Ministry of Women Affairs and one government-funded shelter along the Lafia–Makurdi Road. However, awareness of available support services remains low (37.7%), reflecting weak public sensitization and referral linkages. Also, only 41.3% of respondents were aware of or had visited active shelters or the SARC, despite 91.9% of those aware affirming that these facilities are functional and adequately equipped.

Officials from the state reinforce this gap: according to the SARC Manager, the centre provides round-the-clock services and collaborates with security and justice institutions, yet awareness and utilization "depend largely on referrals." Referral pathways are dominated by police (52.7%) and healthcare facilities (53.8%), while links to legal and community-based support remain limited (12.9% and 16.3% respectively). Although 56.5% of respondents perceive informal support systems as more helpful, stakeholders emphasized that the religious organizations are always ready to support by involving in management and advocacy. The JNI and CAN are always involved in managing the cases. However, limitations such as the informal nature of some collaborations lead to inconsistent access to information and training. Not all individuals or groups have access to the VAPP Law, which can hinder effectiveness. Additionally, the lack of formal training and limited information can impact the overall efficacy of these collaborations.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness and accessibility of support services in Nasarawa State have evolved notably since 2023. Awareness of shelters and SARCs improved from near absence (8%) in 2024 to 34.9% in 2025 following the establishment of the state's first SARC. Public perception of service functionality has remained strong, with 91.9% of respondents agreeing that the SARC is effective and adequately equipped corroborated by the SARC Manager that the Lafia facility operates 24 hours with free, government-supported services, filling a gap that previously forced survivors to travel long distances or depend on informal mechanisms. Plans are also underway to expand SARCs to the three senatorial zones – Northern, Southern, and Western – marking a strategic shift from isolated service delivery to a more decentralized and survivor-centered approach. Awareness of comprehensive survivor support services (medical, legal, psychosocial, and economic) has fluctuated slightly around 38%, while knowledge of referral pathways, particularly legal representation fluctuated from 58% to 2.5% between 2023 and 2024, to 12.9% in 2025, and police moved from 85% in 2023 to 82% in 2024 to 52% in 2025.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Public awareness of GBV information and education programs in Nasarawa State remains critically low, with only 30.8% of respondents aware of such initiatives, primarily accessed through radio (32.4%), television (26.1%), and social media (20.6%). The perceived usefulness of existing materials is concerning, as 35.6% of respondents found them "not useful at all" and only 3.9% considered them "completely useful," indicating significant gaps in the quality and relevance of information dissemination.

Despite strong public support for formal education, with 84.6% advocating for GBV and Child Sexual Abuse education in schools, the Ministry of Education confirmed the absence of a standardized curriculum for GBV education. Accessibility for persons with disabilities remains limited, as data shows that only a small proportion of respondents use disability-friendly communication formats, ranging from 10.7% who use simplified messages to 44% who rely on audio content. This indicates that while some accessible options exist, their utilization is still low, underscoring the need to strengthen inclusive information delivery across all population groups.

State-led awareness efforts remain fragmented and insufficient in reach and consistency. The Ministry of Women Affairs utilizes mass media, community drama, magazines, and flyers distributed through local government focal persons, schools, and counseling centers; however, new Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials are still in development and not yet disseminated. The annual 16 Days of Activism campaign covered only three LGAs — Lafia, Akwanga, and Nasarawa Eggon, leaving most of the state without recent programming. This uneven coverage, combined with the lack of standardized educational content and user-friendly, disability-inclusive materials, undermines the effectiveness of awareness initiatives and limits the state's capacity to reach vulnerable populations.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV programs has declined significantly from 55% in 2023 to 29.5% in 2025. The perceived usefulness of materials remained problematic throughout, with 25% finding the materials completely useful, dropping to 7% in 2024 and 4% in 2025, even as support for school-based GBV education remained strong at 83.3% in 2025. Use of accessible materials among persons with disabilities showed minimal improvement, with reliance on audio content declining from 71% in 2023 to 26.9% in 2024 and increased to 42.3% in 2025, and the use of visual content also dropping

from 23% in 2023 to 1.6% in 2024 but recovered to 30% in 2025.
The Ministry of Women Affairs indicated that new magazine materials are in development as of 2025, suggesting ongoing efforts that were not mentioned in 2023 data. However, the Ministry of Education's acknowledgment that they do not have a standardized GBV curriculum has remained unchanged throughout the assessment period, reflecting persistent structural gaps in formal education systems despite strong public demand for comprehensive school-based programming.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

The State budgeted ₦1.35 billion for programs addressing gender-based violence (GBV), which represents 0.38% of the total state expenditure. However, the state only spent ₦363 million, achieving an execution rate of just 27%. This amounts to a per capita expenditure of ₦223.21, which is only 0.20% of the actual state spending. This indicates significant challenges in implementation.

Nearly three-quarters of the designated GBV funds went unspent, which left critical protection services and intervention programs severely underfunded. The challenge to execute the budget undermines the modest commitment that the initial allocation represented.

Changes Over Time (2022 to 2024)

Nasarawa State did not include any gender-based violence (GBV) specific line items in its 2022 and 2023 budgets. In 2024, however, the state introduced GBV-specific items into the approved budget, earning full marks for that indicator. Of these items, only two recorded actual spending, with performance rates of 74% and 8%, while the remaining items had no expenditure.

Budget performance within the Ministry of Women Affairs fluctuated sharply during the period. In 2022, the ministry received ₦586.82 million and achieved a high implementation rate of 92% (₦539.81 million). The allocation increased substantially to ₦1.43 billion in 2023, yet performance dropped dramatically to just 23% (₦325.58 million). In 2024, the allocation fell slightly to ₦1.30 billion, with actual performance recorded at only 27%. Per capita spending stood at ₦223.21 in 2024, ₦206.25 in 2023, and ₦352.37 in 2022. The downward trend from 2022 to 2024 indicates a reduction in per capita investment over the period, reflecting diminishing fiscal attention to GBV-related interventions.

Human Angle Stories

19-year-old Ali lives with his uncle, who constantly beats him. One of those beatings made him lose his ability to hear in one ear. A good Samaritan referred him to the Ministry of Women's Affairs, where he was offered medical help and sheltered for two nights.

When asked if he was satisfied with how his case was handled, he said, "Yes and no. I got help, but I still returned home later."

He wished his community understood that violence isn't correction, that it's not just women who suffer. He wished people knew boys could be victims too.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	The state has domesticated the VAPP Law and Child's Rights Act without additional enhancements.	Review and amend the domesticated VAPP Law and Child's Rights Act to include state-specific provisions, enforcement mechanisms, and budgetary allocations that strengthen implementation and accountability.
	Critical enforcement infrastructure remains non-operational including the absence of a sex offenders' registers and a non-functional Family Court.	Establish and operationalize a sex offenders' register with digital integration across all law enforcement agencies. Operationalize the Family Court through specialized training for judges, police, and civil defence officers on VAPP Law application and trauma-informed case management.
	Female Genital Mutilation continues "widely across the state," especially in remote areas despite campaigns and legal frameworks.	Strengthen enforcement against FGM through targeted investigations, prosecutions, and community-level monitoring systems in identified hotspot areas.
	Awareness and reliance on customary/religious laws surged from 27% (2023) to 71.2% (2025), overshadowing formal legal mechanisms.	Develop a harmonization framework that engages traditional and religious institutions in GBV prevention while clearly delineating criminal matters that must proceed through formal justice channels.
Access to Legal Justice	Despite increased reporting willingness, prosecutions stall because complainants do not appear in court. Over 16% of respondents unwilling to serve as witnesses cite safety concerns.	Establish a comprehensive witness protection program including safe houses, identity protection, court escort services, and psychosocial support throughout the trial process
	Preference for formal justice declined from 92% (2024) to 68.2% (2025) while informal system reliance jumped to 30.4%. Yet, there is ineffective access to formal justice mechanisms, particularly the undue interference of informal actors, weak enforcement in rural areas, and limited reach of formal justice institutions.	Enact laws penalizing interference with formal justice processes, establish structured dialogue platforms with traditional and religious leaders to clarify jurisdictional boundaries, and deploy mobile courts and circuit prosecution teams to rural areas to increase access to formal justice.
Support Services	Legal aid services concentrated in Lafia (the state capital), Keffi, Karu, and Akwanga, with uncertainty about other LGAs.	Expand Legal Aid Council presence to all 13 LGAs with dedicated GBV desks, full-time staff, and performance monitoring through partnerships with FIDA, NBA, and law school clinics to provide pro bono representation in underserved areas.
	Only one operational SARC exists statewide at Federal University Teaching Hospital Lafia, serving fewer than 50% of LGAs.	Fast-track establishment of SARCs in the three senatorial districts (Northern, Southern, Western) with defined timelines, budget allocation, and staffing requirements.
	While technical working committee meets monthly, "political interference and third-party interference" disrupts service delivery as "families, cultural intervention, and religion" pressure survivors to withdraw after government intervention.	Develop survivor-centered case management Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) with confidentiality protocols and strengthen the technical working committee with enforcement and accountability measures.
Information and Awareness	Awareness of GBV programs collapsed from 30.8% (2023) to 8% (2024). Materials are perceived as largely ineffective: 35.6% found them "not useful at all" and only 3.9% "completely useful." New IEC materials remain "in the process."	Finalize and distribute IEC materials in multiple languages, conduct needs assessment, and increase budget for quarterly campaigns.
	Despite 84.6% public support for school-based GBV education, the Ministry of Education confirmed absence of standardized curriculum.	Develop age-appropriate GBV prevention curriculum for schools, train teachers and counsellors, and establish school-based GBV focal persons and confidential reporting mechanisms.
	Disability-inclusive materials awareness declined (audio: 44% to 26.9%; visual: 32% to lower levels).	Produce GBV information in all accessible formats (braille, audio recordings, large print, easy-read pictorial materials, sign language videos, and screen-reader compatible digital content).
Budget and Spending	The state left 73% of allocated GBV funds unspent in 2024, with actual expenditure dropping to just 27%, down from 92% implementation in 2022, revealing a systemic breakdown in fund release and execution capacity.	Establish quarterly fund release schedules with the Ministry of Finance and conduct a rapid diagnostic of bottlenecks preventing the Ministry of Women Affairs from accessing and deploying approved GBV budgets.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | Invictus AFRICA



Niger State

The Power State

Kpakungu Roundabout

Niger State

Population: 7,293,058

50.5% Female | Male 49.5%

Overall Grade 69.6%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,025)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

69.7% | 30.3%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

80.6% | 19.4%

AGE

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

1.1% | 13.7% | 45.5% | 35.5% | 3.5% | 0.7%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

1.7% | 98.3%

SARCs: 6

Shelters: 0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦2.15bn

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

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦1.69bn

(This accounts for **78.4%** of total allocation to the ministry)

78.4%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ Others ■ (Actual Spend)

74.6% | 17.4% | 7.9% | 0.1%

Per Capita Spending

₦457.71

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	62.5%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	68.6%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	66.7%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

66.7% | 33.3%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

71.3% | 6.5% | 15.8% | 24.0% | 5.6%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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

20.8% | 4.7% | 19.6% | 1.5% | 53.4%

What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

59.8% | 25.5% | 21.1% | 34.6% | 16.4% | 3.2%

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

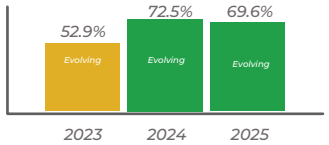
Where did you or the person first seek help?

52.2% | 25.8% | 17.9% | 1.8% | 0.3% | 0.6% | 1.5%

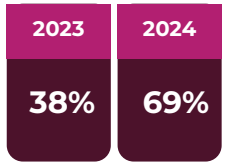
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



58%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 48.3%	LP 58.3%	+1 ▲ LP 75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 86.3%	ALJ 81.3%	+1 ▼ ALJ 62.5%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	SS 68.8%	SS 62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA 43.8%	+1 ▲ IA 62.5%	IA 68.8%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+2 ▲ BS 91.7%	BS 66.7%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- GBV cases are now handled quickly – judges sit daily, with over 100 convictions secured and many cases concluded within weeks instead of months.
- All 25 local government areas have access to free legal representation through collaboration between the Ministry of Justice, Legal Aid Council, and NGOs.
- Six SARCs now operate across the state, offering free medical, psychosocial, and legal services in both urban and semi-urban zones.
- 97.2% of residents support teaching GBV and child protection in schools, and anti-GBV clubs are already active in several secondary schools.

Areas of Concern

- Early marriage and patriarchal norms still prevent many women and girls from seeking justice, especially in Zone A where taking offenders to court is seen as taboo.
- Only 30.9% of respondents know that free legal help exist, even though it is available in all LGAs.
- Awareness of SARCs and shelters collapsed from 93% (2023) to just 11% (2025) after donor-funded campaigns ended.
- 98.3% of respondents believe informal community support is better than formal services.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Niger State domesticated the VAPP Act with contextual modifications to accommodate the state's religious and cultural diversity, including provisions for immigrant communities.
- The state introduced amendments including expanded definitions of rape and specific provisions recognizing Almajiri children as inhabitants with full rights to education, welfare, and human rights protection.

Access to Legal Justice

- Gender focal persons were established at every police station across the state, expanding from previous state-level coverage to local-level presence for improved case management.
- The Child Rights Law was enacted, empowering magistrates to handle GBV cases directly without requiring Director of Public Prosecution's approval, significantly reducing delays.

Support Services

- The state established six Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) distributed across zones, including facilities in Minna, Suleja, Kontagora, New Bussa, Police Clinic, and Jummai Babangida General Hospital.
- State helplines and helpdesk emails were established as additional entry points for survivors, complementing facility-based reporting pathways.

Information and Awareness

- Anti-GBV clubs were established in secondary schools across the state, with plans to expand to all educational levels for youth engagement in prevention efforts.
- The state engaged traditional rulers, religious leaders, and community groups through structured advocacy sessions to address harmful cultural practices and improve referral of cases to formal systems.

Change Spotlight

Niger State has achieved significant progress in prosecution efficiency through legislative and judicial reforms. The enactment of the Child Rights Law now allows magistrates to handle GBV cases directly without referral to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), drastically reducing processing time. As one Ministry of Justice official emphasized: "With the invention of the Child Rights Law, right now a magistrate can handle cases of GBV without being taken to the DPP for their approval. So, in that way, we have seen justice being served more strictly and going faster." This reform, combined with the Chief Judge's practice direction requiring daily sittings for GBV cases, has enabled Niger State to secure over 100 convictions with fast-tracked trials completing within weeks rather than months.

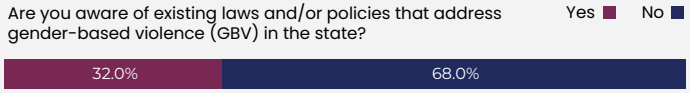
Niger State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 69.6%

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 ■

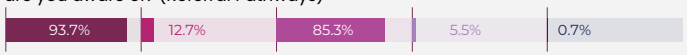


Do you believe that these shelters and/or SARCs are effectively functional, adequately equipped, properly maintained, and sustainable over time?



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

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



■ 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 ■



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

Niger State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 69.6%

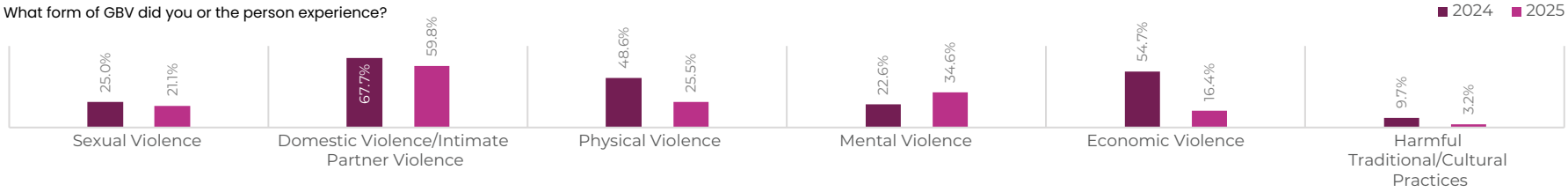
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



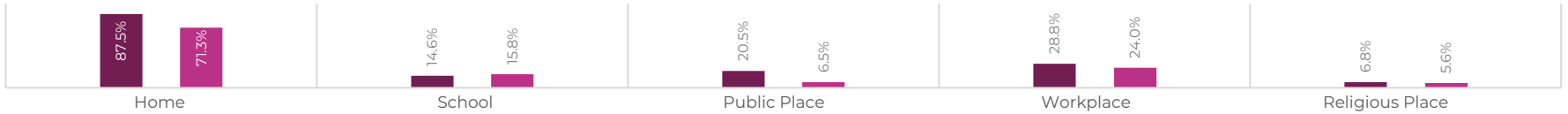
33.3%

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

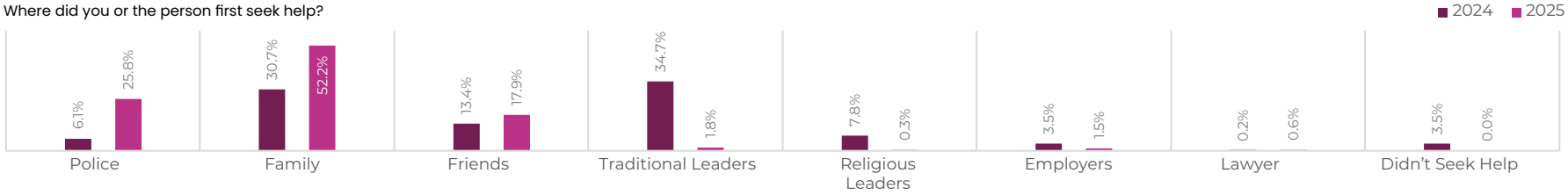
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



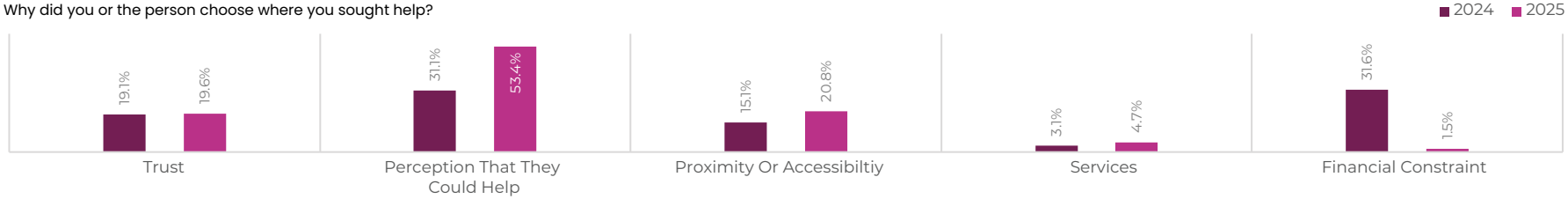
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

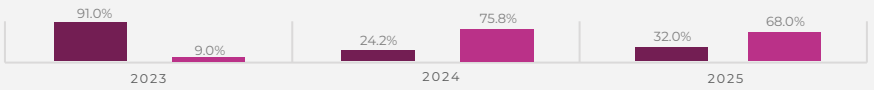


Niger State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

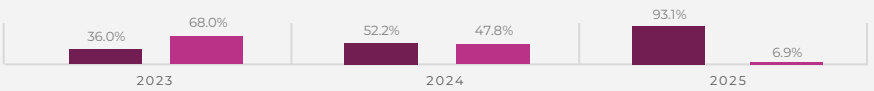
Overall Grade 69.6%

LAWS AND POLICIES

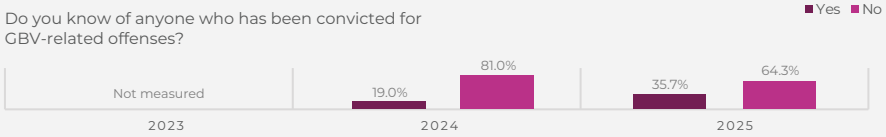
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

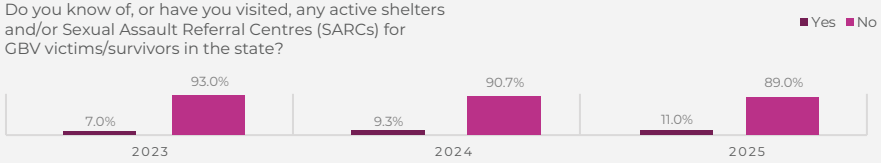


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

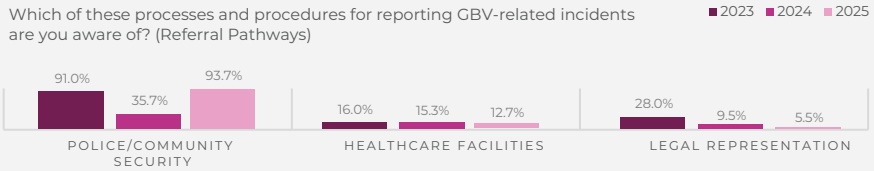


SUPPORT SERVICES

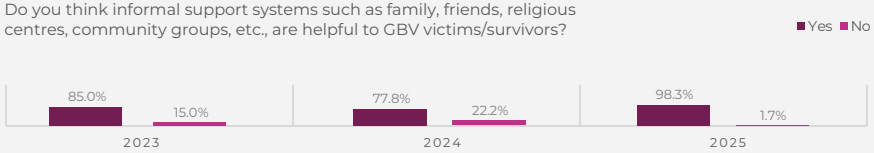
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

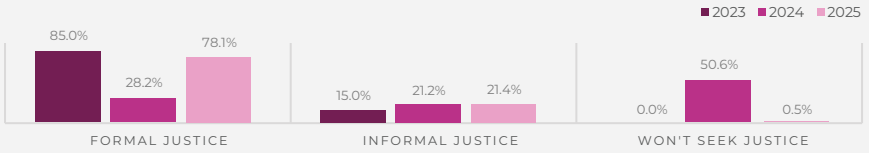


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

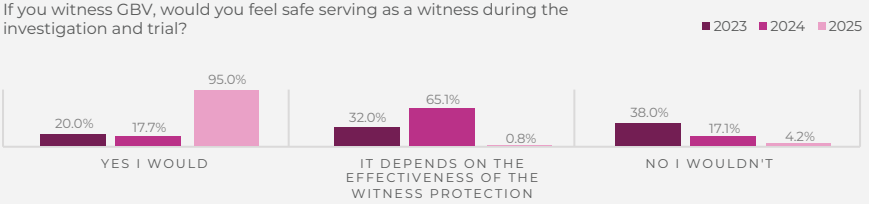


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

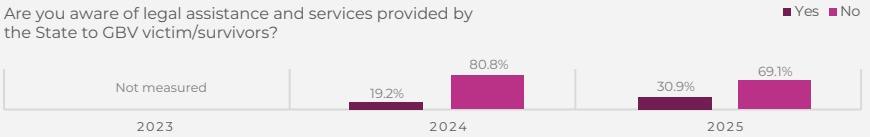
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

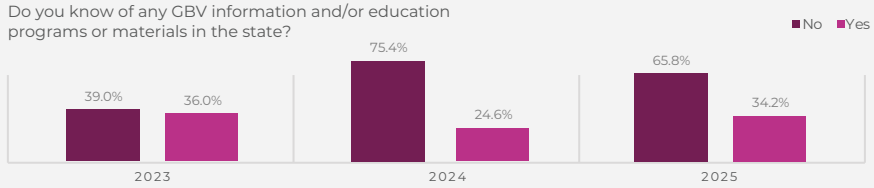


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

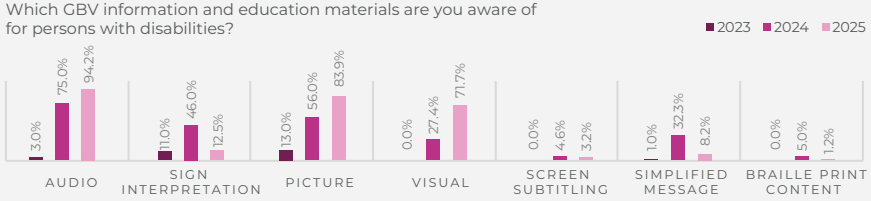


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

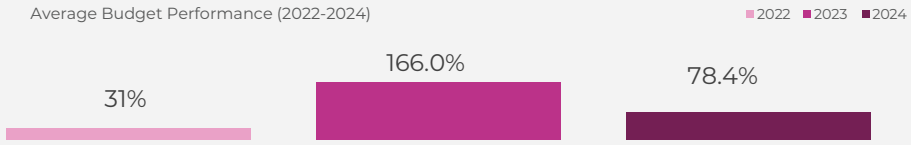


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

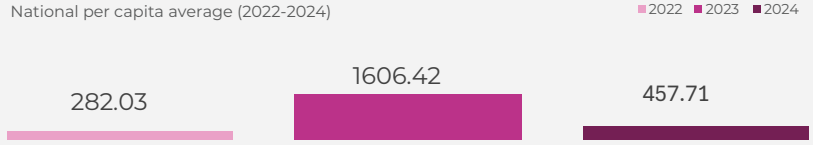


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Niger State has established a comprehensive legal framework addressing GBV through its domesticated VAPP law, contextualized to accommodate the state's religious, cultural, and demographic diversity. This contextualization resulted in meaningful modifications, including a redefined scope of rape and additional offenses not present in federal legislations. Notably, Niger State's law includes provisions specifically for Almajiri children, recognizing them as inhabitants entitled to education, welfare, and human rights protection, a significant departure from treating them merely as street children.

The state has demonstrated strong enforcement capacity, with the Ministry of Justice reporting that "we have handled more than 100 cases, and I can sincerely say we have many success stories because of the practice direction." This conviction record reflects not only legislative strength but also judicial commitment to GBV prosecution. The practice direction issued by the Chief Judge allows presiding judges to sit daily on GBV cases, ensuring swift trials that would otherwise face the delays characteristic of Nigeria's overburdened court system.

Despite this robust legal foundation, awareness of GBV-related laws and policies remains limited. The quantitative data reveals that only 32% of respondents are aware of existing GBV laws, with radio (82.6%) and television (75%) serving as primary information sources among those who are aware. Notably, traditional leaders (0.3%) and religious centres (0.6%) have negligible roles in legal awareness dissemination, despite their cultural influence. Furthermore, only 35.7% of respondents know someone convicted for GBV offenses, indicating a significant gap between the state's strong institutional performance and public knowledge of justice outcomes.

Customary and religious practices continue to pose challenges despite legal prohibitions. The Ministry of Justice noted that "in some areas, like Zone A, society sees it as taboo for a woman or child who has been violated to take the perpetrator to court." Also, early marriage and religious teachings that emphasize male authority remains particularly problematic and further limit women's agency in seeking justice. Interestingly, the quantitative data shows that 96% of respondents are aware of customary and religious laws addressing GBV, and 93.1% believe these practices help prevent and respond to GBV, revealing a disconnect between institutional assessments and community perceptions of traditional systems.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of GBV laws showed concerning fluctuations between 2023 and 2025. Awareness plummeted from 91% in 2023 to 24% in 2024, before recovering modestly to 32% in 2025. The partial recovery in 2025 indicates renewed efforts but insufficient to regain previous levels.

Perceptions of customary and religious laws shifted dramatically. The proportion of respondents believing these practices help prevent GBV increased from 32% in 2023 to 96% in 2025, suggesting either improved traditional leadership engagement following sensitization efforts or growing community preference for familiar cultural mechanisms over formal systems. As an NGO coordinator noted, efforts to reform traditional practices include working "through forums like the League of Imams and CAN, and with support from the National Orientation Agency, we educate religious leaders on human rights and the need to improve." This intensive engagement with religious leaders appears to have influenced community perceptions.

Awareness of convictions emerged as a tracked indicator in 2024 at 52%, declining to 35.7% in 2025. This reduction, despite the Ministry of Justice reporting over 100 successful prosecutions, highlights inadequate communication of justice outcomes to communities. The gap between actual convictions and public awareness undermines the deterrent effect of prosecution.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Niger State has established multiple pathways for reporting and prosecuting GBV cases, with varying degrees of effectiveness across regions. Survivors can report incidents through police stations, the Ministry of Women Affairs, hospitals, the Child Rights Agency, or traditional and religious leaders. The Ministry of Health explained that "people know to report to the nearest police station, SARCs, Child Rights Agency, or social workers at the Ministry of Women Affairs," demonstrating public awareness of formal reporting channels.

The prosecution of GBV cases follows a structured pathway: victims are taken to a police clinic for medical assessment, statements are obtained from suspects with caution and relatives present, and prosecutors follow up in court to ensure justice. Fast-track trials have improved speed, with judges sitting daily for swift hearings, and survivors now reporting more freely. However, cost remains a key barrier, as parties struggle to pay for services like summons, especially for out-of-town defendants.

Legal aid services demonstrate comprehensive geographic coverage. Stakeholders confirmed unequivocally that all 25 LGAs in the state are covered by NGOs. There are LGA focal persons, customary courts, family courts, and SARC across the state, providing multiple entry points for legal services. The Ministry of Justice confirmed that "major LGAs such as Suleja, Lapai, Kontagora, Bida, and Minna are covered. NGOs have groups within local areas that assist in resolving domestic violence cases." However, quantitative data reveals low awareness of these services; only 30.9% of respondents know about legal assistance available to survivors.

Informal justice systems have mixed effects as sometimes they help resolve cases but other times, they hinder justice by pressuring victims to settle or condoning violence. 78.1% of respondents would seek formal justice, while 21.4% would seek informal justice. Regarding witness protection, 95% of respondents would feel safe serving as witnesses, suggesting successful confidence-building measures.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Preference for formal justice systems showed volatility between 2023 and 2025. Awareness of legal aid services appeared at 19% in 2024 and increased to 30.9% in 2025. Formal justice preference dropped drastically from 85% in 2023 to 28% in 2024, before recovering strongly to 78.1% in 2025. The 2025 recovery suggests renewed trust in formal mechanisms, possibly due to the fast-track reforms and increased conviction rates becoming more visible to communities.

Correspondingly, reliance on informal systems increased from 15% in 2023 to 21% in 2024, settling at 21.4% in 2025. While informal system use remains a minority preference, it represents persistent confidence in traditional mechanisms among one-fifth of the population. As the Ministry of Women Affairs noted, informal systems "have improved significantly due to increased awareness among traditional leaders who now take action against harmful practices."

Willingness to serve as witnesses transformed dramatically. In 2023, only 20% would feel safe testifying, 38% would not, and 32% said it depends on witness protection effectiveness. By 2024, hesitancy increased (18% yes, 17% no, 65% depends). In 2025, confidence surged to 95% willing to testify, with only 4.2% refusing and 0.8% conditional. This remarkable shift suggests successful implementation of protection measures or effective communication about existing protections.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Niger State provides GBV support through a dual system comprising Sexual Assault Referral Centres and dedicated support structures. The Ministry of Women Affairs reported: "We currently have six SARCs distributed across zones: two in Zone B (including the police clinic and Jummai Babangida General Hospital), one in Minna, one in Suleja, one in Kontagora, and one in New Bussa. All are government-run." These centres deliver comprehensive services. The SARC case manager explained: "We provide good psychosocial support and free medical examinations including tests for HIV, hepatitis B, and pregnancy at low cost. Doctors diagnose and prescribe drugs, often free or at low cost."

Economic empowerment is also taken as a priority, but survivors often lack sufficient support. However, data reveals significant awareness challenges. Only 11% of respondents know of or have visited SARCs or shelters. Among those aware, 55.8% believe the facilities are effectively functional and adequately equipped, with 43.4% strongly agreeing. Regarding support services broadly, 30.9% are aware of available medical, legal, psychosocial, or economic services for survivors, primarily learning through radio (82.6%) and television (77.3%).

The GBV reporting and referral system is accessible and user-friendly, offering multiple reporting options including the Ministry of Women Affairs, police stations with gender focal points, a state helpline, and SARCs. The process is coordinated with services like interpreters for persons with disabilities and collaboration with agencies such as the Education and Child Rights Agency. Confidential information is shared securely among stakeholders. However, challenges remain, including overburdened hospital doctors, pointing to the need for dedicated SARC staff to improve support services. Awareness of specific referral pathways shows striking disparities. Police or community security pathways are known to 93.7% of respondents, healthcare facilities to only 12.7%, support groups to 85.3%, and legal representation to just 5.5%. Strikingly, 98.3% of respondents believe informal support systems are better than formal systems, indicating either deep cultural preference or perceived inadequacy of formal mechanisms.

In Niger State, service accessibility for GBV survivors varies. Urban areas (Suleja, Minna, Bida) have better counselling and justice services, while rural areas (especially Niger town) are underserved due to security restrictions and resource gaps, with economic support notably limited. Informal systems complement formal care by providing moral/financial aid, reducing stigma, and boosting awareness. Traditional leaders now act against harm, and engagement with families and communities emphasizes universal human rights, encouraging survivors to speak up.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Knowledge of SARCs or shelters plummeted from 93% in 2023 to 9% in 2024, recovering slightly to 11% in 2025. This collapse likely reflects the end of donor-funded awareness campaigns mentioned by the SARC respondent: "Previously, when donor funding was available, activities and awareness were fantastic, and reporting was massive. Continuous awareness is needed." The failure to sustain 2023 awareness levels suggests over-reliance on temporary project-based outreach rather than institutionalized communication.

Confidence in SARC functionality among those aware remained relatively stable, rising from 40% in 2024 to 55.8% in 2025. This suggests that while fewer people know about these facilities, those who do have growing confidence in their effectiveness. Awareness of specific referral pathways showed mixed trends. Police pathway recognition declined from 91% (2023) to 35.7% (2024) then surged to 93.7% (2025), demonstrating successful sustained sensitization on law enforcement channels despite the 2024 dip. Healthcare pathway awareness sharply declined from 58% (2023) to 15.3% (2024) to 12.7% (2025), indicating persistent neglect of health sector communication. Legal representation awareness collapsed from 85% (2023) to 9.5% (2024) to 5.5% (2025), representing a critical failure in legal literacy outreach.

Reliance on informal support systems increased from 80% (2023) to 78% (2024) to 98.3% (2025) which

may be attributed to the Ministry of Women Affairs' efforts to strengthen informal networks through training, retraining, advocacy, and sensitization through town hall meetings, market squares, and other community gatherings.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Niger State adopts a multi-channel approach to GBV awareness through radio, TV, print materials, and community engagement. The Ministry of Women Affairs uses IEC materials, banners, and quarterly jingles in English and Hausa, though most new content is tied to the 16 Days of Activism, indicating campaign-driven rather than continuous messaging. Radio remains the most effective medium, complemented by roadshows, role plays, and short dramas produced by the Ministry of Education for all LGAs.

Community support for school-based GBV and child sexual abuse education is strong (97.2%), but implementation is inconsistent. While anti-GBV clubs exist in some secondary schools, standardized curricula are lacking, and challenges persist, including parental resistance, poor coordination between parents and teachers, and cases of staff misconduct discouraging reporting.

Public sensitization relies heavily on annual campaigns like the 16 Days of Activism and programs such as "Talk Your Own," which engage communities via local FM stations. Awareness gaps remain—only 34.2% of respondents know of GBV programs, mainly through radio (84.6%) and TV (74.6%), while NGOs and CSOs account for just 5.4%. Disability inclusion is prioritized through PWD representation in GBV committees, but accessible formats like sign language (12.5%), simplified messaging (8.2%), and braille (1.2%) are rarely used. Outreach also targets marginalized groups like Almajiri and Mai Angwas via community leaders.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

GBV awareness showed volatile patterns from 2023 to 2025. Knowledge of information programs declined from 36% in 2023 to 25% in 2024, before recovering to 34.2% in 2025. This fluctuation suggests inconsistent campaign intensity, likely tied to donor funding cycles and government budget allocations for awareness activities. The perceived usefulness of materials improved among those exposed. The proportion finding content "completely useful" dropped from 21% in 2024 to 6.8% in 2025. The "mostly useful" category increased from 6% in 2023 to 59% (2024) to 86.9% (2025). This suggests that while fewer people encountered awareness materials in some years, those who did find them increasingly valuable, indicating improved content quality even as dissemination fluctuated.

Use of disability-inclusive materials peaked in 2024 before declining in 2025. Audio or spoken content awareness rose from 4% in 2023 to 75% in 2024, surging to 94.2% in 2025 — a remarkably positive trend. Visual content awareness increased from 3% (2023) to 27.4% (2024) to 71.7% (2025). However, braille usage showed regression: 4% (2023), 5% (2024), 1.2% (2025). Screen subtitling remained consistently low: 3% (2023), 4.6% (2024), and 3.2% (2025). Simplified messages declined from 32.3% (2024) to 8.2% (2025).

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Niger State stands out as one of the stronger performers in GBV budget execution for 2024. The state allocated ₦2.15 billion to GBV programs (0.27% of total budget) and demonstrated impressive follow-through by spending ₦1.69 billion, achieving a 78.4% execution rate. This resulted in a per capita expenditure of ₦457.71. The high implementation rate suggests that Niger has developed effective coordination mechanisms enabling efficient fund disbursement and program execution. This performance is particularly noteworthy given that many states with similar or higher initial allocations struggled to achieve even half of Niger's execution rate.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Across the three years under review, Niger State consistently included gender-based violence (GBV) specific line items, such as the "Provision of Shelter and Nutrition for Abused Children," which appeared annually. However, implementation remained weak. In 2022, only 15% (₦1.5 million) of the ₦10 million allocation was spent, while the 2023 and 2024 allocations of ₦5 million and ₦30 million respectively recorded 0% expenditure. Budget performance within the Ministry of Women Affairs was relatively strong in the last two years. In 2022, the ministry received ₦3.08 billion but achieved an implementation rate of only 31% (₦970.80 million). In 2023, the allocation rose to ₦3.45 billion, and the state recorded an exceptional performance rate of 166% (₦5.72 billion). However, the allocation fell to ₦2.15 billion in 2024, with actual performance at 78.4% (₦1.69 billion). Per capita spending stood at ₦457.71 in 2024, ₦1,606.42 in 2023, and ₦282.03 in 2022. The exceptionally high level of spending in 2023, followed by a steep decline in 2024, reflects volatile investment patterns and inconsistent prioritization of GBV-related interventions across the three-year period.

Human Angle Stories

20-year-old Amina was raped by someone she trusted. "I felt shame and was afraid of other people's opinions," she recalled.

One evening, she heard a radio broadcast about the VAPP Act and support services for survivors. "The woman on the radio said it wasn't my fault and that there were people who could help me," Amina said. Encouraged, she reached out to a local women's group, which referred her to a Sexual Assault Referral Centre for counselling. Amina's story demonstrates the impact of survivor-centred awareness campaigns and the importance of accessible media messaging in breaking cycles of silence.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Only 32% of respondents are aware of existing GBV laws despite strong legislative framework and over 100 convictions.	Launch a systematic, year-round legal awareness campaign through multiple channels and existing government outreach programs to ensure sustained visibility beyond donor-funded projects.
	Early marriage continues despite legal prohibitions, with cultural and religious teachings emphasizing male authority limiting women's agency in seeking justice.	Launch culturally-sensitive dialogue programs with community leaders, Imams, pastors, and health professionals to challenge harmful practices and promote alternative ceremonies.
	Traditional leaders and religious centres have negligible roles (0.3% and 0.6% respectively) in legal awareness dissemination despite their cultural influence and community trust.	Formalize traditional/religious leaders as legal awareness ambassadors with materials, briefings, and awards, leveraging their influence to boost legal literacy in hard-to-reach communities.
Access to Legal Justice	Only 30.9% are aware of legal assistance services despite comprehensive coverage across all 25 LGAs through Legal Aid Council, NGOs, customary courts, and family courts.	Launch "Know Your Rights" campaigns with survivor testimonials, targeting vulnerable populations through women's groups, youth organizations, and community health workers
	Informal justice mechanisms present a paradox, as some traditional leaders appropriately refer cases, while others obstruct justice through forced settlements that deny survivors medical evidence collection and prosecution.	Implement quarterly reporting for traditional leaders on GBV cases, with awards for high performers and sanctions for underreporting or harmful practices.
	Legal representation awareness collapsed from 85% (2023) to 5.5% (2025), representing a critical failure in legal literacy outreach despite services being available.	Establish permanent legal aid awareness roles in the Ministry of Justice, with performance metrics tied to community outreach and survey results, ensuring sustained awareness beyond donor funding.
Support Services	Six SARCs exist across zones but awareness plummeted from 93% (2023) to 11% (2025), with stakeholders explicitly linking the decline to end of donor-funded awareness in 2018, indicating over-reliance on temporary project funding.	Institutionalize SARC awareness as a permanent government function with dedicated staff in the Ministry of Women Affairs responsible for year-round campaigns, including SARC location signage at major intersections, regular radio announcements.
	Services are more accessible in urban areas (Suleja, Minna, Chanchaga, Mokwa, Bida) than rural areas, with some areas like Niger town underserved due to security issues restricting movement.	Explore alternative GBV service models: mobile SARC teams, telemedicine consultations, and partnerships with humanitarian organizations in underserved areas.
	98.3% of respondents believe informal support systems are better than formal systems,despite institutional improvements in formal services.	Integrate trained community support persons into GBV referral pathways with standardized training, tools, and accountability to SARCs, bridging formal and informal support systems.
	The SARC case manager noted "doctors are often overworked, so having a dedicated doctor for each SARC would help," indicating staffing gaps affecting service quality.	Partner with Ministry of Health to deploy dedicated SARC medical officers, trained in GBV response, with protected workload for specialized survivor care.
Information and Awareness	GBV awareness materials are produced and distributed "only for the 16 Days of Activism," indicating campaign-concentrated rather than continuous communication, contributing to awareness volatility.	Implement continuous GBV awareness through permanent IEC material displays in public spaces, refreshed quarterly, making awareness a constant presence.
	97.2% support teaching GBV in schools, yet implementation is inconsistent. Stakeholders acknowledged GBV is "not a formal subject," only covered through clubs in some secondary schools.	Develop and implement a comprehensive, age-appropriate GBV curriculum for all education levels through the Ministry of Education, training teachers as facilitators, and integrating content into existing subjects (Social Studies, Civic Education, Health Education, Religious Studies).
	Traditional leaders (0%) and religious centres (0%) have no reported impact as sources of GBV information despite their cultural influence, while radio (84.6%) and television (74.6%) dominate, missing opportunities to leverage trusted community voices.	Formalize religious/traditional leaders as GBV awareness partners with talking points, updates, and sermon integration, recognizing consistent GBV messaging in communities.
	Awareness of specialized disability formats remains critically low — braille (1.2%), screen subtitling (3.2%), simplified messages (8.2%) — despite government commitment to disability inclusion and materials reportedly being produced.	Partner with disability organizations to disseminate tailored materials and train service providers in disability communication, boosting GBV support accessibility.
Budget and Spending	Despite high implementation efficiency, specific GBV line items like "Provision of Shelter and Nutrition for Abused Children" recorded 0% expenditure in 2023 and 2024.	Strengthen monitoring of earmarked GBV line items to ensure funds reach intended programs, particularly shelter and child protection services that currently show zero implementation despite allocations.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



Ogun State

Gateway State

Olumo Rock

Ogun State

Population: 6,794,135

50.7% Female | Male 49.3%

Overall Grade 65.0%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,025)*

GENDER — Female ■ Male ■

68.8% | 31.2%

AREA — Rural ■ Urban ■

27.7% | 72.3%

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

4.0% | 25.5% | 24.4% | 30.8% | 10.2% | 5.1%

DISABILITY STATUS — Yes ■ No ■

15.7% | 84.3%

SARCs: 5

Shelters: 4

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦6.22bn

(This accounts for **0.9%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦3.19bn

(This accounts for **51.2%** of total allocation to the ministry)

51.2%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ Others ■ (Actual Spend)

43.6% | 15.8% | 17.9% | 22.7%

Per Capita Spending

₦925.70

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	56.3%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	56.3%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	83.3%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

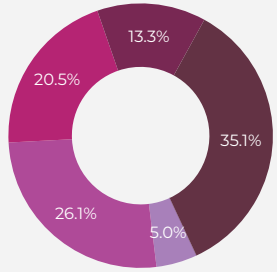
25.7% | 74.3%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

61.8% | 31.1% | 19.0% | 23.8% | 11.3%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

45.0% | 44.9% | 32.0% | 28.9% | 15.1% | 4.7%

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

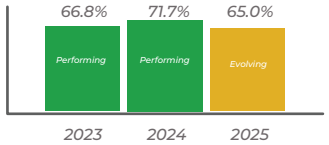
Where did you or the person first seek help?

28.3% | 33.4% | 12.6% | 8.3% | 8.7% | 3.4% | 3.3% | 2.0%

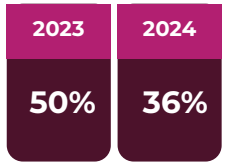
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



43%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	LP 75.0%	LP 66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	+1 ▲ ALJ 75.0%	-1 ▼ ALJ 56.3%
Support Services	SS 86.3%	SS 81.3%	-1 ▼ SS 62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA 86.3%	-1 ▼ IA 68.8%	IA 56.3%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 58.3%	+1 ▲ BS 83.3%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Four new SARC centers became operational in 2025 (Sagamu, Ijebu-Ode, Abeokuta, Ilaro), up from just one center.
- State established toll-free emergency lines and runs radio/TV awareness campaigns across all zones.
- Traditional rulers increasingly refer cases to police rather than handling them informally.

Areas of Concern

- Convictions remain under 10 annually as victims withdraw from court due to family pressure and stigmatization.
- SARC operates without statutory status or dedicated funding lines, relying entirely on donor support and the personal commitment.
- Families and communities pressure victims to withdraw cases, treating GBV as "family matters" requiring prayer rather than prosecution.
- Referral pathway remains inconsistent with survivors entering through uncoordinated entry points.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Integration of Civil Defense Corps into GBV prosecution and community-level sensitization roles.
-
- Engagement of religious and traditional leaders in sensitization campaigns to promote legal literacy.

Access to Legal Justice

- Introduction of free legal aid through FIDA and NGOs, coordinated by the Ministry of Justice and Legal Aid Council.
- Empowerment of the Civil Defense Corps to handle and prosecute GBV cases, improving response timeliness.

Support Services

- Expansion of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) to five (four public, one private), covering all four zones of the state.
- Integration of Women Development Centres (WDCs) offering psychosocial, legal, and economic empowerment programs.
- Launch of toll-free hotlines, roadshows, and radio campaigns to strengthen referral and awareness systems.

Information and Awareness

- Statewide sensitization campaigns via radio, television, social media, and NGO partnerships.
- Establishment of school-based sensitization programs through collaboration between the Ministry of Education and Women Affairs.

Change Spotlight

Ogun State has made significant progress in addressing gender-based violence (GBV) by expanding survivor support through the establishment of four government-operated Sexual Assault Referral Centers (SARCs) in Sagamu, Ijebu-Ode, Abeokuta, and Ilaro, along with a privately managed Spring Centre in Abeokuta.

These centers provide comprehensive services, including medical care, psychosocial support, legal assistance, temporary shelter, and livelihood training. By integrating Women Development Centres (WDCs) with SARCs, survivors receive vocational training in areas like tailoring and catering, aiding their economic reintegration.

Increased awareness and community engagement have led to over 90% of users rating SARCs positively. Ogun State's combined SARC-WDC model effectively links protection, justice, and empowerment for GBV survivors.

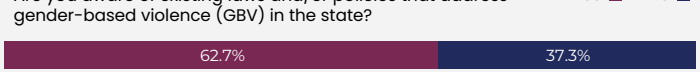
Ogun State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 65.0%

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 ■



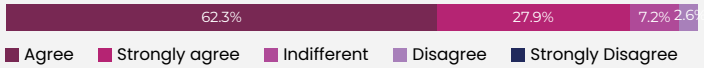
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

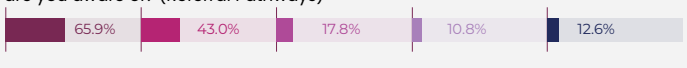
Yes ■ No ■



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)



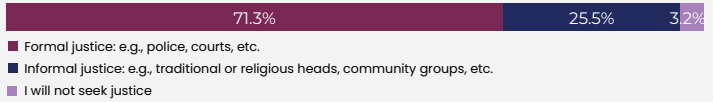
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

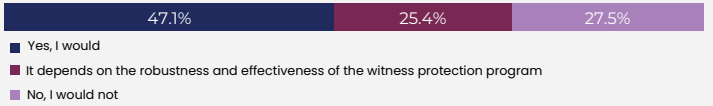


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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?

Yes ■ No ■



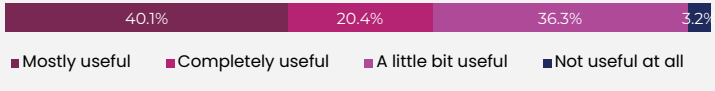
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

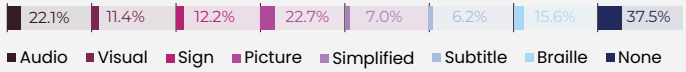
Yes ■ No ■



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



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



Ogun State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 65.0%

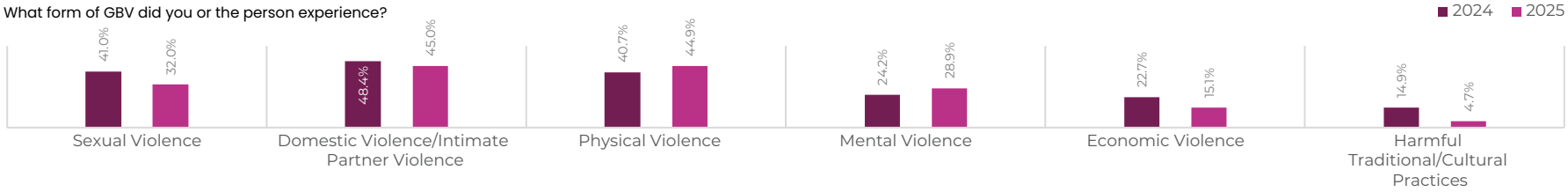
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



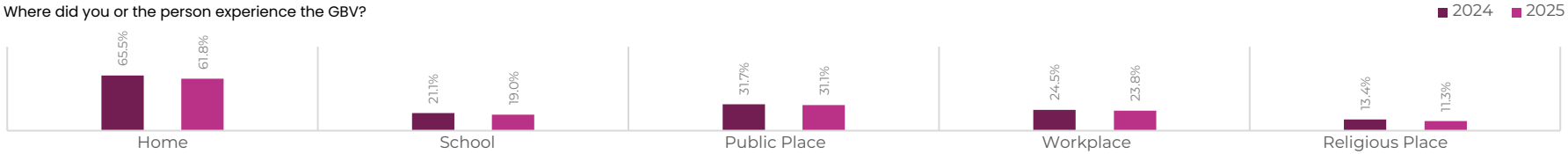
74.3%

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

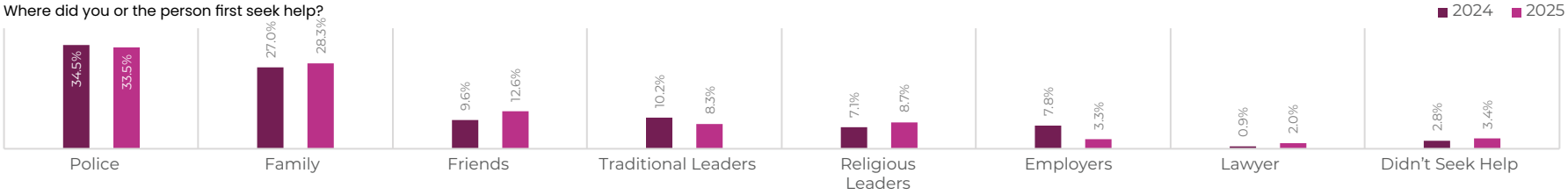
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



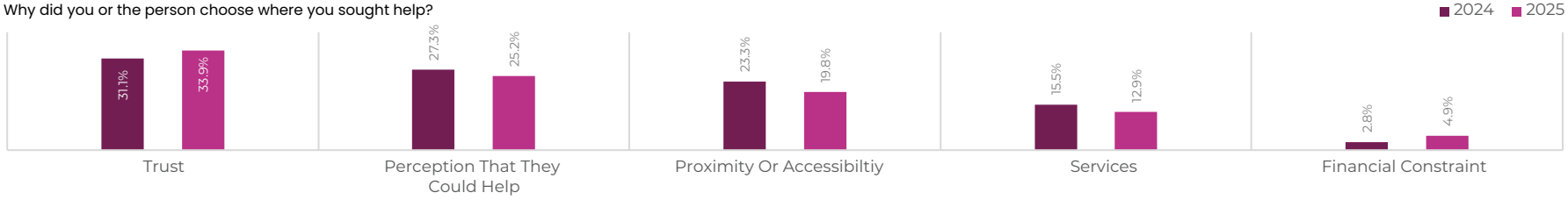
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

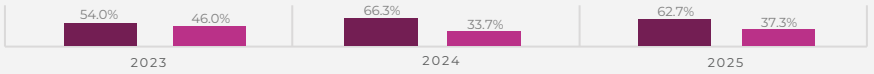


Ogun State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

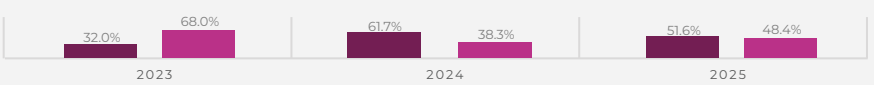
Overall Grade 65.0%

LAWS AND POLICIES

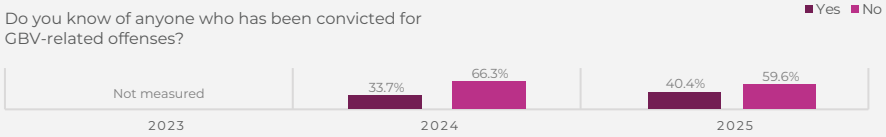
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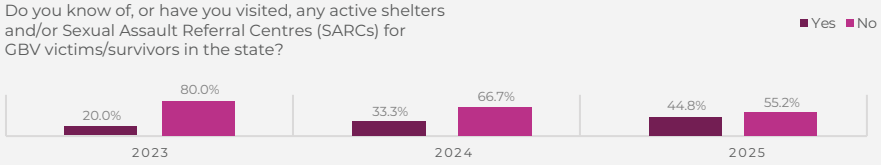


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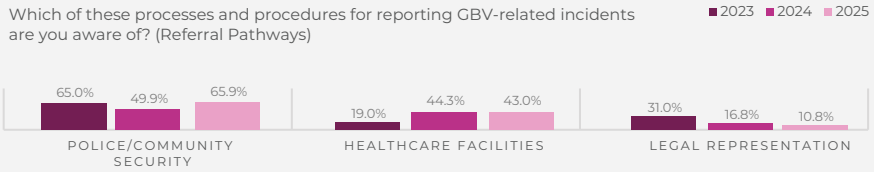


SUPPORT SERVICES

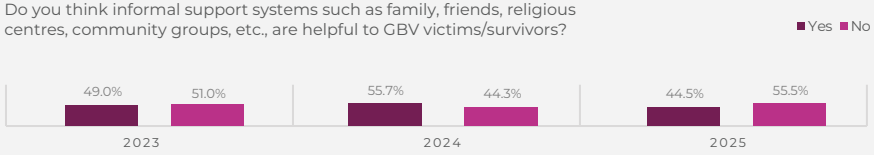
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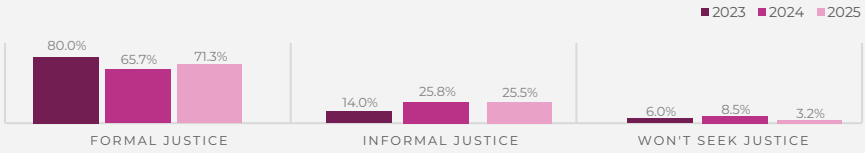


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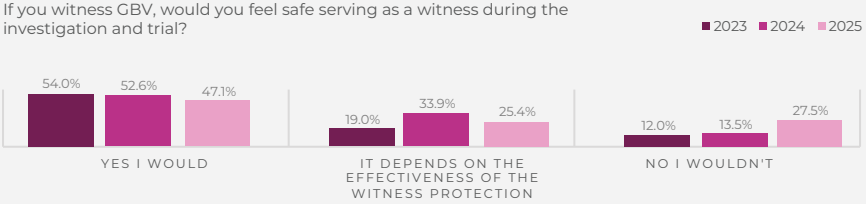


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

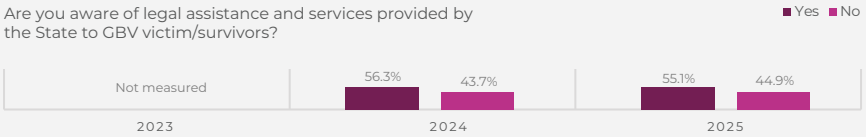
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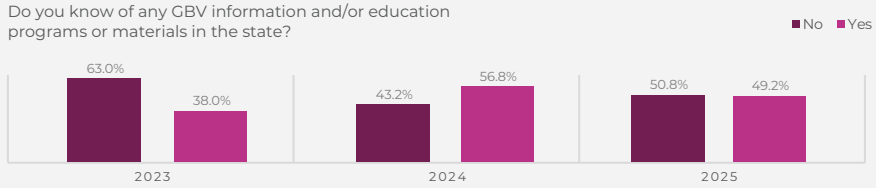


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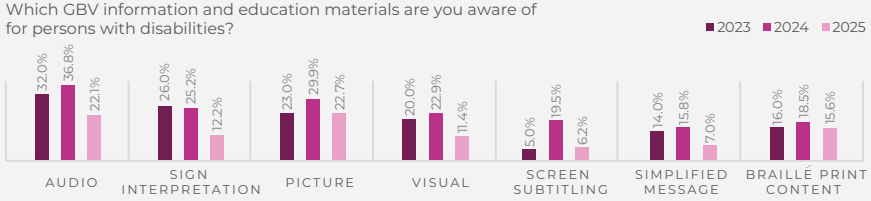


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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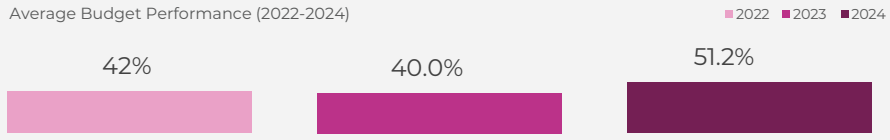


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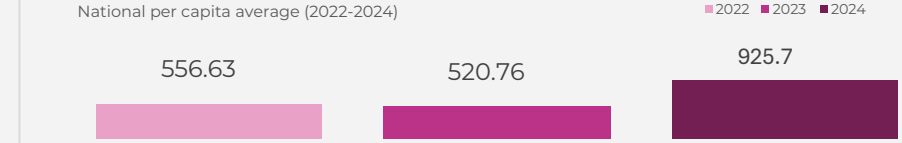


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Ogun State has established a comprehensive legal framework through the Violence Against Persons (VAPP) Law of 2017, adapted from the federal VAPP Act, which the Ministry of Justice confirms has "broadened definitions of rape to include marital and non-physical acts, criminalized emotional and psychological abuse, and introduced restraining orders and victim protection mechanisms." Awareness of GBV-related laws and policies stands at 62.7% in 2025, with respondents accessing information primarily through social media (34.7%), radio (29.9%), and NGOs/CSOs (28.5%). Perceptions of effectiveness remain high, with 84.4% believing formal laws and policies are effective in addressing GBV. However, conviction rates remain critically low despite 40.4% of respondents reporting awareness of GBV convictions. The Legal Aid Council's State Coordinator stated convictions are "very low compared to the number of cases been reported and eventually taken to court". The exact number of convictions under the VAPP Law in the past year is unclear, with an NGO reporting 2 convictions and the Ministry of Justice estimating between 0 and 10.

Harmful customary and religious practices persist despite legal prohibitions, though with reduced prevalence. Stakeholders described ongoing challenges: "We still have a lot of cultural issues with several religious beliefs and practices that perpetuates GBV." It was also noted that the cultural norm of prioritizing family reputation over justice continues to obstruct formal systems. In response, the State has actively engaged cultural and religious leaders to secure their commitment to justice and survivor support. This ongoing community-level engagement is helping to drive a gradual shift toward more accountable and survivor-centred approaches to GBV case management.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, Ogun State demonstrated incremental but meaningful progress in awareness and enforcement of GBV-related laws, though with some fluctuations. Public awareness of GBV laws rose from 54.1% in 2023 to 66% in 2024 before declining slightly to 62.7% in 2025. The initial surge reflected intensive public sensitization efforts by the Ministry of Women Affairs and NGO partners, while the modest dip in 2025 likely reflects uneven outreach in rural and underserved areas where awareness campaigns have been inconsistent. More significantly, perceptions of the usefulness of customary and religious laws in addressing GBV improved substantially from 31.6% in 2023 to 51.6% in 2025, demonstrating the impact of community dialogues and faith-based engagement in promoting anti-violence norms. This suggests that traditional and religious systems are gradually aligning with formal legal frameworks rather than obstructing them, representing important cultural progress.

However, knowledge of GBV convictions declined sharply from 62% in both 2023 and 2024 to 40.4% in 2025 — a pattern that does not necessarily indicate fewer prosecutions but rather limited transparency and communication of judicial outcomes to the public. This visibility gap undermines public confidence in enforcement and obscures accountability, even as actual prosecution activity may be ongoing.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Stakeholders confirm that Ogun State now operates a multi-layered justice framework integrating the Ministry of Justice, Legal Aid Council, Civil Defense Corps, and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Response Centres, providing survivors with free legal representation and psychosocial services through the Citizens' Rights Department and partner NGOs. The Sagamu SARC manager confirmed institutionalized funding: "They put in funds through the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development. So, there is a designated fund for cases of gender-based violence and other related cases." This legal-social collaboration has enhanced case handling and survivor confidence, demonstrating functional coordination across formal support systems.

Despite these institutional improvements, enforcement remains undermined by external pressures on survivors and victims. An NGO's Deputy Director revealed a critical obstruction to justice: "Even when the police do their work, we still find victims being pressurized to withdraw the matter from the court, sometimes by their immediate family or big men in the society." This testimony highlights how informal power structures continue to obstruct formal justice processes even when reporting and prosecution mechanisms function effectively.

Access to legal justice for GBV survivors in Ogun State shows measurable strengthening through expanded institutional structures and multi-sectoral coordination, though significant challenges persist. In 2025, 71.3% of respondents indicated they would seek redress through formal mechanisms such as police or courts, compared to 25.5% who would rely on informal channels and 3.2% who would not pursue justice at all, reflecting a gradual shift toward trust in formal justice systems. However, awareness of available legal support remains moderate at 55.1%, with information primarily obtained through social media (32.6%), NGOs (32.2%), Television (27.6%) and radio (27.3%), while engagement

through traditional (2.7%) and religious (5.5%) channels remains minimal. Confidence in witness safety is mixed: only 47.1% felt safe serving as witnesses, 27.5% felt unsafe, and 25.4% made their willingness conditional on protection measures, indicating continuing fears of retaliation despite improved coordination. The combination of moderate legal aid awareness (55.1%), mixed witness protection confidence, and persistent pressure on survivors to withdraw cases suggests that while Ogun State has established effective reporting and prosecution systems, enforcement bottlenecks driven by social and familial pressure continue to limit justice outcomes.

There are currently no specialized GBV courts or judges; however, the State is working toward designating specific days for hearing GBV cases. This proposal is under review by the Ministry of Justice.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Ogun State's justice-seeking indicators has shown a consistent recovery. Preference for formal justice systems increased from 66% in 2024 to 71.3% in 2025, following earlier declines linked to prosecution delays. Stakeholders confirmed that police prosecution processes have improved, with officers now better equipped to handle GBV cases. Enforcement has also become more consistent, with police demonstrating stronger commitment to arresting and charging offenders, though challenges remain in ensuring payment of legal charges and full follow-through during prosecution.

Perceptions of informal justice mechanisms evolved positively, with recognition of their complementary role rising from 33.8% in 2023 to 48.6% in 2025, supported by stronger collaboration between traditional rulers and law enforcement agencies. The Ministry of Justice emphasized the need for closer coordination to eliminate harmful sociocultural practices and improve community awareness. Despite these gains, confidence in serving as witnesses declined from 54.1% in 2023 to 47.1% in 2025, largely due to persistent fears of stigma and inadequate witness protection. Legal aid officials observed that cases involving sexual offenses are now treated with greater seriousness, reflecting growing enforcement commitment, although social pressures continue to limit justice outcomes.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Ogun State's survivor support system has expanded and become more functional, with growing public awareness of available services. In 2025, 44.8% of respondents were aware of active SARCs or shelters. Stakeholders confirmed that there are now four government-operated SARCs located in Sagamu, Ijebu-Ode, Abeokuta, and Ilaro, alongside one private centre in Abeokuta. These centres provide zonal coverage rather than local government-based distribution. According to officials from the Ministry of Health and Women Affairs, the expansion also includes shelters and Women Development Centres (WDCs), which have been integrated into the GBV response system to support survivors across the state.

Service delivery at the SARCs is survivor-centred and comprehensive, combining free medical care, psychosocial counselling, legal assistance, and temporary shelter with vocational skills training. Health officials explained that the state government ensures all medical services, drugs, and psychological support are provided at no cost, while counsellors and legal officers work directly under state supervision. Survivors who have no safe homes are accommodated in shelters where their basic needs are met. The WDCs at Abeokuta and Ijebu-Ode also offer training in trades such as tailoring, catering, hairdressing, make-up, upholstery, and barbing, supporting survivors' long-term recovery and economic empowerment.

Despite these improvements, stakeholders acknowledged that coverage and functionality are not yet uniform across the state. Some centres, such as the one in Ijebu-Ode, still face staffing and resource challenges, while others depend on nearby hospitals for essential services. Officials highlighted that SARCs are not yet institutionalized as an independent agency, which limits sustainable funding and coordination. They emphasized the need for SARCs to operate as a stand-alone entity to ensure stable resourcing and protection from political transitions.

Operational access has improved through toll-free helplines, social media platforms, and awareness campaigns via radio, billboards, schools, and markets. However, referral awareness remains uneven as 65.9% of respondents know police or community security channels, 43% know healthcare routes, while awareness of legal representation (10.8%) and support groups (17.8%) is still low. Informal support systems continue to play mixed roles: while some families and religious groups assist survivors, others prefer to settle cases privately, reflecting deep-rooted cultural norms. The government continues to engage religious and community leaders to strengthen their understanding and participation in GBV response efforts.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness and confidence in GBV support services have grown significantly in Ogun State. Awareness of SARCs and shelters rose steadily from 19.5% in 2023 to 33% in 2024 and 44.8% in 2025, while public confidence in their functionality also improved from 76% in 2024 to 90.2% in 2025 among those aware. Stakeholders attributed these improvements to the establishment of new safe centers, expanded infrastructure, and sustained funding for shelters. Several centers that previously lacked accommodation facilities are now fully equipped, with the number of Women Development Centres integrated into the GBV response framework expected to rise further. This expansion has enhanced survivors' access to medical, psychosocial, and legal services across all four zones of the state.

Referral pathway visibility has also improved through toll-free lines and sensitization efforts targeting police, schools, and community leaders. However, stakeholders noted that the referral architecture remains evolving rather than fully standardized. Many survivors still report cases through informal channels such as relatives, faith leaders, or human rights groups before reaching formal institutions. The state has recently developed a formal referral pathway document, as most coordination previously relied on verbal referrals

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Ogun State has recorded notable progress in public awareness and dissemination of GBV information, although gaps remain in reach and inclusivity. In 2025, 49.2% of respondents were aware of GBV-related information, education, and communication (IEC) programs or materials. Respondents' perception of the usefulness of GBV materials showed 40.1% describing them as mostly useful and 20.4% as completely useful. Radio (30.2%), social media (29.2%), television (27.8%), and NGOs/CSOs (30.6%) were the main information sources, while schools (12.5%), health facilities (19.6%), and workplaces (11.3%) had limited influence. Religious (7.1%) and traditional leaders (2.6%) remained the least utilized channels, showing weak community-level engagement.

Officials explained that government ministries, particularly Education and Women Affairs, have sustained awareness through posters, placards, jingles, radio talk shows, roadshows and billboards across the state's four zones. They highlighted that awareness campaigns are complemented by toll-free hotlines and social media channels that connect survivors directly to service providers. However, they also noted the need for greater school-based integration, stating that GBV education is mostly taught at tertiary and some secondary institutions, while primary schools lack structured guidance and counseling units to deliver consistent prevention messages.

Awareness and sensitization have also expanded geographically beyond urban centers. Health officials described regular outreach to schools and communities to educate students and families, while SARC managers reported new campaigns in marketplaces, schools, and community meetings in Ijebu-Ode, Ilaro, and Sagamu. The Ministry of Women Affairs confirmed that outreach teams now reach remote locations, using local structures to raise awareness and link survivors to services. These efforts reflect growing state-level commitment to decentralizing GBV prevention and response.

Despite these advances, inclusivity remains weak. Stakeholders acknowledge that accessible GBV materials for persons with disabilities are limited, noting that only simple methods, sign interpretation, and audio or subtitled formats are occasionally used. Partnerships with organizations working with people with disabilities have helped introduce some audio and visual materials, but coverage remains low. This aligns with the data, which shows that just 22.1% of respondents reported using audio-based materials, while braille (15.6%), visual content (11.4%), screen subtitling (6.2%) and simplified messages (7%) remain almost nonexistent, highlighting the need for a more inclusive communication strategy.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

From 2023 to 2025, Ogun State recorded steady progress in public awareness of gender-based violence (GBV) programs. Awareness increased from 37.6% in 2023 to 57% in 2024, before stabilizing at 49.2% in 2025. The slight decline in 2025 was attributed by stakeholders to reduced campaign frequency and budgetary delays rather than waning community interest. Officials from the education sector noted that limited funding continues to constrain consistent outreach, emphasizing that sustained resources are essential to maintain program momentum and impact.

Despite these financial and logistical challenges, perceptions of GBV message usefulness improved significantly from 43.6% in 2023 to 50% in 2024, and further to 60.5% in 2025. Stakeholders observed that the growing relevance of awareness messages has encouraged more survivors and community members to speak up, signaling gradual behavioral change. This reflects stronger alignment between awareness efforts and community realities, demonstrating that even limited but well-targeted initiatives can foster increased public confidence and engagement in GBV prevention.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Ogun demonstrates strong financial commitment and relatively good implementation capacity. The State allocated ₦6.2 billion to GBV in 2024, representing 0.88% of its total state budget, one of the higher allocations among Nigerian states. The state spent ₦3.19 billion of the allocated amount, achieving a 51.2% implementation rate, which indicates moderate budget performance. The actual GBV expenditure constituted 0.71% of the state's total spending. On a per capita basis, Ogun State spent approximately ₦925.70 per female resident on GBV-related programs.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Ogun State's spending performance within the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development fluctuated significantly during these years. Actual spending amounted to ₦3.19 billion in 2024 (₦1.39 billion CAPEX), ₦1.73 billion in 2023 (₦7.41 million CAPEX), and ₦1.79 billion in 2022 (₦62.88 million CAPEX). These expenditures translated into performance rates of 51.2%, 40.0%, and 42.0% respectively.

In 2023, Ogun State included one GBV-specific budget line item: "Rehabilitation of Juvenile Correctional Home Building, Asero, as Assault Referral Centre (Gender Unit)," with an allocation of ₦57.05 million. However, no implementation was recorded. Per capita spending stood at ₦925.70 in 2024, ₦520.76 in 2023, and ₦556.63 in 2022. The significant rise in 2024 marks a sharp expansion in investment, although the fluctuations between 2022 and 2023 indicate earlier inconsistencies in GBV-related funding.

Human Angle Stories

On the invitation of her boyfriend, Ayanfe innocently followed him to a vigil. Believing that he was abstaining from sexual immorality like her, they shared a hotel room and a bed. Later that night, he sexually assaulted her.

She knew what happened was rape, having learnt about it in secondary school and seen cases on social media, she didn't report the crime for fear of being judged. She wishes every community had emergency contacts, easy access to help, and real awareness about violence.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Conviction rates are critically low because victims withdraw cases due to family and community pressure.	Establish dedicated GBV prosecution units with trained prosecutors and integrated community-based survivor support systems, including psychosocial counselling and witness protection measures.
	Customary and religious practices still perpetuate GBV, with restricted movement for Muslim women and churches discouraging divorce despite government claims of progress.	Partner with traditional and religious leaders to create a network of certified "GBV Champions" who can privately counsel families and facilitate confidential reporting without stigma.
Access to Legal Justice	Rural areas cannot access legal aid services due to distance, poor roads, and lack of physical presence despite claimed coverage of all 20 LGAs.	Deploy mobile legal aid clinics to remote areas monthly and station legal aid officers in at least 10 additional LGA headquarters.
	No designated GBV courts or judges exist, resulting in inconsistent case handling and varying prioritization across the state.	Designate at least two judges and five magistrates as specialized GBV adjudicators with annual training and clear case management protocols.
	Witness safety perception remains low (47.1%), limiting case follow-through.	Strengthen witness protection frameworks through confidential reporting systems, survivor anonymity safeguards, and secure transportation for court appearances.
Support Services	Awareness of SARCs and shelters increased to 44.8% in 2025, reflecting improved service visibility.	Scale up SARC and shelter coverage to underserved LGAs through mobile outreach and integration with primary healthcare centres.
	The referral pathway is informal and undocumented, with survivors entering through uncoordinated entry points causing service gaps and delays.	Finalize and publish the standardized referral pathway within three months, train all stakeholders, and establish monitoring systems for compliance.
	The functionality of existing SARCs is high (90.2%), but access remains limited in remote areas.	Develop a standardized, digital inter-agency referral system linking police, hospitals, NGOs, and social welfare officers for coordinated survivor management.
	Families and religious groups provide inconsistent support, with some pressuring victims to withdraw cases or treating GBV as "spiritual matters."	Train faith-based organizations and community groups on survivor-centred responses and certify community champions for first-level support.
Information and Awareness	GBV awareness improved, but accessibility for persons with disabilities remains inadequate.	Develop and disseminate inclusive IEC materials, including braille, sign interpretation, and tactile visuals, to ensure equitable access for PWDs and marginalized groups.
	School-based GBV education is inconsistent and lacks formal curriculum integration.	Integrate GBV and child protection education into basic and secondary school curricula, with functional guidance and counselling units and trained counsellors in each school.
	Awareness campaigns are largely event-driven and short-term.	Adopt continuous communication models, including radio drama series, social media engagement, school clubs, and workplace sensitization for sustained year-round outreach.
Budget and Spending	Budget performance has remained moderate over the past three years: 42% in 2022, 40% in 2023, and 51% in 2024.	Improve budget performance to at least 70% in the next cycle, the Ministry of Budget and Planning should coordinate with relevant ministries to implement a quarterly fund release schedule.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



Ondo State

Sunshine State

Oke Maria Hills

Ondo State

Population: 5,938,889

50.2% Female | Male 49.8%

Overall Grade 62.1%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,005)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

66.0% | 34.0%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

66.8% | 33.2%

AGE

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

5.1% | 26.0% | 25.6% | 23.8% | 14.0% | 5.5%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

9.7% | 90.3%

SARCs

2

Shelters

0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦7.45bn

(This accounts for **1.5%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦533.58m

(This accounts for **7.2%** of total allocation to the ministry)

7.2%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

7.0% | 26.6% | 66.4%

Per Capita Spending

₦178.84

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	68.8%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	56.3%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	68.8%
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 ■

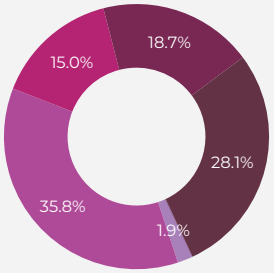
46.9% | 53.1%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

77.3% | 23.6% | 20.4% | 17.2% | 4.1%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

57.7% | 48.5% | 30.5% | 33.3% | 9.2% | 8.6%

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

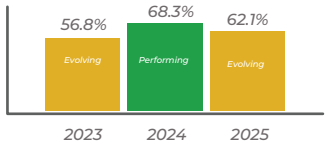
Where did you or the person first seek help?

37.5% | 36.1% | 17.0% | 2.2% | 2.6% | 2.6% | 1.3% | 0.6%

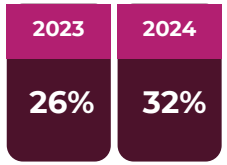
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



29%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	LP 83.3%	LP 66.7%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 68.8%	ALJ 68.8%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	+1 ▲ SS 75.0%	−1 ▼ SS 56.3%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3%	SS 56.3%	SS 68.8%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 58.3%	BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- School-based GBV initiatives: Guidance counsellors use structured materials covering GBV and child sexual abuse in most secondary schools, with public support at 95.7%.
- Functional referral networks: Ministries, OSSAGBV, NGOs, and local leaders coordinate GBV responses through established referral pathways.
- Some improvements in disability inclusion: Awareness of braille materials (11.7%), sign language (25.1%), and visual/audio content show modest gains, demonstrating growing attention to accessibility.

Areas of Concern

- Reliance on customary/religious laws: Perception that informal systems are sufficient rose to 58.6%, potentially discouraging formal reporting.
- Limited functional support services: SARCs are largely non-operational; adult shelters do not exist, and awareness of support services remains very low.
- Financial barriers: Survivors face out-of-pocket costs for medical exams, police transport, and documentation, discouraging reporting.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Ondo State domesticated the VAPP Act in 2021, retaining core federal provisions while introducing community sentencing for minor offenses.
- Translated the VAPP law into Yoruba language and developed simplified versions for improved accessibility.
- Established Ondo State Agency Against Gender-Based Violence (OSSAGBV) as a dedicated agency for GBV prevention and response.

Access to Legal Justice

- GBV units were set up across all 18 LGAs, with gender desk officers at every police division and support from the Civil Defence and Amotekun security outfits.
- Legal Aid Council has branches in all 18 local government areas providing pro bono services, complemented by NBA Human Rights units across six judicial divisions.

Support Services

- Three SARCs were established across the three senatorial districts, operated by the Ministry of Health with additional support from private facilities.
- A coordinated referral pathway was developed involving the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Justice, OSSAGBV, police, and partner NGOs..

Information and Awareness

- Comprehensive training manuals on GBV were developed and distributed to schools, covering topics such as prevention, gender roles, and decision-making, with guidance counsellors using structured schemes of work from JSS1 to SS3.
- The state established multiple sensitization channels including school programs, market outreaches, community meetings, religious centre engagements, and collaborations with civil society organizations

Change Spotlight

Ondo State achieved a significant milestone in GBV prevention through its systematic integration of GBV education into the secondary school system via guidance counsellors. Ondo developed a comprehensive scheme of work that ensures every guidance counsellor address gender-based violence topics throughout the academic year, from JSS1 to SS3. The Ministry of Education created structured guidance counselling programs covering critical topics including self-concept, self-esteem, reproductive health, and specifically, gender-based violence.

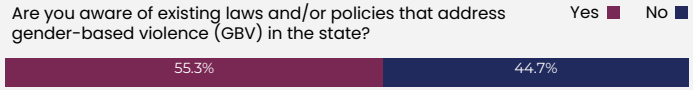
This has created multiple reporting pathways. Students now report to counsellors, teachers report to authorities, and parents increasingly support their children rather than covering up abuse. The combination of structured curriculum delivery, trained counsellors, and supportive school leadership has transformed schools from places where abuse might be hidden into active protection sites.

Ondo State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 62.1%

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)

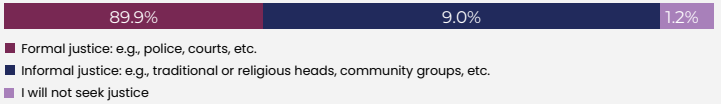


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors? Yes No

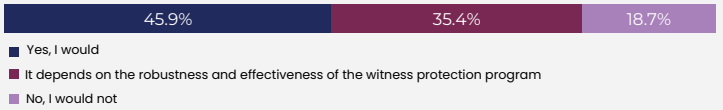


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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? Yes No



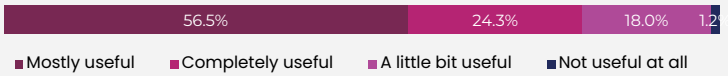
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INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

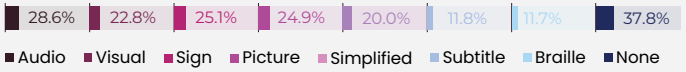
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state? Yes No



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



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



Ondo State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 62.1%

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



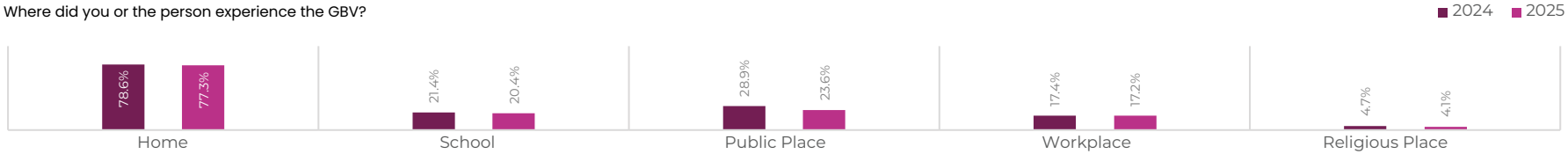
53.1%

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

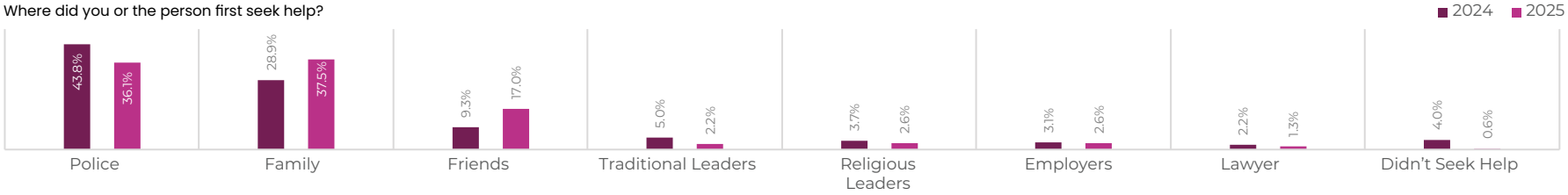
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



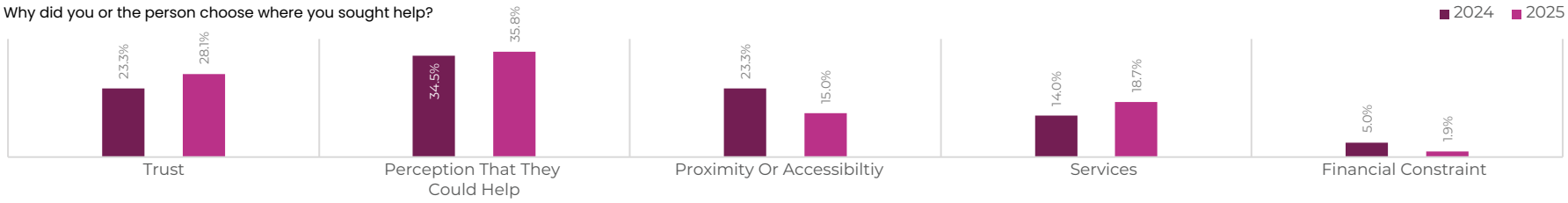
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

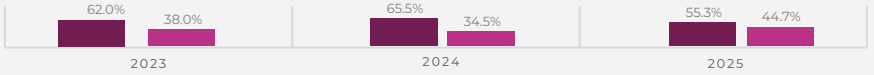


Ondo State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

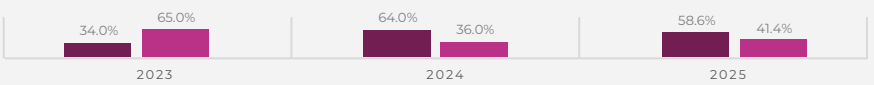
Overall Grade 62.1%

LAWS AND POLICIES

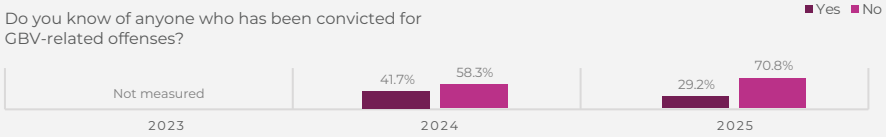
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

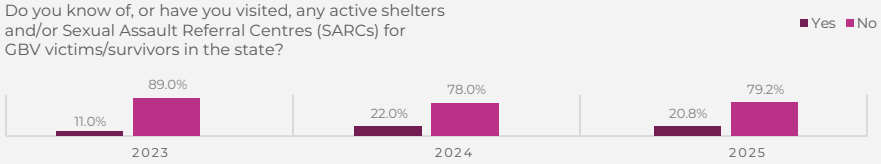


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

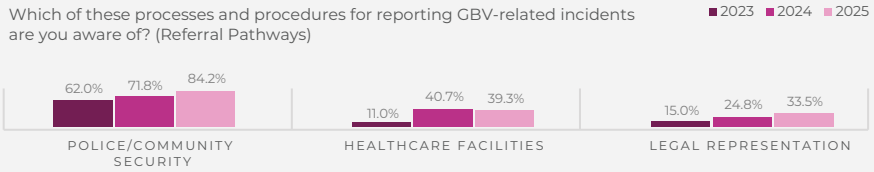


SUPPORT SERVICES

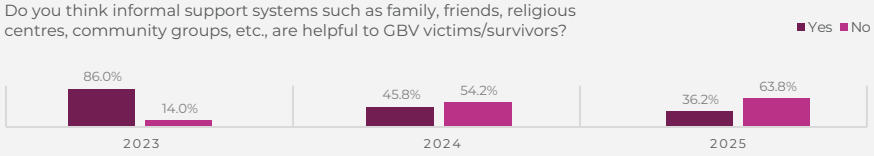
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

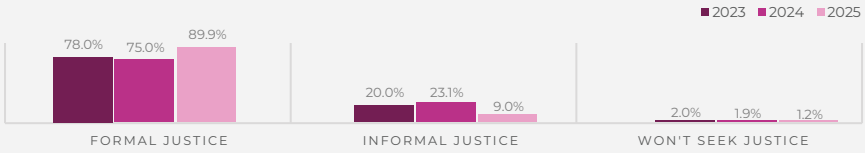


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

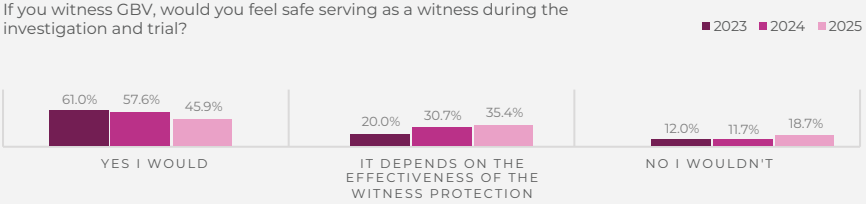


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

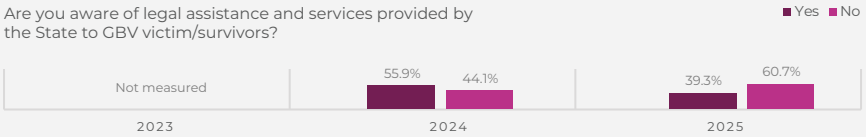
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

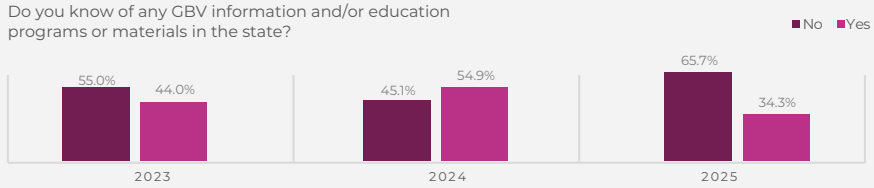


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

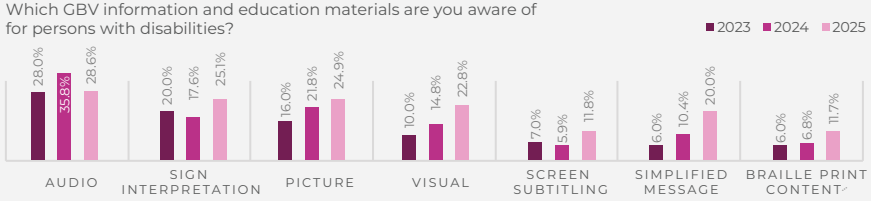


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

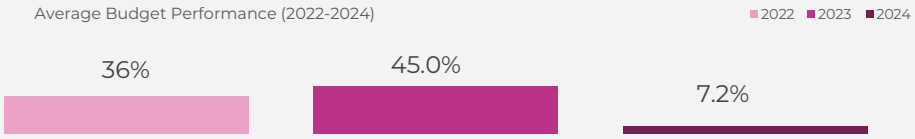


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

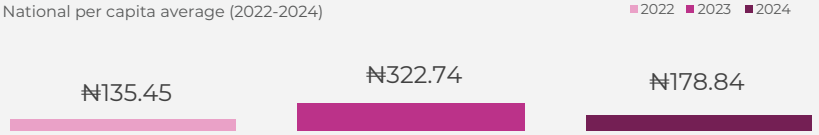


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Ondo State has established strong legal frameworks to address GBV, having domesticated the VAPP Act in 2021. The law retained core elements of the federal VAPP Act 2015 while introducing context-specific provisions, including the establishment of OSSAGBV as a dedicated state agency for coordinating GBV response, guidelines for engaging traditional rulers and religious leaders in prevention, and protocols for school-based prevention programs.

The state has taken significant steps to improve accessibility by translating the VAPP law into Yoruba and developing simplified versions for distribution in rural areas. In 2023, OSAA-GBV translated the VAPP law into Braille print for the use of virtually impaired in Ondo state to promote inclusiveness.

These efforts appear to be yielding results: most residents (62.0%) believe the laws are effective tools for preventing and addressing GBV. Overall awareness of the specific laws stands at 55.3%, representing a relatively stable understanding among the population compared to 62.3% in 2023.

However, public awareness of actual GBV-related convictions is notably low, with only 29.2% of residents reporting knowledge of anyone convicted for GBV offences. Stakeholder interviews offer mixed figures but suggest that actual convictions likely fall between 5 and 10 cases in the past year. The Ministry of Justice reported "over 30 convictions" for all violence-related cases but acknowledged that specific GBV conviction data resides with OSSAGBV and is not centrally tracked.

Customary and religious laws continue to significantly influence how communities in Ondo respond to GBV. While 62.5% of residents are aware of these informal practices, 58.6% consider them effective. Multiple sources documented practices including early and forced marriages, resolving sexual assault cases through monetary compensation instead of prosecution, and pressuring survivors to marry their abusers or accept traditional remedies. Some religious leaders were also identified as enablers of GBV, with stakeholders reporting instances where pastors and church leaders counsel survivors to "forgive" abusive spouses rather than pursue justice. Such practices prioritize family honour and religious doctrine over justice, creating significant tension with formal legal systems and preventing survivors from accessing the support and justice they deserve.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, public awareness of formal laws addressing GBV increased slightly from 62.0% in 2023 to 65.6% in 2024, then declined to 55.3% in 2025. However, a far more concerning trend emerged in public knowledge of actual GBV-related convictions, which dropped dramatically from 41.7% in 2024 to just 29.2% in 2025. This sharp decline occurred despite the Family Court magistrate reporting consistent weekly prosecution of GBV cases.

At the same time, significantly more residents now believe that customary and religious laws are sufficient for addressing GBV. This perception increased from 34.0% in 2023 to 64.0% in 2024 and to 58.6% in 2025, raising serious concerns about a shift away from formal justice systems. This trend can be partly attributed to the highly visible presence of traditional and religious leaders in communities, compared to the less visible outcomes of formal justice processes.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Public engagement with the formal justice system in Ondo remains modest, highlighting the need for stronger efforts to build trust and improve access. While 89.9% of residents say they would seek redress through official channels, this reflects expressed willingness rather than actual behaviour, as conviction rates remain low and GBV case attrition high. About 9.0% of residents still consider community-based mechanisms helpful for securing justice, suggesting and the continued reliance on both formal and informal channels.

Limited trust is also evident in residents' willingness to serve as witnesses. Only 45.9% feel safe doing so without conditions, while 35.4% are willing only if witness protection is available and 18.7% are unwilling to participate at all. Stakeholders noted that fear and intimidation undermine prosecution, with some witnesses requiring court orders to appear. Although the GBV reporting and prosecution process is functional, it remains slow and burdened by financial barriers. Survivors often face significant out-of-pocket costs for medical tests, police transportation, and court documentation despite official claims of free services.

Fees for medical examinations reportedly increased, and some survivors were asked to pay to move case files from the police to the Ministry of Justice. These costs discourage reporting and delay justice, with some survivors abandoning cases due to financial hardship. Legal aid services are available in all 18 local government areas through FIDA clinics in Akure, Ondo, and Owo, the Legal

Aid Council, and GBV units in each LGA, but only 39.3% of residents are aware of these services. The main challenge is not availability but limited awareness and access, especially in remote areas like Ilaje, Ese-Odo, Irele, Ibiono, and Ikono, where transportation barriers are significant.

Family Support Units (FSUs) and gender desks operate across police divisions but face severe resource constraints, including lack of mobility, shelters, and vehicles, which affect service quality at the first-response stage. While family courts exist at the magistrate and high court levels, there are no specialized GBV courts or judges. Consequently, GBV cases compete for attention on crowded dockets, leading to prolonged delays and placing additional strain on survivors. Establishing dedicated GBV courts and strengthening resourcing at first-response units would enhance access to justice and build greater public confidence in formal systems.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

A positive shift observed over the three-year period is the drop in the number of residents unwilling to seek justice, from 2.0% in 2023 to just 1.2% in 2025. This suggests improved willingness to act when GBV occurs. Reliance on informal mechanisms decreased from 20.0% in 2023 to 9% in 2025. The proportion of residents preferring formal justice channels increased notably from 78.0% in 2023 to 89.9% in 2025. This indicates growing confidence in formal systems, though it must be balanced against declining awareness of convictions and persistent operational challenges reported by service providers.

Concerns about safety during the justice process have grown. The proportion of residents who feel unconditionally safe participating in investigations and court proceedings dropped sharply from 61.0% in 2023 to 57.6% in 2024 and further declined to 45.9% in 2025, while those willing to engage only with strong witness protection measures increased from 19.7% in 2023 to 31% in 2024 and 35.4% in 2025. The share of residents unwilling to serve as witnesses also rose from 12.0% in 2023 and 11.7% in 2024 to 18.7% in 2025. As the Ministry of Justice explained, many witnesses face pressure, threats, or intimidation, which often forces complainants to withdraw their cases. The lack of adequate security arrangements for witnesses and legal professionals continues to undermine confidence and contribute to case attrition.

Awareness of state-provided legal aid for GBV survivors has not improved meaningfully, remaining at 55.9% in 2023 but dropping to 39.3% in 2025. This decline, despite reported expansion of services by stakeholders, highlights the urgent need to strengthen legal aid outreach and accessibility. The Legal Aid Council noted efforts to enlist pro bono lawyers through the NBA, but this expansion has not yet translated into greater public awareness or use of available services.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Ondo State operated two SARCs, however, their operational status and capacity vary widely. The Ministry of Health confirmed having at least two referral centres. Officials also noted that none currently operate as full-fledged SARCs. The Ministry of Health's Gender Focal Person explained: "Concerning the SARC and shelters, we don't have any SARC at the moment," suggesting that while facilities exist on paper, they are not functioning comprehensively. The different response on whether SARCs exist or not points to lack of shared knowledge, limited coordination of data and information, and the likelihood of not differentiating between SARCs and other response organizations (such as NGOs) or facilities (such as PHCs).

Shelter provision remains a major gap. The state operates a government children's home at Oba-Ile, but it only accommodates minors aged 12–15. The Ministry of Women Affairs and FIDA both confirmed that there is no adult shelter in Ondo State, forcing agencies to rely on temporary arrangements such as hotel accommodation for survivors during court proceedings.

Awareness of SARCs and shelters is very low—only 20.8% of residents know about or have visited one. Among those aware, 91.4% believe facilities are functional, suggesting the main challenge is accessibility and awareness, not service quality. While referral pathways link key ministries, OSSAGBV, and NGOs, knowledge gaps persist, especially in rural areas. Most residents know to report via police (84.2%) or hospitals (39.3%), but awareness of support groups (15.6%) and legal aid (33.5%) is limited. Underserved LGAs include Ikono, Ini, Ilaje, Ese-Odo, Irele, and Eastern Obolo (Igbokoda)..

Broader awareness of GBV support services stands at just 34.6%. The Ministry of Health confirmed that medical treatment for survivors is not free, requiring out-of-pocket payment. Although OSSAGBV, the Ministry of Women Affairs, and partners such as FIDA and the Legal Aid Council provide counselling, legal aid, and small grants for survivors, coverage remains limited by funding constraints. This limited access and awareness may explain why 36.2% of residents still believe informal support systems are more effective than formal services. However, stakeholders note that while informal networks can provide emotional support, they often lack the structure, accountability, and protection survivors need for long-term recovery and justice.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, public engagement with shelters and SARCs declined dramatically from 11.0% in 2023 to 22% in 2024, before plummeting to just 20.8% in 2025. The sharp variability points to inconsistent visibility, limited accessibility, declining public confidence in these facilities, or possible confusion about what constitutes a SARC versus other health facilities.

Knowledge of police reporting increased from 62.0% in 2023 to 71.8% in 2024 and to 84.2% in 2025, indicating successful efforts to position law enforcement as a primary entry point. Healthcare pathway awareness also improved from 11.0% in 2023 to 40.7% in 2024 and declined slightly to 39.3% in 2025, though it remains below 50%. However, legal representation awareness doubled from 15.0% in 2023 to 24.8% in 2024 and further increased to 33.5% in 2025.

At the same time, public trust in informal support systems appears to be declining significantly. The proportion of residents who viewed these informal systems as more helpful than formal services dropped sharply from 86.0% in 2023 to 45.8% in 2024, and further to 36.2% in 2025.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Ondo State continues to implement robust public sensitization campaigns, with its annual GBV

Month observed every June serving as a major awareness platform. OSSAGBV described the June 2025 GBV Month as a "statewide program" that reached "almost all the local government areas in the state," with sensitization delivered through stakeholder trainings for village heads and youth councils, radio jingles, television programs, flyers, posters, and even town criers in some communities. These campaigns are implemented in collaboration with key stakeholders such as the Ministry of Justice, FIDA, ROTDOW, and other civil society organizations. Despite these efforts, only 34.3% of residents report having been exposed to GBV-related programs, highlighting the need to extend outreach to underserved communities and deepen public engagement.

The primary channels through which residents learn about GBV laws and programs are social media (61.3% of those aware), television (44.6%), and radio (38.3%), followed by school/educational institutions (30.6%) and friends/family (26.1%). Traditional sources like healthcare facilities (8.1%), religious centers (8.3%), traditional leaders (5%), and workplaces (7.4%) show very low penetration, suggesting missed opportunities to leverage these trusted community institutions for awareness-raising.

School-based GBV initiatives in Ondo have progressed. Guidance counsellors teach GBV as a mandatory topic from JSS1 to SS3 using structured schemes and distributed training materials on prevention, gender roles, and decision-making. IEC materials are reportedly in most of the state's 2,000 schools, though exact figures were not provided.

However, the long-term sustainability of these interventions is at risk. While public support for integrating GBV and child sexual abuse education into the formal school curriculum is very high (95.7%), these topics remain outside the official curriculum as standalone subjects. This means current progress is heavily reliant on individual guidance counsellors' commitment and donor-funded programs. Schools not reached by these efforts are less likely to have access to standardized materials and teacher training, leaving gaps in awareness and protection.

Disability inclusion in GBV communication is limited. While sign language interpreters are used in some events, awareness and use of accessible formats remain low—audio (28.6%), sign interpretation (25.1%), picture-based (24.9%), visual content (22.8%), simplified messages (20%), subtitling (11.8%), and braille (11.7%). Accommodations exist but are inconsistently applied, restricting access for many PWDs.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV programs over the three years has remained relatively stagnant: 44.0% in 2023, 54.9% in 2024, and 34.3% in 2025. The observed trend suggests that while sensitization programs exist, they need to be scaled up significantly to ensure community-wide penetration and that gains made in one year are not being sustained.

Disability inclusion in awareness materials shows modest improvement in some areas but stagnation in others. Audio/spoken content awareness moved from 28.3% in 2023 to 35.8% in 2024 and dropped to 28.6% in 2025, braille awareness increased from 5.8% in 2023 to 6.7% in 2024 and 11.7% in 2025, and visual content awareness increased from 10% in 2023 to 14.8% in 2024 and further increased to 22.8%. However, screen subtitling awareness decreased from 7.5% in 2023 to 5.9% in 2024 before increasing to 11.8% in 2025, and simplified messages awareness doubled from 5.8% in 2023 to 10.4% in 2024 and to 20% in 2025. While these represent improvements, the absolute levels remain very low, indicating that much more needs to be done to ensure persons with disabilities have equitable access to GBV information.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Ondo State allocated the substantial sum of ₦7.45 billion to GBV programs in 2024, representing 1.5% of its total budget—one of the highest proportional commitments among all states. However, this ambitious allocation was undermined by poor execution, with only ₦533.58 million actually spent, yielding a meager 7.2% implementation rate. The resulting per capita expenditure of ₦178.84, represents a massive underutilization of resources given the original allocation. This dramatic gap between planning and implementation suggests that Ondo may have overestimated its absorptive capacity or faced significant mid-year constraints that prevented the release and deployment of funds, ultimately leaving over 90% of designated GBV resources unspent.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Ondo State's spending performance within the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development fluctuated over the three-year period. Actual spending amounted to ₦533.57 million in 2024 (₦37.55 million CAPEX), ₦934.43 million in 2023 (₦338.80 million CAPEX), and ₦380.56 million in 2022 (₦13.34 million CAPEX). These figures translated into overall budget performance rates of 7.2%, 45.0%, and 36.0% respectively. In 2024, the Ondo State Agency Against Gender-Based Violence (OSAA-GBV) received an allocation of ₦352.86 million but implemented only ₦48.54 million, resulting in a performance rate of 13.8%.

Notably, ₦200 million of the allocation was earmarked for capital interventions and programmes, yet no implementation was recorded. Per capita spending stood at ₦178.84 in 2024, ₦322.74 in 2023, and ₦135.45 in 2022. The significant rise in 2023 followed by a decline in 2024 indicates fluctuating

Human Angle Stories

When Augustina started suffering verbal and physical violence from her husband, she didn't even think of reporting. According to her, "It was a family matter." When the violence became too much, her father and in-laws intervened. Her husband was warned, promises were made, and the beatings stopped.

Her story mirrors a common reality in Ondo State, where survivors often rely on informal systems such as family councils, religious leaders, or traditional rulers rather than formal legal channels. Despite the existence of the VAPP Law (2021) and agencies like OSAA-GBV, social norms and fear of stigma continue to silence many women. Augustina herself had heard of these institutions but saw them as "for people with very serious cases."

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Public awareness declined slightly from 62.0% in 2023 to 65.5% in 2024, then declined to 55.3% in 2025; only 29.2% know of any GBV convictions.	Implement public education campaigns on GBV laws and convictions, using radio, TV, and community leaders to highlight successful prosecutions.
	Residents viewing customary/religious laws as sufficient rose from 34.0% in 2023 to 64.0% in 2024 and to 58.6% in 2025, undermining formal justice.	Engage traditional and religious leaders in GBV sensitization and establish clear protocols to align customary practices with formal legal standards.
Access to Legal Justice	Only 45.9% feel safe serving as witnesses; fear, intimidation, and lack of protection hinder reporting.	Introduce witness protection measures and train legal professionals to ensure survivor safety during investigations and trials.
	Only 39.3% of respondents are aware of legal aid services, down from, and 65% in 2024.	Expand outreach campaigns on legal aid, especially in remote LGAs, and set up mobile legal aid clinics.
	No dedicated GBV courts; cases compete on crowded dockets, delaying justice.	Establish specialized GBV courts/judges and strengthen resourcing of Family Support Units (FSUs) for faster case handling.
Support Services	SARCs exist on paper but are not fully operational; Ministry of Health reports no functioning SARCs.	Upgrade SARCs to fully functional centres, with dedicated staff, equipment, and operational protocols.
	Only government children's home exists; adult survivors rely on temporary hotels.	Establish state-funded adult shelters across senatorial districts to provide safe accommodation.
	Only 20.8% know about SARCs/shelters; broader GBV service awareness at 34.6%.	Conduct community outreach campaigns, including rural areas, on SARC and survivor services.
Information and Awareness	Only 34.3% report exposure to awareness programs; coverage is inconsistent.	Scale up statewide awareness programs through schools, media, and community-based channels.
	Awareness of accessible formats remains low (braille 11.7%, sign language 25.1%).	Ensure inclusive communication strategies, incorporating braille, sign language, audio, and visual content in all GBV campaigns.
	GBV education is not fully integrated into the formal curriculum; sustainability is at risk.	Institutionalize GBV and CSA education in the official school curriculum with state funding for training and materials.
Budget and Spending	Ondo State allocated ₦7.45 billion (1.5% of total budget) to GBV programs in 2024 but spent only ₦533.58 million, achieving a mere 7.2% implementation rate and leaving over 90% of designated GBV resources unspent.	Conduct an immediate administrative and capacity review to identify barriers preventing fund release and utilization. Implement quarterly disbursement schedules with mandatory reporting requirements and consider reallocating unspent funds to agencies with demonstrated execution capacity to ensure resources reach intended beneficiaries.



Osun State

Land of Virtue

Erin Ijesha Waterfall

Osun State

Population: 6,078,458

50.1% Female | Male 49.9%

Overall Grade 58.3%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,148)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

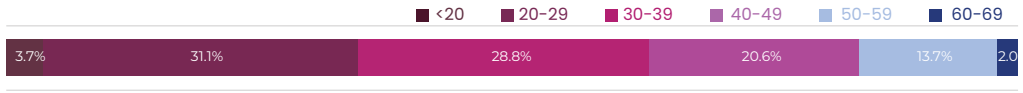


AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

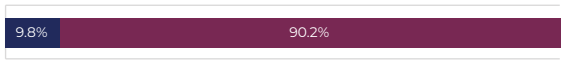


AGE



DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■



SARCs: 1

Shelters: 16

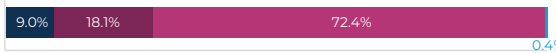
Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦1.34bn
(This accounts for **0.5%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦482.64m
(This accounts for **36.1%** of total allocation to the ministry)



Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ Others ■ (Actual Spend)



Per Capita Spending

₦158.66

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	56.3%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	56.3%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	58.3%

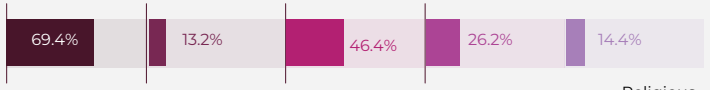
GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

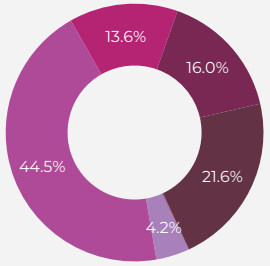


Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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

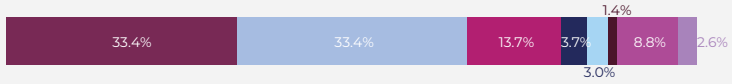


What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



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

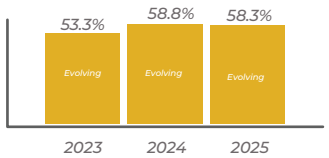
Where did you or the person first seek help?



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 ■

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)

2023	2024
25%	18%

22%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	-1 ▼ LP 58.3%	LP 58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 68.8%	ALJ 56.3%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	SS 68.8%	SS 56.3%
Information and Awareness	IA 43.8%	+1 ▲ IA 56.3%	IA 62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 41.7%	BS 58.3%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- The Asubiaro SARC was overhauled with new staff, better equipment, and stronger inter-ministerial coordination, boosting user confidence.
- High Court officials confirmed more GBV convictions compared to previous years, despite limited public data.
- Preference for formal justice systems increased to 76.6% in 2025, up from 55% in 2024.

Areas of Concern

- Awareness of GBV laws fell sharply from 68.1% (2023) to 21.7% (2025). indicating poor public sensitization.
- Only 25.5% believe formal laws prevent GBV, down from 65% in 2023.
- Lack of comprehensive conviction data and poor record-keeping persist across justice institution
- Only one government SARC and one state shelter exist, with uneven distribution across LGAs.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Regular court sittings at family and juvenile courts, ensuring GBV cases are given priority.
- Engagement of faith and traditional leaders in sensitization campaigns against harmful practices such as female genital mutilation, reducing cultural barriers to justice.

Access to Legal Justice

- Establishment of a Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Response Unit within the Ministry of Justice to coordinate prosecutions and mediations.
- Provision of free legal aid services through Ministry of Justice lawyers and volunteer activists.

Support Services

- Refurbishment and activation of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) at Asubiaro State Hospital, providing medical, psychosocial, legal, and protective services. .

Information and Awareness

- Annual 16 Days of Activism against GBV reaching at least 10 LGAs by 2024

Change Spotlight

In mid-2024, Osun State began refurbishing the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) at Asubiaro State Hospital in Osogbo. By 2025, the center became fully staffed and operational, marking a turning point in how the state responds to gender-based violence. The SARC now provides survivors with integrated care under one roof: medical examinations, psychosocial counseling, legal aid, and protective services. This removes the exhausting burden survivors previously faced navigating multiple disconnected agencies. The center operates through collaboration between the Ministries of Health, Women Affairs, and Justice, with dedicated personnel from each working together on-site. Evidently, among respondents who know about the SARC, confidence in its effectiveness is strong: 53.8% strongly agree and 35.5% agree that the facility is functional and adequately equipped.

Osun State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 58.3%

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 ■



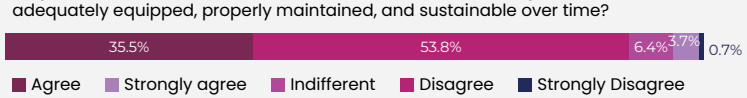
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

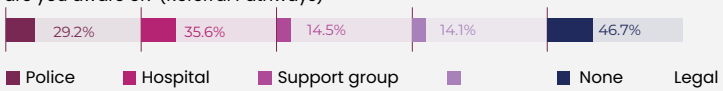
Yes ■ No ■



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)



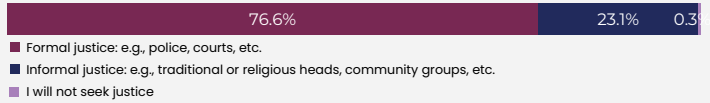
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

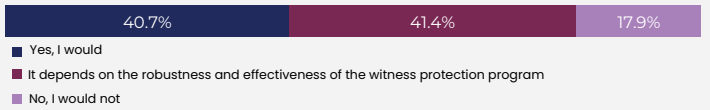


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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?

Yes ■ No ■



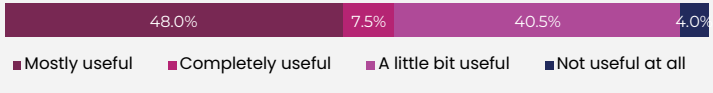
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

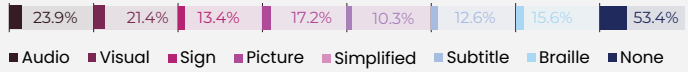
Yes ■ No ■



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



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



Osun State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 58.3%

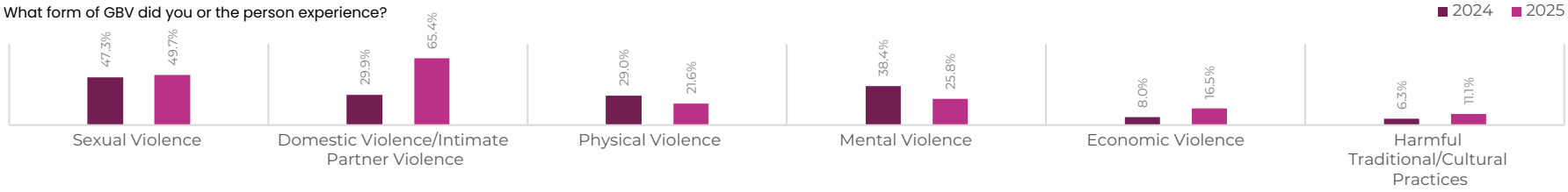
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



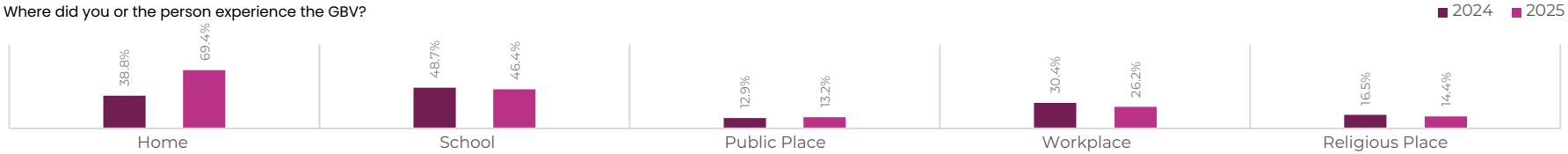
37.5%

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

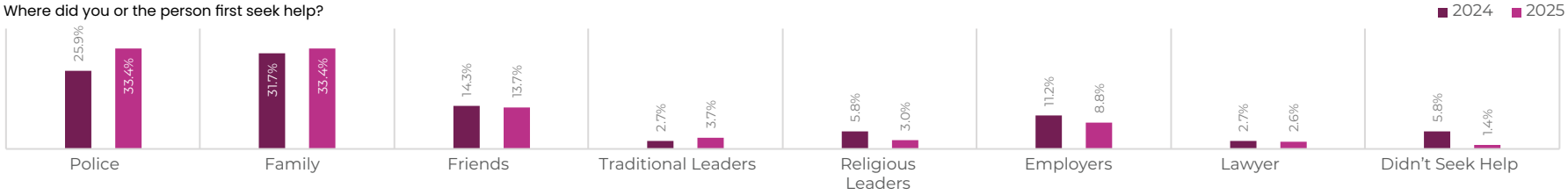
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



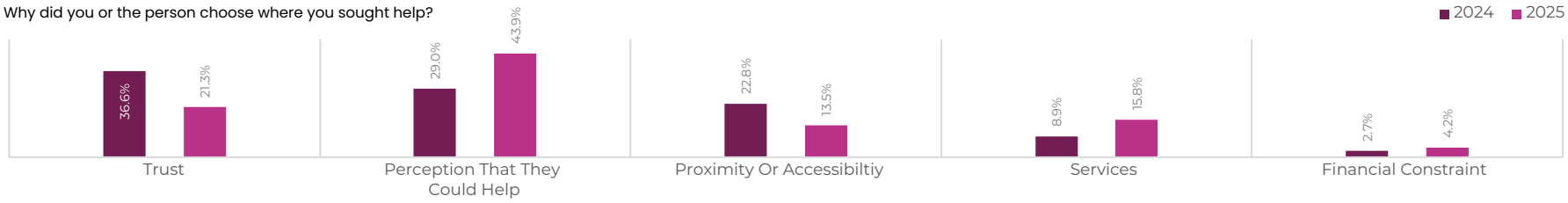
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

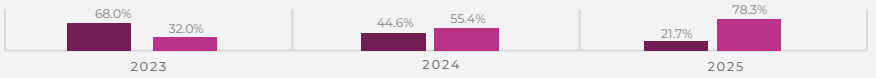


Osun State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

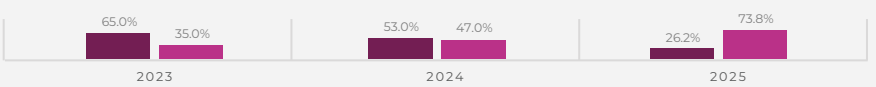
Overall Grade 58.3%

LAWS AND POLICIES

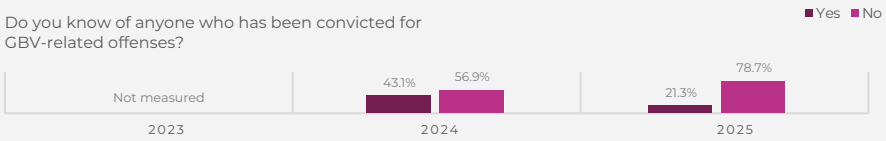
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

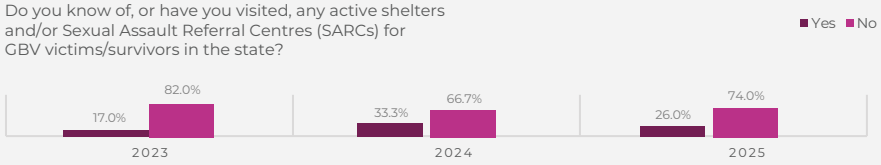


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

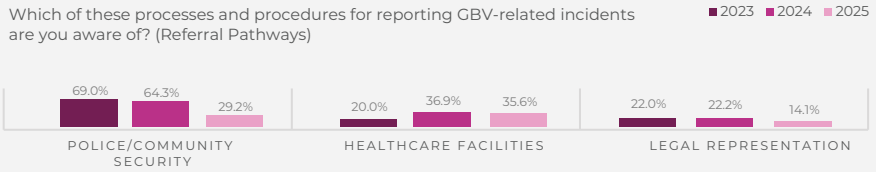


SUPPORT SERVICES

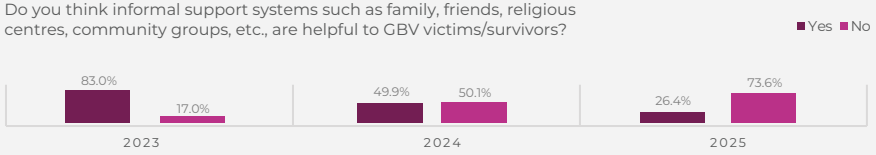
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

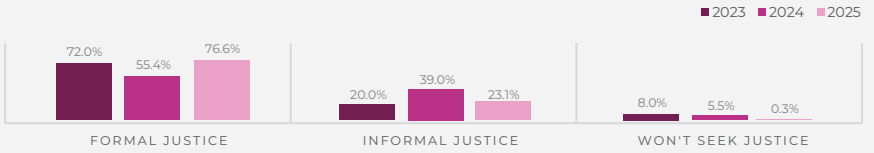


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

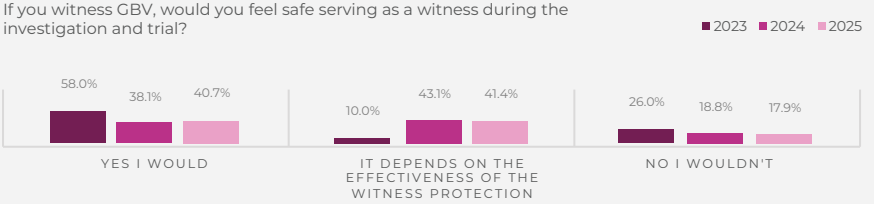


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

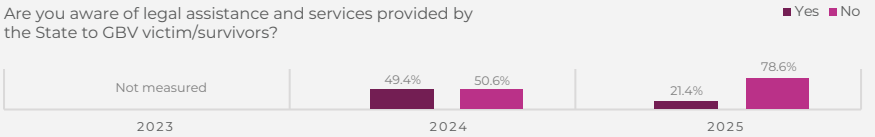
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

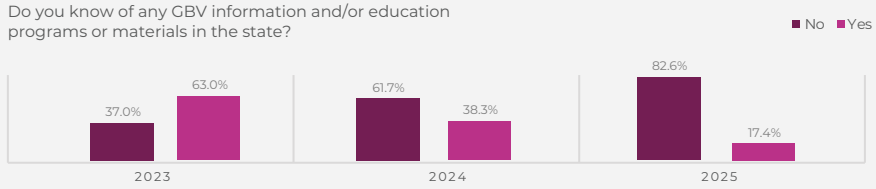


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

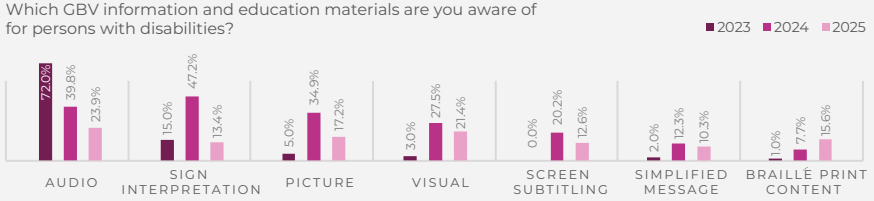


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

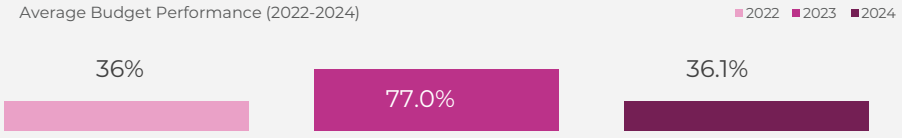


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

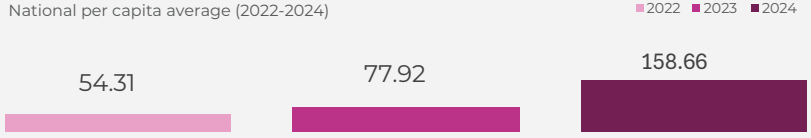


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

The 2025 assessment reveals critically low awareness of GBV laws in Osun State, with only 21.7% of respondents aware of existing legislation, and 25.5% believing formal laws are ineffective in preventing GBV. Despite having comprehensive legal frameworks, including the 2004 Female Genital Mutilation Prohibition Law, 2013 Protection Against Domestic Violence Law, and 2021 VAPP Law, implementation remains weak. The Ministry of Justice explained that the 2021 VAPP Law adapted the federal Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act of 2015 to Osun State's context, expanding legal protections beyond the scope of the earlier 2013 domestic violence legislation to cover additional forms of gender-based violence.

Furthermore, only 21.3% of respondents know anyone convicted of GBV offenses. A High Court representative confirmed that numerous convictions have been secured with noticeable improvements in conviction rates compared to previous years but could not provide specific figures, highlighting data collection gaps. Regarding customary practices, 25.3% expressed awareness of customary and religious mechanisms addressing GBV, with 26.2% believing these help prevent violence.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Legal awareness in Osun State has significantly declined over the review period. While 68.1% of respondents were aware of existing GBV laws in 2023, this figure dropped to 45% in 2024 and sharply to 21.7% in 2025. The Ministry of Justice, explained that although the 2021 VAPP Law broadened protection beyond domestic violence, "many citizens and even some law enforcement officers are still unaware of the provisions, which affects implementation."

Confidence in the effectiveness of formal legal mechanisms also deteriorated, with only 25.5% of respondents in 2025 believing in their efficacy compared to 65% in 2023. This decline indicates an erosion of public trust in legal systems addressing GBV.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

The State provides free legal aid through the Ministry of Justice and organizations including FIDA, where dedicated activists and volunteer lawyers offer legal representation to survivors. Nonetheless, only 21.4% of respondents are aware of these services, and many survivors discontinue cases under family pressure or fear of stigma. Enforcement capacity also remains weak. The Ministry of Justice official noted that "the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Response Unit operates with only four officers handling increasing caseloads, with no dedicated vehicle for emergency response... we are choked, the number of gender matters has been increasing day by day." This underscores the limited institutional capacity to provide timely and effective legal response to GBV cases. When asked about seeking justice, 76.6% prefer formal justice systems, while 23.1% would turn to informal mechanisms. However, participation in the justice process is further undermined by fear and inadequate protection: only 40.7% feel safe testifying, 41.4% would participate only if witness protection is robust, and 17.9% refuse involvement altogether.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of legal justice services decreased, with 49% aware of legal aid in 2024, falling to 21.4% in 2025. Willingness to serve as witnesses also declined from 58.3% in 2023 to 38% in 2024, before slightly rising to 40.7% in 2025. However, outright refusal to testify increased from 6.1% to 17.9% over the same period. Preference for formal justice systems varied over the review period. In 2023, 72.4% of respondents favoured seeking justice through formal channels. This preference declined to 55% in 2024 but rebounded to 76.6% in 2025. Meanwhile, preference for informal justice mechanisms rose from 19.6% in 2023 to 23.1% in 2025.

Notably, those who stated they would not seek justice at all dropped significantly from 8.0% in 2023 to 0.3% in 2025, indicating improved willingness to pursue some form of justice. Trust in informal justice systems has declined markedly from 71.2% in 2023 to 30.1% in 2025, reflecting growing scepticism about the effectiveness of customary and religious mechanisms in delivering justice for GBV survivors

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Osun State has limited resources to support survivors of GBV, with only one government-run SARC located at Asubiaro State Hospital and one government shelter, supplemented by fifteen private shelters that mainly cater to children. This limited infrastructure aligns with the low awareness level of 26% among respondents who know about SARCs or shelters. However, among those aware, confidence in functionality is high: 53.8% strongly agree and 35.5% agree that these facilities are effectively operational. The SARC Coordinator explained that this confidence stems from recent improvements, noting that "the Asubiaro Centre was restructured to provide integrated medical, legal, and psychosocial services through coordination among the Ministries of Health, Women Affairs, and Justice."

Despite these institutional improvements, overall service awareness remains critically low. About 76.9% of respondents are unaware of available medical, legal, psychosocial, or economic supports, with hospitals (35.6%) and police services (29.2%) being the most recognized entry points. Consequently, 73.6% of respondents still rely on informal support systems—family, religious institutions, and community leaders—perceived as more accessible than formal channels.

Beyond limited awareness, coordination gaps in the referral pathway remain a major constraint in survivor support. Stakeholders confirmed that referral processes between hospitals, police, SARCs, and legal aid institutions are largely informal and inconsistent, leading to delays and duplication of efforts.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of SARCs and shelters in Osun State is unstable. It stood at 17.0% in 2023, increased to 33% in 2024, and then declined to 26% in 2025.. While overall awareness of medical, legal, psychosocial, and economic support services fluctuated, rising to 43% in 2024 before falling sharply to 23.1% in 2025, confidence in the quality of available facilities improved. Respondents who strongly agreed that the shelter and SARC are effective and adequately equipped increased from 42% in 2024 to 53.8% in 2025, a change corroborated by the SARC Coordinator, who noted that "the Asubiaro SARC was overhauled with new staff and better equipment, and coordination among key ministries has strengthened service delivery."

Awareness of referral pathways also showed uneven progress. Knowledge of police and hospital referral channels improved modestly, while awareness of legal representation and support groups declined. Interestingly, public preference for informal support systems such as family and religious institutions fell from 82.8% in 2023 to 26.4% in 2025, suggesting a gradual shift in trust toward formal GBV response mechanisms, even as awareness of available services remains low.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

An official of the Ministry of Women Affairs indicated that although campaigns such as the 16 Days of Activism Against GBV are conducted annually, "coverage is limited to about 10 of the 30 LGAs due to funding and logistical constraints." This constraint is reflected in the low awareness levels, with only 17.4% of the respondents familiar with GBV programs in Osun State. Among the few who are aware, 48% found the materials "mostly useful," and 40.5% considered them "a little bit useful."

The survey further identified social media (38%), radio (35.5%), and newspapers (32.5%) as the most effective GBV information channels. Support for teaching GBV and child sexual abuse prevention in schools stood at 57.1% while accessibility of materials for persons with disabilities remains poor, with only 23.9% accessing information through audio/spoken content, 21.4% through visual content, and 15.6% through braille materials.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV programs fell from 62.6% in 2023 to 38% in 2024, reaching a low of 17.4% in 2025. Despite this decline, perceptions of the usefulness of materials improved, with those rating them as "mostly useful" increasing from 39.9% to 48%, although "completely useful" ratings fell from 25.8% to 7.5%.

Social media overtook radio as the main channel for GBV information, accounting for 38% of respondents citing it in 2025. Support for school-based GBV education declined substantially from 82.8% in 2023 to 57.1% in 2025, with no integration into the formal curriculum. Awareness of disability-accessible materials plunged critically, with audio/spoken content awareness falling from 71.8% to just 23.9%. Other inclusive formats remained below 22%.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Osun allocated ₦1.34 billion to GBV initiatives, representing 0.49% of its total state budget. However, the state only spent ₦482.64 million—just 36.1% of what was budgeted. This means nearly two-thirds of allocated GBV funds remained unspent. The actual expenditure accounted for merely 0.20% of the state's total spending, indicating that GBV was not a spending priority despite the budgetary provision. With a per capita spend of ₦158.66, Osun's investment per citizen remains modest. The significant gap between allocation and actual spending suggests either poor budget execution, fund diversion, or lack of urgency in implementing GBV programmes. This underutilization of available resources undermines the state's commitment to addressing gender-based violence effectively.

Changes Over Time (2022 to 2024)

Osun State's Budget and spending performance fluctuated considerably during the period under review. Actual spending amounted to ₦482.64 million in 2024, ₦229.56 million in 2023, and ₦154.97 million in 2022. These figures translated into performance rates of 36.1%, 77.0%, and 36.0% respectively. In 2024, Osun State included one GBV-specific budget line: "Development of a Strategic Framework for the Implementation of Osun State VAPP/GBV," with an allocation of ₦37.22 million. However, no implementation was recorded. The state's low execution of GBV-related budgets is also evident in its per capita spending which stood at ₦158.66 in 2024, ₦77.92 in 2023, and ₦54.31 in 2022. The steady year-on-year increase reflects gradual improvement, although the overall levels indicate that investment in GBV-related interventions remains critically low.

Human Angle Stories

Eniola was at work in Ibadan when her sister's teacher called to say that a neighbour had raped her sister. A matron, who confirmed the assault, referred them to the Osun State University Teaching Hospital for follow-up care, but they didn't go because of a lack of money.

Eniola was unaware of the free legal aid services or the Sexual Assault Referral Centre that could have helped. They never returned to the hospital. No police report was filed. Her sister received no counselling. The rape was never officially reported, and the perpetrator was never caught.

This case demonstrates how a lack of awareness creates insurmountable barriers for survivors. Despite having a functional SARC in Osogbo, the siblings never accessed it because they didn't know it existed. The absence of systematic referral pathways from the initial hospital visit to specialized services left them navigating the system alone, ultimately choosing silence over a process they couldn't afford or understand.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Laws remain available only in English, excluding grassroots communities and less literate populations.	Make GBV laws more accessible by translating them into major local language, distributing them freely in local offices and among community groups, and broadcasting audio versions on the radio and in public spaces.
	Only 21.3% of respondents know anyone convicted for GBV offenses, down from 53% in 2024. A representative of the High Court confirmed there are "many" convictions but could not provide specific figures, indicating weak data collection systems.	Create a public GBV database to track reported cases, prosecutions, convictions, and sentences, and publish quarterly reports to ensure transparency and demonstrate effective enforcement.
Access to Legal Justice	The Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Response Unit operates with only four officers handling increasing caseloads, with no dedicated vehicle for emergency response.	Strengthen institutional capacity of the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Response Unit by increasing personnel, providing dedicated logistics (such as a response vehicle), and establishing a rapid-response framework to manage rising caseloads.
	Only 40.7% of respondents would feel safe serving as witnesses in GBV cases, while 41.4% conditioned participation on effectiveness of the state's witness protection program.	Develop and operationalize a comprehensive witness protection program with clear protocols, safe houses, and financial support for witnesses.
Support Services	Only 1 government SARC (Asubiaro Hospital) and 1 state shelter operational; 15 private shelters cater mainly to children.	Establish at least two additional SARCs in Osun East and Osun West senatorial districts by 2026.
	Only 26% of respondents know about the SARC, which was activated in mid-2024. The Ministry of Women Affairs noted that rural areas are largely underserved due to distance from Osogbo, forcing survivors to travel to the state capital for support.	Expand SARC coverage by establishing satellite centers in underserved LGAs and linking them to Asubiaro's referral hub.
	Referral pathways for GBV survivors remain weak and fragmented. Referrals often depend on personal networks rather than a coordinated system, leading to delays in survivor support and case follow-up.	Institutionalize a coordinated GBV referral mechanism by developing a standardized referral directory and digital tracking system linking SARCs, hospitals, police units, FIDA, and social welfare offices.
Information and Awareness	Awareness of GBV programs plummeted from 38% in 2024 to 17.4% in 2025—the lowest across all indexes. The 16 Days of Activism campaign reaches only 10 of 30 LGAs.	Expand the 16 Days of Activism campaign to all 30 LGAs by 2026 with sustained quarterly awareness activities rather than one-time annual events.
	Awareness of GBV materials for persons with disabilities is very low — only 23.9% access information through audio content, 21.4% through visual, and 15.6% through braille materials. Officials admitted that most sensitization efforts still target the public rather than PWDs.	Develop and distribute disability-inclusive GBV materials through coordinated outreach. Ensure meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in designing these materials and provide training for frontline workers to enhance accessibility and effectiveness of information dissemination.
	Only 57.1% support teaching GBV prevention in schools, with the Ministry of Education deflecting responsibility to Women Affairs.	Collaboration between the Ministries of Women Affairs and Education to integrate age-appropriate GBV and child sexual abuse prevention into the school curriculum at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.
Budget and Spending	Osun's ₦37.22 million allocation for developing a GBV strategic framework in 2024 recorded zero implementation, symptomatic of broader execution failures where the state spent only 36.1% of its total GBV budget, leaving ₦857 million unutilized.	Prioritize immediate implementation of its GBV strategic framework and establish a dedicated monitoring unit within the Ministry of Women Affairs to track monthly expenditure against budget targets, ensuring funds reach intended programmes rather than remaining unspent.



Oyo State

Pace Setter State

AdoAwaye Mountains and Suspended Lakes

Oyo State

Population: 10,291,816

50.0% Female | Male 49.6%

Overall Grade 50.0%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,386)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

64.5% | 35.5%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

34.8% | 65.2%

AGE

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

8.0% | 35.5% | 27.7% | 15.3% | 9.6% | 3.8%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

9.7% | 90.3%

SARCs

1

Shelters

0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦1.61bn

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

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦429.91m

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

26.7%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

0.1% | 43.8% | 56.1%

Per Capita Spending

₦82.88

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 ■

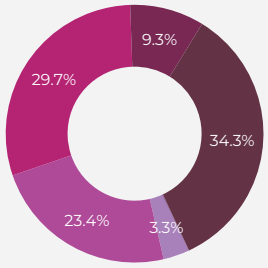
51.2% | 48.8%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

57.9% | 18.5% | 33.1% | 23.5% | 7.5%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

44.2% | 25.7% | 37.4% | 27.5% | 9.7% | 7.5%

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

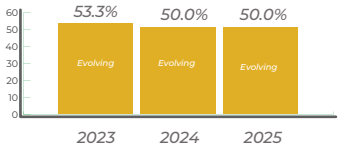
Where did you or the person first seek help?

32.2% | 32.1% | 14.3% | 2.1% | 3.5% | 6.8% | 5.6% | 3.4%

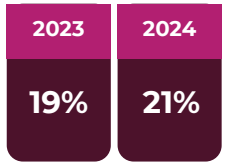
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



20%
Overall implementation rate

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 Abiamo 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 ■

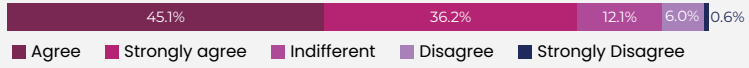
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

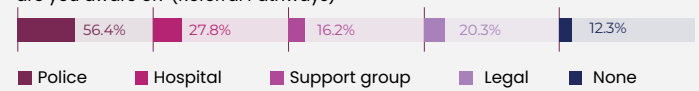
Yes ■ No ■



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)



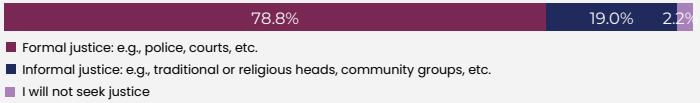
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

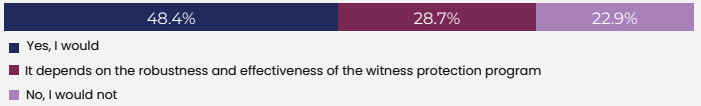


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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?

Yes ■ No ■



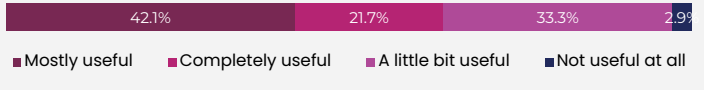
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

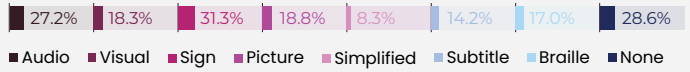
Yes ■ No ■



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



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



Oyo State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 50.0%

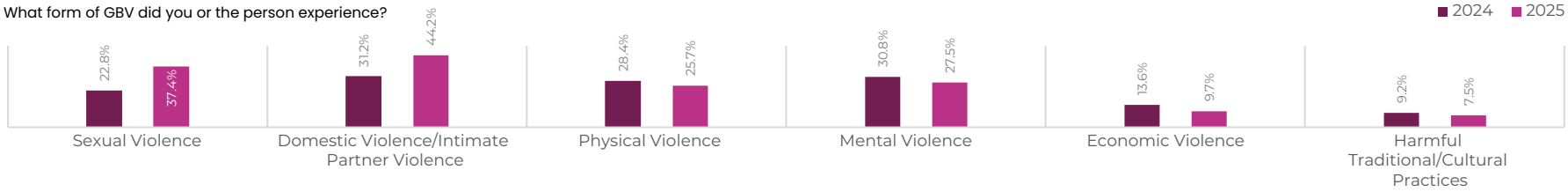
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



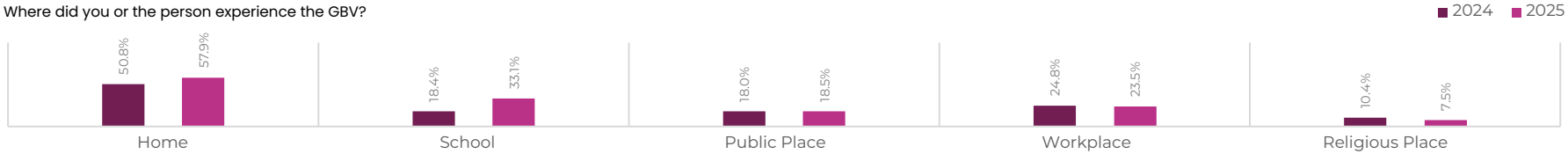
48.8%

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

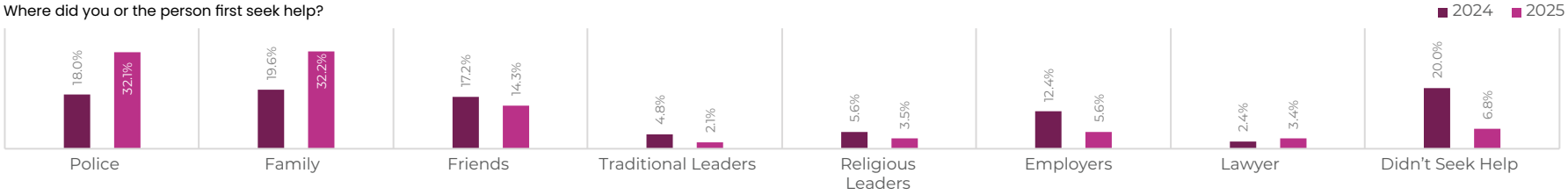
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



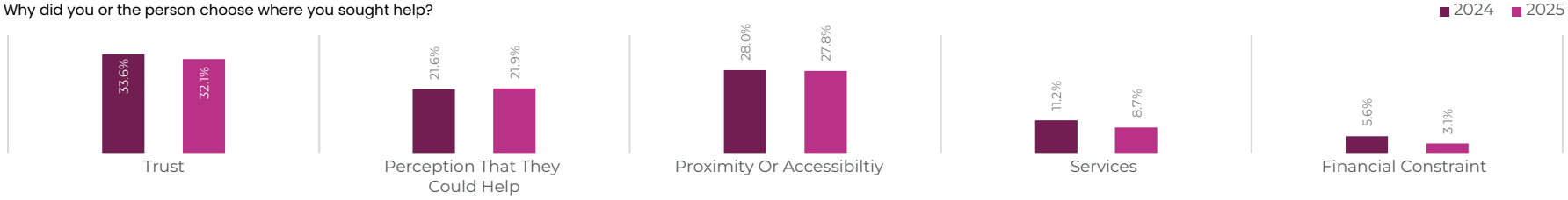
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

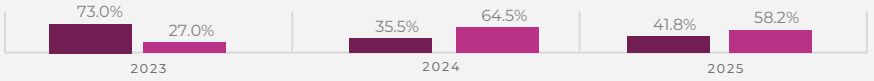


Oyo State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

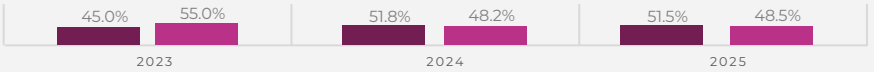
Overall Grade 50.0%

LAWS AND POLICIES

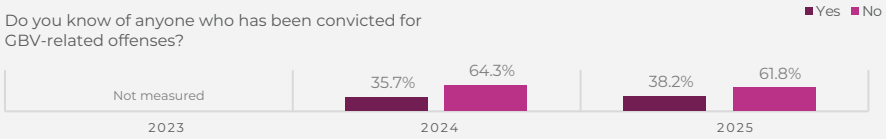
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

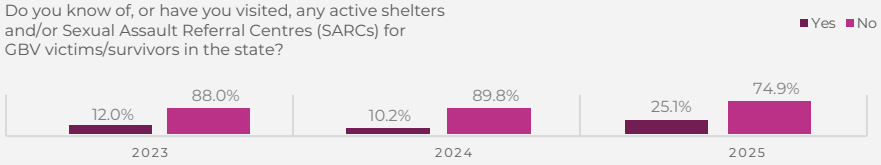


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

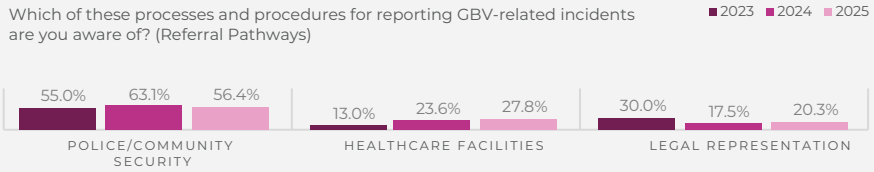


SUPPORT SERVICES

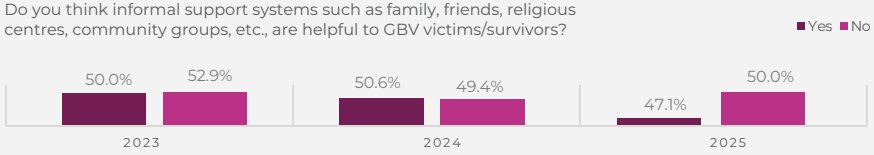
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

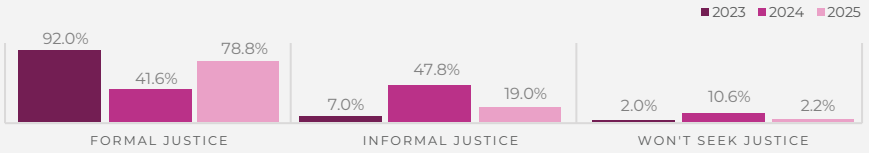


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

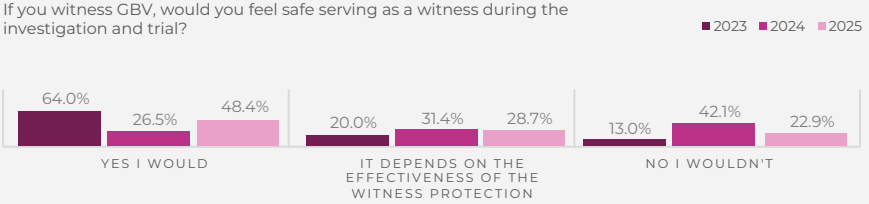


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

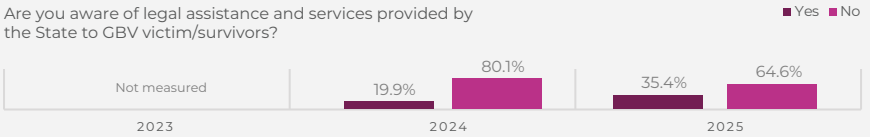
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

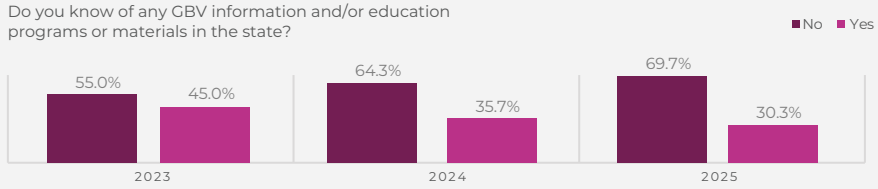


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

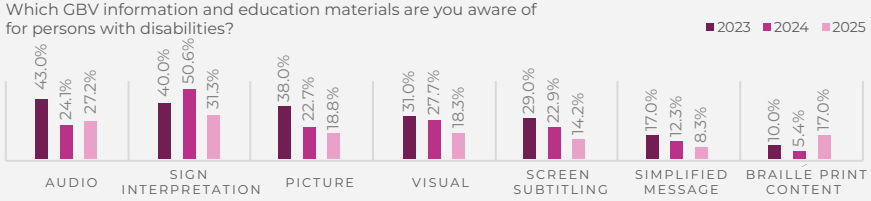


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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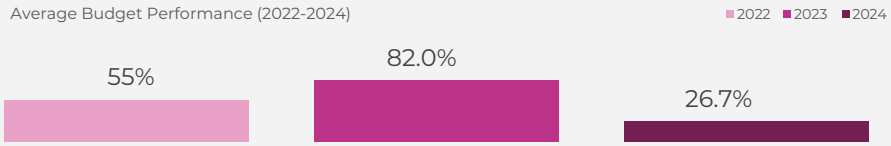


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

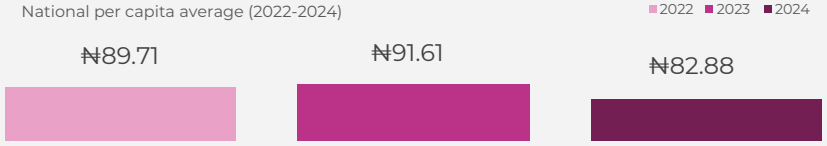


BUDGET AND SPENDING

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.

Womanity INDEX
2025 Edition

Invictus AFRICA



Plateau State

Home of Peace and Tourism

Shere Hills

Plateau State

Population: 5,213,178

51.1% Female | Male 48.9%

Overall Grade 57.1%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,026)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

70.3% | 29.7%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

67.3% | 32.7%

AGE

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

5.0% | 32.0% | 31.3% | 14.9% | 9.5% | 7.3%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

9.9% | 90.1%

SARCs: 1

Shelters: 1

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦1.08bn

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

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦532.55m

(This accounts for **49.5%** of total allocation to the ministry)

49.5%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

26.1% | 20.9% | 53.1%

Per Capita Spending

₦200.09

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	75.0%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	56.3%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	33.3%

GBV Context 2025

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

No ■ Yes ■

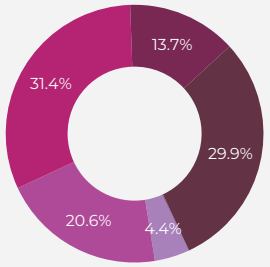
11.4% | 88.6%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

88.7% | 24.5% | 22.9% | 18.9% | 6.7%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

47.0% | 66.8% | 28.7% | 52.3% | 25.1% | 12.1%

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

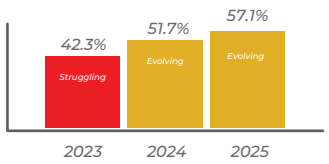
Where did you or the person first seek help?

41.7% | 27.8% | 9.7% | 6.9% | 4.2% | 5.4% | 2.4% | 1.9%

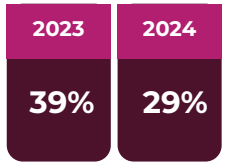
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



30%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	−1 ▼ LP 50.0%	LP 58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 68.8%	+1 ▲ ALJ 75.0%
Support Services	SS 25.0%	+1 ▲ SS 50.0%	SS 56.3%
Information and Awareness	IA 25.0%	+1 ▲ IA 56.3%	IA 62.5%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 33.3%	BS 33.3%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Trust in formal justice systems increased significantly, with 71.4% now preferring formal avenues compared to 61.4% in 2023.
- Witness safety perceptions improved markedly from 53.5% to 68.6%.
- Specialized structures established, including a dedicated gender court (2024) and gender desk officers in all police divisions.

Areas of Concern

- Knowledge of convictions fell sharply from 62% to 30.7%.
- Awareness of state-provided legal assistance declined from 49% to 40.8%. Legal aid, remains concentrated in Jos and surrounding areas, leaving rural communities underserved.
- Growing reliance on customary/religious systems (24.9% to 60.8%) may weaken formal legal structures.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The Plateau State legislature passed a bill to establish a Law Reform Commission in July 2023 to update outdated laws and strengthen deterrence against GBV.
- Inaugurated a committee in October 2024 within the Ministry of Justice to spearhead law reform efforts and strengthen the state's legal framework.

Access to Legal Justice

- Established a dedicated gender court in 2024, presided over by Justice Mary Izam.
- Deployed gender desk officers in all police divisions across the state to facilitate survivor-friendly reporting.
- Increased the number of family courts to handle GBV cases, including five at the high court level and two at the magistrate level.
- Established the Office of the Public Defender in 2024 to, among other duties, provide legal representation to victims/survivors.

Support Services

- Provided economic assistance such as skill training to survivors through the Ministry of Women Affairs and Gender Commission.

Information and Awareness

- Launched regular radio programs in multiple local languages through the Ministry of Women Affairs and Gender Commission.
- The Gender Commission began budgeting for inclusive communication materials for persons with disabilities.

Change Spotlight

In November 2024, Plateau State established the Gender and Equal Opportunities Commission to institutionalize the fight against GBV. Headed by Bar. Olivia Dazyem, the Commission promotes gender equity, protects women's rights, and monitors GBV interventions across the state. It serves as a key coordinating body, working with government agencies, NGOs, and development partners to harmonize policy implementation and strengthen accountability. The state also established a designated GBV court and the Office of the Public Defender to provide free legal representation to survivors.

These innovations have made justice more accessible, particularly for survivors who previously faced financial barriers or family pressure. Stakeholders describe these developments as a major step forward in Plateau State's GBV response. Together, these institutions ensure that GBV prevention and response are embedded within the state's governance structures rather than left to temporary initiatives.

Plateau State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 57.1%

LAWS AND POLICIES

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

Yes ■ No ■

62.4% | 37.6%

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

Yes ■ No ■

60.8% | 39.2%

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

Yes ■ No ■

30.7% | 69.3%

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 ■

21.2% | 78.8%

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

38.7% | 37.8% | 10.6% | 6.5% | 6.5%

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

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

62.3% | 30.5% | 15.0% | 19.9% | 16.5%

■ 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 ■

56.4% | 43.6%

ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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

71.5% | 26.8% | 1.7%

■ 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?

68.6% | 21.0% | 10.4%

■ 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

40.8% | 59.2%

INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

Yes ■ No ■

37.4% | 62.6%

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

39.6% | 46.6% | 10.4% | 3.4%

■ 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?

20.2% | 14.3% | 16.9% | 17.4% | 4.6% | 7.9% | 4.6% | 45.0%

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

Plateau State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 57.1%

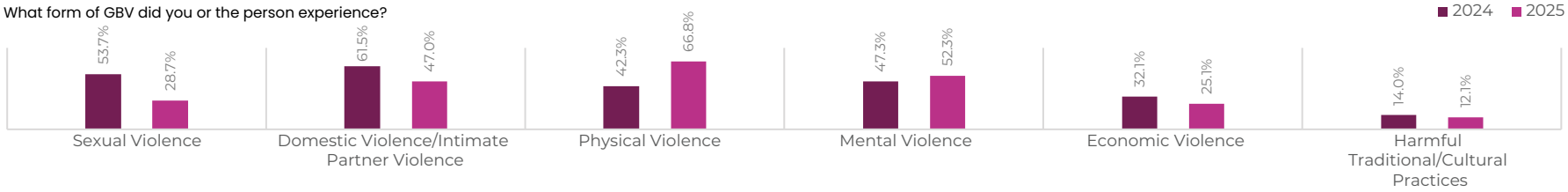
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



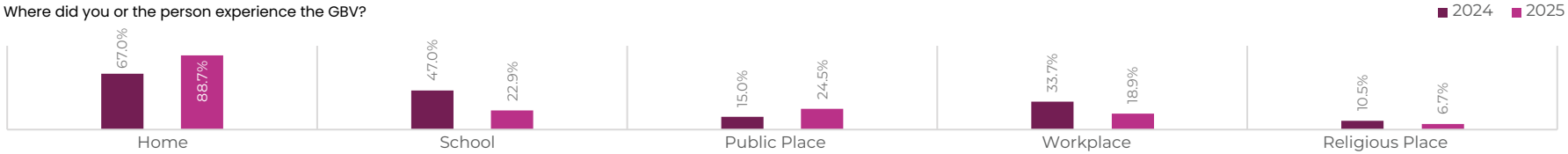
88.6%

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

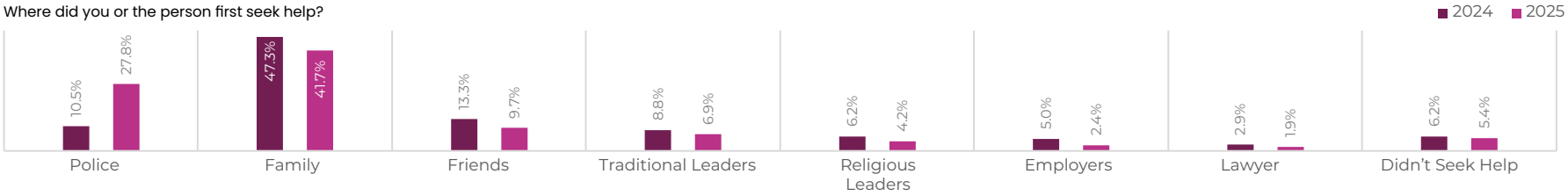
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



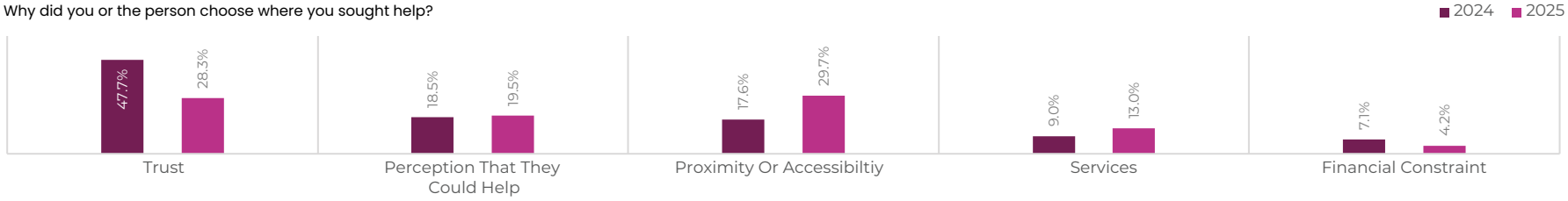
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

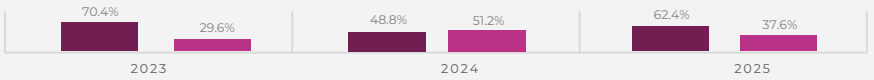


Plateau State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

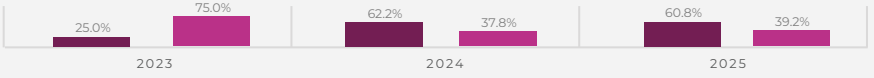
Overall Grade 57.1%

LAWS AND POLICIES

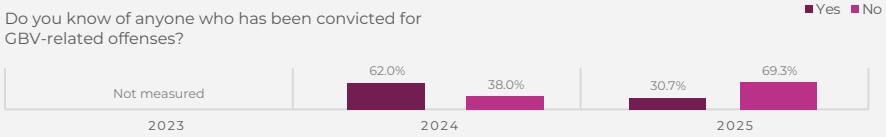
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

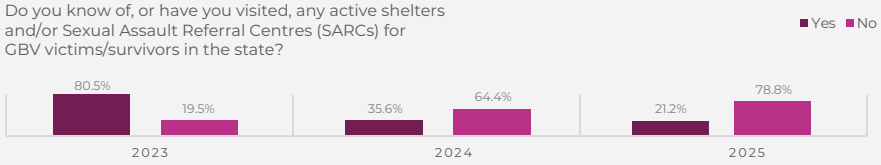


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

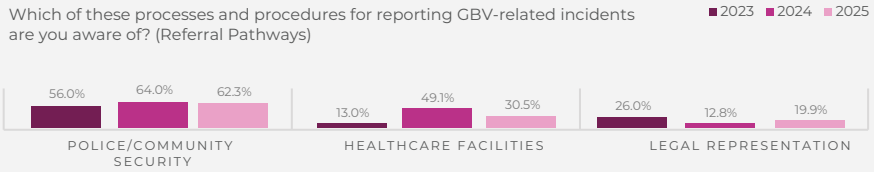


SUPPORT SERVICES

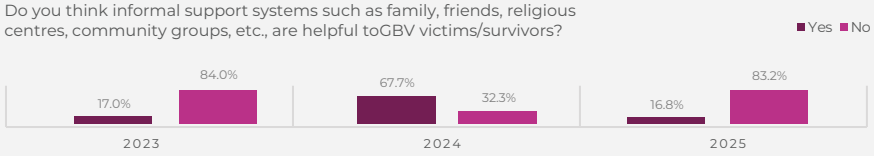
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



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

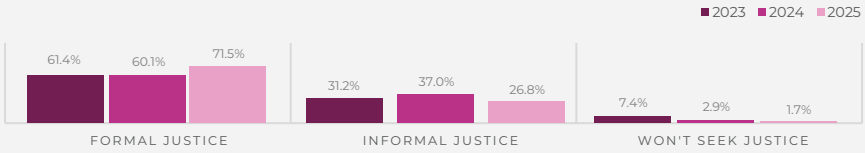


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

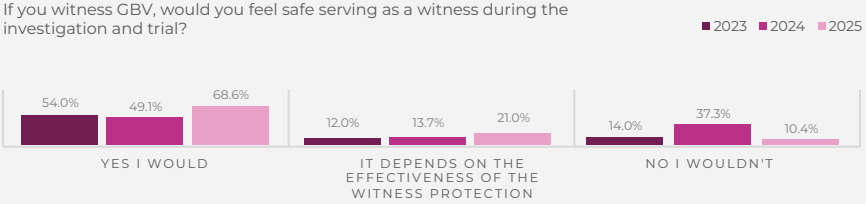


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

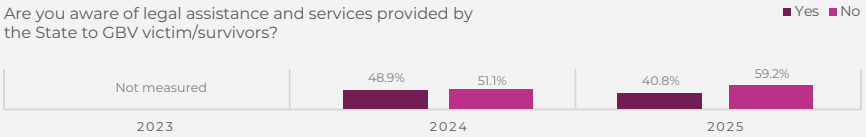
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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

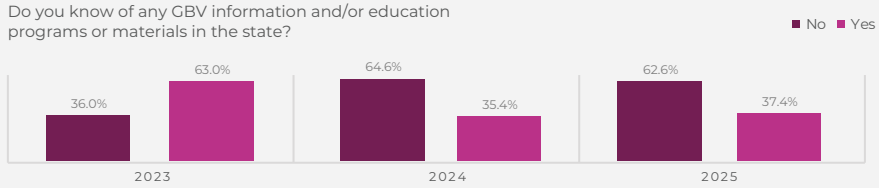


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

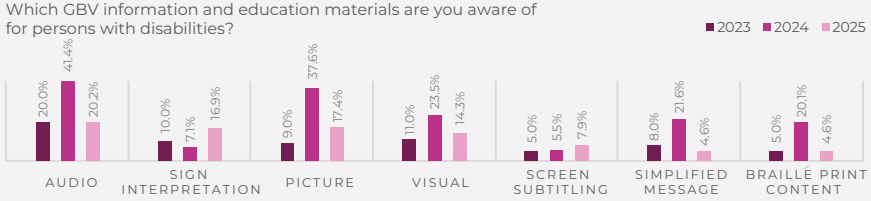


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

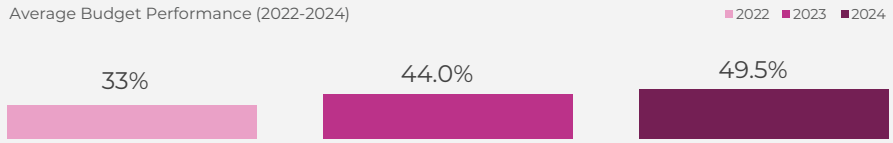


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

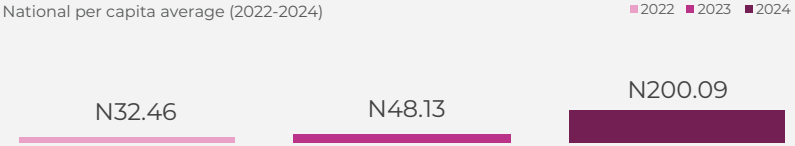


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Plateau State's legal framework for addressing GBV includes the VAPP Law (2020), the Gender and Equal Opportunities Law (2018), and the Child Rights Law (2005). The state has made notable improvements to these laws, including criminalization of abandonment of family responsibilities, an offense that was previously not recognized.

Public awareness of these laws is moderate (62.4%), but confidence in their effectiveness remains divided. While a slight majority (56.1%) believe the laws are effective, a significant proportion (43.9%) remains unconvinced. Stakeholders attribute this skepticism partly to weak enforcement mechanisms and limited visibility of convictions. As noted by the Ministry of Justice, while the state has received more than 116 cases of GBV in the past year, conviction data remains poorly documented across agencies. This gap is reflected in the fact that 69.3% of respondents reported not knowing anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses, suggesting limited visibility of enforcement outcomes at the community level.

Harmful traditional practices such as early marriage, wife inheritance, widowhood rites, and female disinheritance still exist in some communities. Stakeholders report that these practices are not widespread, and that progress is being made through targeted sensitization. At the same time, customary and religious systems remain influential in how GBV is addressed, with 60.8% of residents viewing them as effective. This strong reliance on non-formal systems can sometimes weaken the role of formal legal protections, especially when traditional norms clash with statutory laws.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, public awareness of GBV-related laws declined from 70.4% to 62.4%. Similarly, knowledge of GBV-related convictions dropped from 62% in 2024 to 30.7% in 2025. This decline may reflect fragile trust in formal structures, reinforced by limited visibility of enforcement outcomes or fewer publicized convictions. Stakeholders confirmed that while convictions are occurring, the lack of centralized data management makes it difficult to track and communicate progress to the public. A civil society actor emphasized that "one of the major concerns we have in this sector is data. There's a poor system of data management, data collection, and data analysis." Such gaps could weaken public confidence in the justice system and discourage survivors from seeking formal redress.

In contrast, the period saw growing confidence in customary and religious laws and practices as effective tools for preventing and responding to GBV, rising from 24.9% in 2023 to 60.8% in 2025. While this shift may reflect increased community engagement, it raises concerns about the weakening of formal legal structures if customary systems are viewed as substitutes rather than complements.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Although there is growing trust in customary and religious practices to address GBV, most residents (71.5%) say they would still seek justice through the formal system. Many also say they would feel safe serving as witnesses in GBV trials (68.6%), which is a positive sign. This shows a strong willingness to use official legal channels.

The state has made progress in establishing specialized structures. A dedicated gender court was established in 2024, and gender desk officers now operate in all police divisions: "from every division that you go to, we have a specialist that handles cases that has to do with family and the human rights responsibility of that person." Additionally, five family courts at the high court level and two at the magistrate level handle child-related matters. Stakeholders noted that the reporting and prosecution process has also improved, due to better coordination between agencies and the Administration of Criminal Justice Law. Stakeholders also report on improved training and capacity building for justice sector actors. Despite this progress, witness intimidation and delays in court proceedings remain key barriers to effective prosecution.

Multiple legal aid services exist, including the Ministry of Justice, Legal Aid Council, Office of the Public Defender (established in 2024), National Human Rights Commission, FIDA, and NBA pro bono services. However, only 40.8% are aware of legal support services provided by the state. This lack of awareness may weaken the fragile trust in the formal system and limit access to justice. Stakeholders also reported that services are concentrated in urban areas: "Jos North and Jos South are the ones that are really benefiting, [while] those from the central down to the south part of the states are still underserved."

Even with this willingness to use formal systems, many residents still turn to informal justice options. Over half (52.9%) believe these help GBV survivors get justice. This shows that informal systems remain influential, especially in areas where formal services are hard to reach. Stakeholders confirm this pattern but express concerns about informal systems perpetuating GBV, describing multiple

cases where church leaders and community members prioritized family reputation over survivor welfare, even in serious cases involving minors. The limited presence of specialized courts and legal aid in rural areas pushes people to rely on community-based solutions. Without better coordination and oversight, informal systems may continue to operate in ways that reduce accountability and protection for survivors.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

The period saw growing trust in institutional responses, with the proportion of respondents preferring formal avenues rising significantly from 61.4% (2023) to 71.4% (2025). Similarly, perceptions of safety among potential witnesses in GBV cases improved markedly from 53.5% in 2023 to 68.6% in 2025. These improvements align with stakeholder reports of institutional reforms.

Despite progress in justice-seeking and witness safety, public awareness of state-provided legal assistance for GBV victims declined between 2024 (49%) and 2025 (40.8%). This creates tension: people are willing to engage with formal justice, yet they lack the information needed to do so effectively. The Legal Aid Council acknowledged inadequate public awareness campaigns about available services, noting “we have not done much public awareness” due to funding constraints. This signals a potential gap in outreach or communication efforts and highlights the need for stronger visibility of legal support initiatives.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

The state operates one SARC, offering basic medical, counselling, and legal support. Located at Plateau Specialist Hospital in Jos North, this government-run facility is the only functional SARC in the state. In addition, one shelter in Bokkos LGA offers temporary accommodation for survivors. However, coverage remains limited. According to stakeholders, areas in the far southern zone, such as Langtang South, Kanam, and Wase, are still underserved.

Public awareness of these facilities and related services is very low. Only 21.2% of respondents reported knowing about or visiting the SARC, and 38% were unaware of broader support services (medical, legal, psychosocial, or economic) available to GBV survivors. This gap between available services and survivor needs weakens the overall response system and leaves many without essential care.

Where services are available, they are often comprehensive, covering medical, legal, psychosocial, and economic support. Both the Ministry of Women Affairs and the Gender Commission report offering a wide range of assistance, including shelter, counselling, mediation, and skills training. However, access to these services largely depends on successful case reporting, which remains a major barrier in rural areas.

Knowledge of referral pathways is uneven. While police channels are relatively well known (62.3%), options such as hospitals (30.5%), legal aid (19.9%), and support groups (15%) are less recognized. Stakeholders confirm that while referral pathways exist on paper, coordination remains weak. This low visibility can delay access to help and contribute to underreporting.

The limited reach of formal support services, especially in rural areas, has led many to rely on informal systems like family, friends, religious institutions, and community groups. More than half of the respondents said they believe informal support is more effective than formal systems. Although informal groups may provide emotional support or referrals, they often lack the capacity to meet survivors’ full needs.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness and engagement with shelters and SARCs declined significantly, from 80.5% (2023) to 21.2% (2025), indicating that outreach efforts may not have reached new or broader audiences, limiting survivors’ access to the help they need. At the same time, awareness of formal referral pathways, especially through police, improved, but remains uneven across healthcare and legal channels.

Informal support systems like family, religious centres, and community groups continue to fill the gaps, reflecting ongoing dependence on community structures where formal systems are either unknown or underutilized. Perceptions of their usefulness remained consistently high, with more than half of respondents affirming their preference each year. These trends highlight the need for greater investment in both strengthening formal systems and expanding public education to ensure survivors can access comprehensive and timely GBV support.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Plateau State uses various media platforms to raise awareness about GBV, including regular radio programs and public sensitization campaigns. The Ministry of Women Affairs and the Gender Commission both run radio programs in multiple local languages to share information on GBV and related laws. The Ministry of Health also maintains a media presence through scheduled awareness broadcasts.

Despite the growth in sensitization activities across the state, including engagement in all 17 LGAs, religious centres, and during events like the 16 Days of Activism, awareness levels remain low. Only 37.4% of residents report having seen or heard any GBV-related information. The recently established Gender Commission has worked closely with religious leaders and youth groups in every LGA to deliver focused sessions, but stakeholders acknowledge that many people in rural and multi-ethnic communities are still not reached. Language barriers and limited access to media continue to hinder efforts.

Most residents (97.6%) believe GBV should be taught in schools. However, because it is not yet part of the formal curriculum, teaching depends on the initiative of individual schoolteachers. While the Ministry of Education includes related topics in subjects like Social Studies and Civic Education, it acknowledges that coverage is insufficient. Some NGOs are filling this gap through clubs and advocacy programs, though their reach is minimal.

People with disabilities also face challenges in getting information. Very few residents know about

materials like braille (4.6%), sign interpretation (16.9%), or simplified messaging (4.6%). Stakeholders confirm that braille materials and regular sign language interpretation are still largely unavailable. This shows the need for more inclusive communication so that no group is left out of awareness and prevention efforts. The Gender Commission recognizes this gap and has begun budgeting for more inclusive communication.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of GBV education programs has remained largely unchanged between 2023 and 2025, with only about 37% of residents reporting exposure to such programs. The Ministry of Women Affairs confirmed that no new materials have been developed recently, noting that jingles were produced two years ago. The Ministry of Justice highlighted that while sensitization efforts continue, the current methods need improvement. They suggested moving away from general community gatherings toward more targeted approaches.

Awareness of disability-friendly materials has been inconsistent. While sign language gained visibility in 2025, awareness of braille and simplified messages dropped compared to 2024. This points to a lack of sustained inclusion efforts and highlights the need for consistent and accessible materials that reach persons with disabilities across all formats.

Budget and Spending

2024 Budget Analysis

Plateau State's 2024 GBV budget data presents a mixed picture, notably lacking a specific GBV budget line despite allocating ₦1.08 billion (0.30% of total budget). The state achieved a 49.5% execution rate with ₦532.55 million in actual spending, resulting in a per capita expenditure of ₦200.09. While the near-50% implementation rate is neither exemplary nor catastrophic, it suggests moderate administrative capacity but insufficient momentum to fully deliver on initial commitments. The absence of a dedicated GBV budget line may contribute to implementation challenges, as funds dispersed across various ministries without clear ownership can lead to coordination difficulties and the middling performance observed.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Plateau State included no gender-based violence (GBV) specific line items in its approved budgets for 2022, 2023, and 2024, contributing significantly to its low performance on this indicator. Budget performance within the Ministry of Women Affairs has remained below 50% throughout the period. In 2022, the ministry received an allocation of ₦245.40 million, with actual spending of only ₦81.86 million, representing a 33% performance rate. The allocation increased slightly to ₦280.72 million in 2023, resulting in an improved yet still modest performance rate of 44% (₦124.69 million). In 2024, the allocation rose substantially to ₦1.08 billion, but actual spending reached only ₦532.55 million, a performance rate of 49.5%. Per capita spending on GBV-related interventions remained very low, with Plateau State recording ₦200.09 in 2024, ₦48.13 in 2023, and ₦32.46 in 2022. The increase in 2024 marks a sharp rise in investment after two years of very low spending, although the pattern still reflects a very low and inconsistent commitment to GBV-related funding across the period.

Human Angle Stories

Blessing, a mother of four, endured constant physical and emotional abuse from her husband with no financial support in raising his children and taking care of their living and feeding expenses. At first, she reported it to the church, then her parents, but nothing changed. Due to lack of awareness of the right measures to take in such cases, she did not report to the police or seek legal action.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	The Sokoto State VAPP Law retains most federal provisions but excludes marital rape and does not clearly define the age of a minor. Public awareness of formal GBV laws dropped from 84.9% to 75% in 2024 and 58.9% in 2025.	Review and update the VAPP law to include clearer definitions and omitted provisions like marital rape, in line with national standards, and intensify targeted public sensitization to improve legal awareness.
	Despite progress through education and training, traditional beliefs still hinder reporting. Families often avoid reporting rape due to stigma concerns and fear that victims will be unmarriageable.	Intensify community engagement programs with traditional and religious leaders to address stigma and cultural barriers to reporting. Document and disseminate success stories where formal justice led to positive outcomes.
Access to Legal Justice	Legal aid services are available through multiple channels but remain concentrated in urban areas, with remote communities underserved due to insecurity and limited resources. Public awareness of legal aid services declined from 76% in 2024 to 59.5% in 2025.	Expand Legal Aid Council offices to establish at least three additional satellite offices in underserved zones with dedicated staff and resources. Publish contact numbers and service locations across radio and posters, in all 23 LGAs.
	The state has no specialized GBV courts, and no judges have been officially designated to handle GBV cases.	Appoint 2 – 3 designated judges across the state within the next 12 months to prioritize GBV cases and ensure balanced distribution of caseloads.
Support Services	Sokoto has only one functional SARC (Nana Khadija Centre) serving the entire state, while the state shelter remains non-functional. Survivors from remote LGAs face access barriers such as transportation costs.	Establish at least two additional SARCs in underserved zones within the next 12 months, Rehabilitate and operationalize the state-owned shelter with trained staff and operational budgets for survivor intake and support.
	Public confidence in informal support systems dropped from 83.3% in 2023 to 73% in 2024, then 61.5% in 2025, possibly reflecting growing recognition of their limitations. However, 61.5% of residents still rely primarily on informal networks due to gaps in formal services.	Expand and intensify training of religious and traditional leaders to recognize the limits of informal mediation and encourage timely referrals to formal mechanisms. Use radio and community forums to promote awareness of available formal services.
Information and Awareness	Public exposure to GBV information programs increased from 75.4% to 83%, then declined 60.1%.	Pending the development of formal GBV curriculum, create and distribute state-level supplementary teaching guides and train teachers on integrating GBV topics into existing subjects.
	This could be partially attributed to the lack of comprehensive government-led awareness campaigns and absence of monitoring from the state leadership.	Establish an annual calendar of GBV awareness activities led by the Governor's office and Ministry of Women Affairs, with clear targets for LGA coverage, audience reach, and message penetration.
Budget and Spending	Sokoto State consistently fails to implement budgeted GBV programs, with a persistent 74% non-utilization rate over three years. Critical initiatives like the internet-based case management platform (allocated ₦150 million cumulatively across 2022-2024) and shelter construction (₦100 million in 2024) recorded zero implementation despite repeated budget allocations.	Establish a quarterly GBV budget tracking and accountability mechanism involving the Ministry of Women Affairs, Budget Office, and civil society organizations to identify implementation bottlenecks early and enforce expenditure of allocated funds. Prioritize completion of the shelter infrastructure and case management platform as immediate proof-of-concept projects to demonstrate commitment to GBV response.


Rivers
State
Treasure Base of the Nation
Owu Fall

Rivers State

Population: 9,587,035

49.3% Female | Male 50.7%

Overall Grade 65.0%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,045)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

57.3% | 42.7%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

73.4% | 26.6%

AGE

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

5.7% | 28.5% | 28.7% | 20.2% | 12.4% | 4.5%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

3.2% | 96.8%

SARCs: 1

Shelters: 0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦2.57bn

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

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦162.59m

(This accounts for **6.3%** of total allocation to the ministry)

6.3%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■

30.1% | 56.6% | 13.3%

Per Capita Spending

₦34.41

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	68.8%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	68.8%
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?

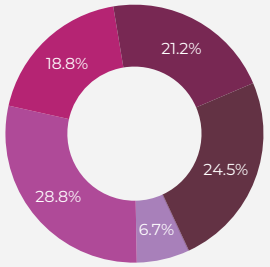
Yes ■ No ■

45.7% | 54.3%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

92.6% Home | 45.0% Public | 37.3% School | 32.2% Workplace | 23.6% Religious Institution

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

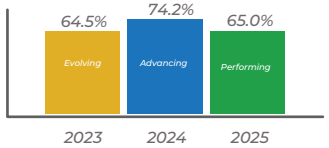
66.3% Domestic | 60.1% Physical | 71.2% Sexual | 55.9% Mental | 43.1% Economic | 15.5% Cultural practices

Where did you or the person first seek help?

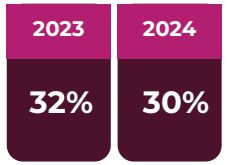
27.6% Family/relatives | 47.5% Police/law enforcement authority | 9.0% Friends/neighbors | 2.6% Traditional/community leader or group | 4.9% Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) | 2.3% Employer/Work colleague/Labour group | 1.9% I did not seek help | 4.2% Lawyer

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

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



31%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	LP 83.3%	LP 75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 86.3%	ALJ 81.3%	−1 ▼ ALJ 68.8%
Support Services	SS 75.0%	SS 75.0%	−1 ▼ SS 62.5%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3%	+1 ▲ IA 81.3%	−1 ▼ IA 68.8%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 50.0%	BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Conviction rates increased significantly, with FIDA securing over 10 convictions in the past 12 months due to improved stakeholder collaboration and family courts.
- Family Support Units and Human Rights Desks now operate across all police divisions statewide, expanding access to specialized GBV response.
- Traditional rulers are increasingly participating in GBV prevention, with some establishing community committees and making referrals to formal justice systems.
- Awareness of government-provided legal aid services improved from 38% in 2024 to 54.1% in 2025.

Areas of Concern

- Public awareness of GBV convictions increased sligthly from 13.3% in 2024 to 22.8% in 2025, potentially weakening confidence in the justice system.
- Awareness of GBV education programs declined from 57% in 2023 to 31.7% in 2025, reflecting funding cuts and political instability that disrupted programming.
- Knowledge of SARCs and shelters remained critically low, dropping from 13.8% in 2023 to 7.1% in 2025.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Established the Office of the Public Defender in 2024 and included in its mandate is carrying out sensitization programs and awareness on the existing GBV laws in the state.
- Established the Multi-Stakeholder Committee on Prevention of GBV, which includes traditional rulers and faith-based leaders.

Access to Legal Justice

- Established Family Support Units and Human Rights Desks across all police divisions in the state.
  Designated specialized GBV courts with two judges at the family high court level and two at the magistrate court level to expedite case processing.
- The newly created Office of the Public Defender provides free legal aid services with hotlines for residents unable to visit offices.

Support Services

- Established 23 GBV response facilities (“Safe Homes”) with trained response teams across all 23 LGAs, managed by the Ministry of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation.
- The Ministry of Health provides free medical services for survivors through the Rivers State Contributory Health Protection Programme (RIVCHPP) and enrolls eligible survivors in the program.

Information and Awareness

- Office of the Public Defender conducted radio and television sensitization campaigns in August 2025 with support from Action Aid.
- TB Network partnered with Community Development Finance Initiative to create “My Story Project,” a media platform where survivors share their experiences with consent to raise public awareness.

Change Spotlight

Rivers State’s most remarkable achievement between 2023 and 2025 has been the systematic establishment of Family Support Units (FSUs) and Human Rights Desks across all police divisions statewide. This represents a fundamental shift in how GBV cases are handled at the first point of contact with law enforcement.

The impact of this expansion is measurable and significant. The state designated specialized GBV courts at two judicial levels—two judges at the family high court and two at the magistrate court level—to expedite case processing. This structural reform contributed directly to a dramatic improvement in conviction rates, with FIDA securing over 10 convictions in the past 12 months alone, described as “high” due to increased awareness of the law among stakeholders. The establishment of the Office of the Public Defender in 2024, which provides free legal aid services with dedicated hotlines for residents unable to visit offices, further strengthened this justice ecosystem.

Public response to these reforms has been overwhelmingly positive. Awareness of government-provided legal aid services surged from 38% in 2024 to 54.1% in 2025. More telling is the community’s trust in these systems: 82.8% of residents indicated they would seek help through formal justice channels if they or someone they knew experienced GBV, while 57.5% expressed willingness to serve as witnesses in GBV cases.

Rivers State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 65.0%

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 ■



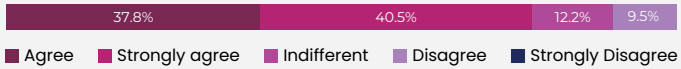
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

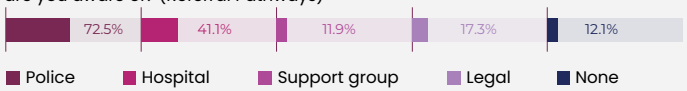
Yes ■ No ■



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)



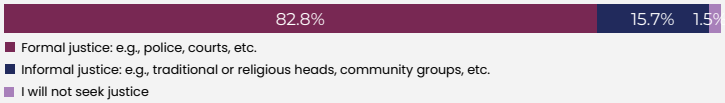
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

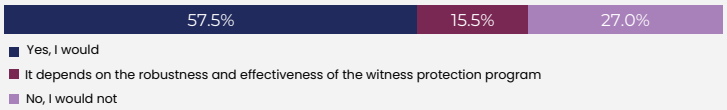


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

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



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?

Yes ■ No ■



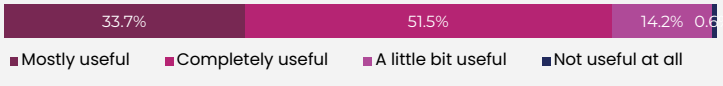
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

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

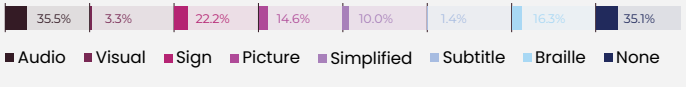
Yes ■ No ■



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



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



Rivers State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 65.0%

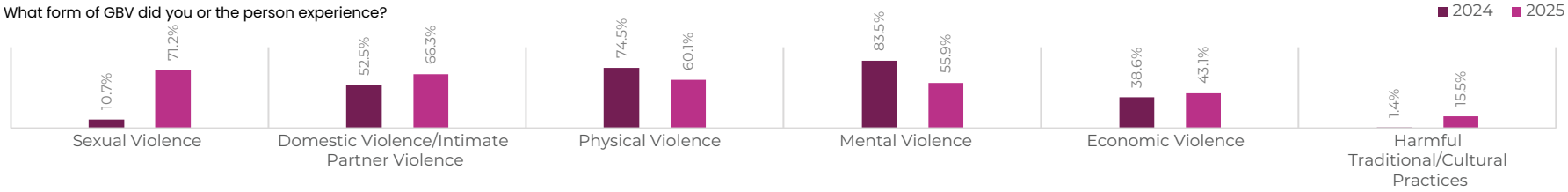
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



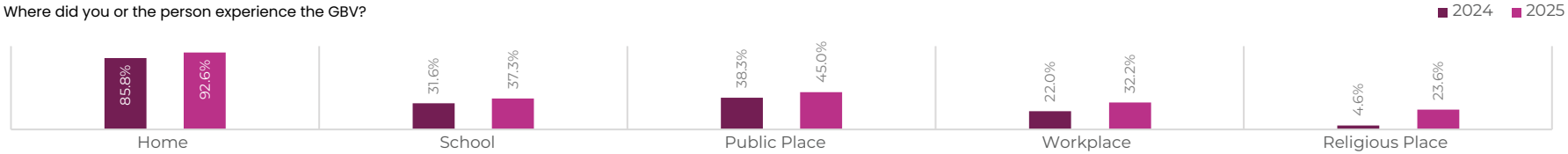
72.9%

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

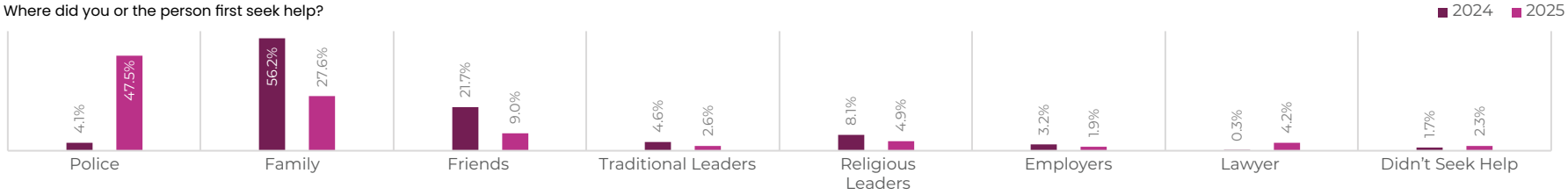
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



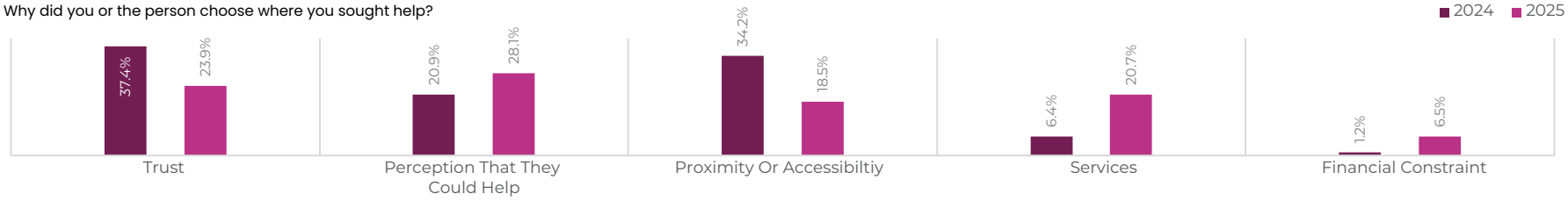
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



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

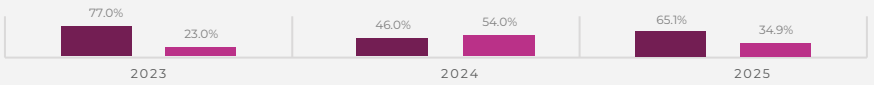


Rivers State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

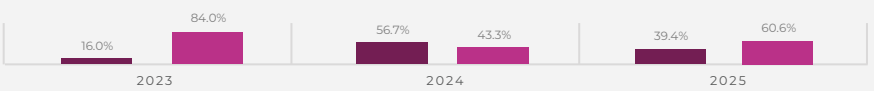
Overall Grade 65.0%

LAWS AND POLICIES

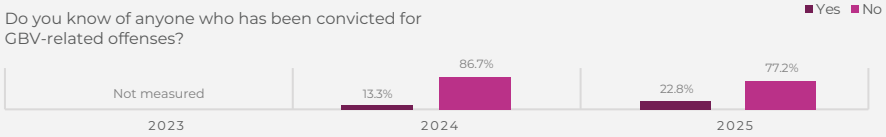
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



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

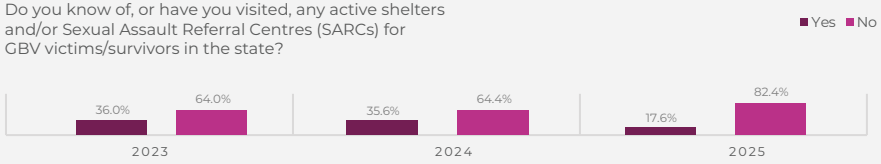


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

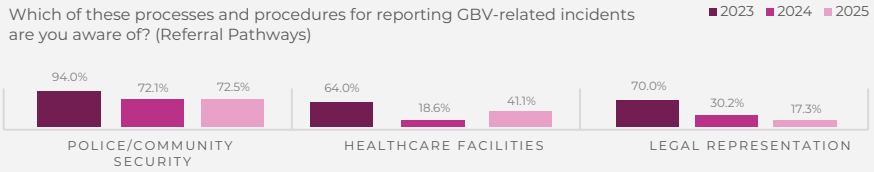


SUPPORT SERVICES

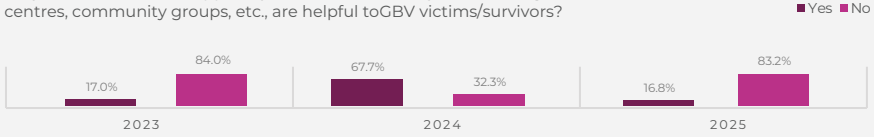
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



Which of these processes and procedures for reporting GBV-related incidents are you aware of? (Referral Pathways)

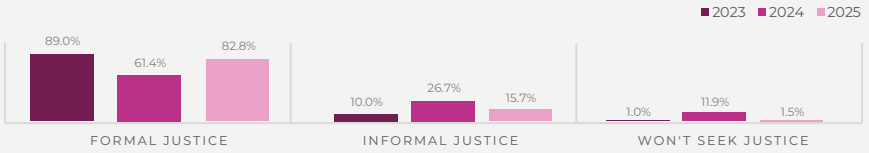


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

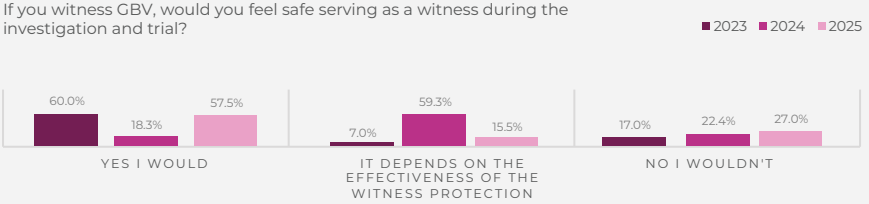


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

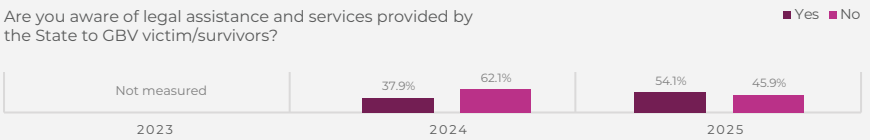
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



If you witness GBV, would you feel safe serving as a witness during the investigation and trial?

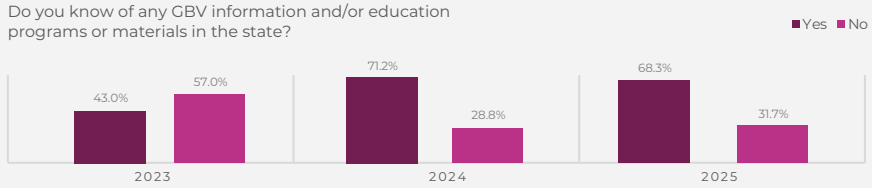


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

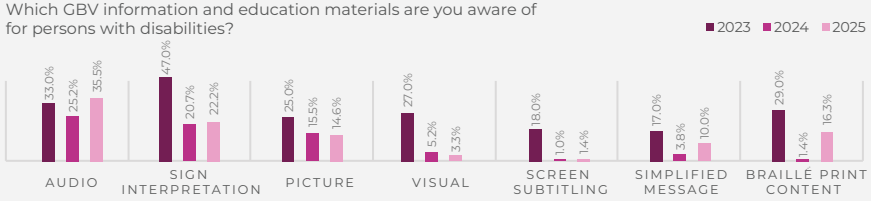


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?

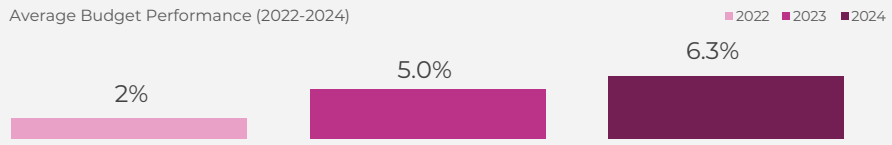


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

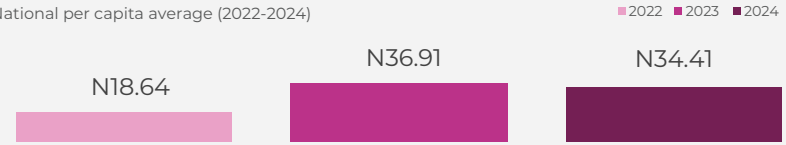


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Rivers State has been operating the VAPP Law since 2022, which closely mirrors the federal VAPP Act of 2015. A key modification was the designation of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation as the domicile ministry instead of Women Affairs. Public awareness of the VAPP Law and other GBV-related laws and policies is moderate (65.1%), and most residents (61.3%) believe these laws are effective in addressing GBV.

FIDA reported securing over 10 GBV convictions in the past 12 months, with conviction rates described as "high" due to increased awareness of the law among stakeholders. However, only 22.8% of residents are aware of any GBV-related convictions, which may weaken public confidence in the justice system.

Most residents (60.6%) view customary and religious laws as ineffective in preventing or responding to GBV. While harmful traditional practices such as widowhood rites that restrict women's remarriage, silencing of victims, and community-based settlements that prioritize family reputation over justice, persist, their influence appears to be declining due to ongoing sensitization efforts. The Multi-Stakeholder Committee on Prevention of GBV, which includes traditional rulers and faith-based leaders, has played an active role in raising awareness.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of GBV-related laws in Rivers State fluctuated over the years. After a sharp drop in 2024 (46%), awareness rebounded in 2025 to 65.1%.

In 2024, only 13.3% reported knowing someone who had been convicted for GBV, indicating little visibility of justice outcomes. However, this figure increased to 22.8% in 2025, which may reflect reduced transparency, fewer prosecutions, or weak communication around legal outcomes. Strengthening public communication and ensuring consistent follow-through on cases will be key to maintaining confidence in the formal justice system.

There was also growing recognition of customary and religious laws in GBV prevention, with perceptions of their helpfulness rising from 16% in 2023 to 39.4% in 2025. The Ministry of Justice reported that traditional rulers are increasingly participating in GBV prevention efforts, with some establishing community-level committees to address cases and making referrals to formal justice systems. However, stakeholders emphasized that traditional systems remain biased and often fail to deliver justice commensurate with the severity of offenses.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Rivers State residents show strong willingness to use formal justice systems, with 82.8% saying they would seek help through official channels if they or someone they knew experienced GBV. This is supported by the relatively high number (57.5%) willing to serve as witnesses in GBV cases. Stakeholders confirmed that formal justice processes are functional and effective. The typical journey involves reporting to police or organizations like FIDA, followed by investigation, medical examination, case filing, and prosecution.

Family Support Units and Human Rights Desks now exist across all police divisions, according to both police officials and civil society actors. The state has designated GBV courts at two levels: two judges at the family high court level and two at the magistrate court level. Court officials confirmed that these specialized courts expedite GBV case processing.

FIDA and the Office of the Public Defender provide free legal aid services to indigent survivors, ensuring that financial constraints do not prevent access to justice. But awareness of these state-provided services stands at 54.1%, meaning nearly half of the population remains uninformed about available assistance. Stakeholders noted that only two LGAs – Port Harcourt and Obio-Akpor – have optimal access to legal aid services, while riverine and distant areas like Ahoada, Khana, and Omoku remain underserved.

Confidence in informal justice systems is low, with only 15.7% believing they can deliver justice for survivors. Multiple stakeholders described how traditional and religious systems often pressure victims to withdraw cases or accept out-of-court settlements, undermining formal justice. Sustaining public trust in formal systems will require ongoing investment in public education and improved access to legal support.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Over the years, most people continued to prefer formal justice systems, with 89% in 2023 and 82.8% in 2025 choosing this option. This shows that trust in formal institutions remained strong, even though there was a temporary drop in 2024. Similarly, the number of people who felt safe serving as

witnesses during GBV investigations stayed fairly stable – 60% in 2023 and 57.5% in 2025 – though concerns about protection still exist.

Awareness of legal support provided by the government improved over time. In 2024, only 38% of residents knew about these services, but by 2025, this increased to 54.1%. While this is a positive change, nearly half of the population still lacks awareness, showing that more public education is needed.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Most residents (70.6%) prefer formal support systems for GBV survivors over informal options such as help from family, friends, religious institutions, or community channels. Unfortunately, availability and access remain significant barriers. Rivers State has one operational government-run SARC in Port Harcourt. This facility is complemented by 23 GBV response facilities across all 23 LGAs, with trained response teams in each. However, awareness of these facilities is critically low: only 7.1% of residents report knowing about the existence of a SARC or shelter in the state. Officials also acknowledged that services are not equally available across the state due to funding constraints, with rural and riverine areas particularly underserved.

Multiple stakeholders confirmed the existence of a comprehensive referral pathway: medical facilities provide treatment and counseling, the Ministry of Justice handles legal issues, the Ministry of Social Welfare addresses social concerns, and the Ministry of Women Affairs offers skills acquisition and economic support. Awareness of these broader support services such as medical, legal, psychological, or economic assistance, is modest, with 48.8% of residents indicating familiarity.

While most residents (72.5%) are aware of the police reporting and referral pathway, fewer know about hospital-based options (41.1%). Awareness of other channels, such as support groups (11.9%) and legal pathways (17.3%), remains limited. Officials described the referral pathway as "not really encouraging," noting that fear, stigmatization, and community pressure to settle matters internally prevent many survivors from accessing formal support.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Perception of informal support systems such as family, religious centres, and community groups declined sharply. In 2023, most residents (74%) believed these systems were helpful to survivors, but by 2025, only 29.4% held that view. This change may reflect growing awareness of the limitations of informal support in addressing serious cases of GBV. It also highlights a stronger public preference for formal services, even though access to those services remains limited.

Between 2023 and 2025, awareness of shelters and SARCs remained low across the period: 13.8% in 2023 and 7.1% in 2025, suggesting that public knowledge of available support services is still far from adequate.

While knowledge of police reporting and referral pathways stayed relatively high, with a small drop from 94% in 2023 to 72.5% in 2025, awareness of other pathways such as healthcare and legal options was more unstable.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Public awareness of GBV information and education materials in Rivers State remains low, with only 31.7% of residents reporting exposure to such materials. Although various government ministries and NGOs conducted awareness campaigns through media and community channels, their reach appears limited. This may be due to the absence of standardized, government-led production and distribution of IEC materials. Stakeholders noted that political instability and emergency governance disrupted planned activities and reduced funding for GBV programs: "We didn't get government funding as much as we would have expected." "We are trying to do one or two things before the emergency came in. So, that has really disrupted a lot of things."

The state has made some progress in promoting GBV education through school-based sensitization. However, a formal GBV curriculum has not yet been introduced, despite strong public support: 91.6% of residents believe GBV and child sexual abuse education should be taught across all school levels.

Efforts have also been made to reach persons with disabilities using formats such as audio materials and picture-based messages. Still, the lack of dedicated sign language interpreters and limited access to other inclusive tools means these efforts are not yet consistent or widespread. Awareness of disability-inclusive materials remains low: 22.2% for sign interpretation, 16.3% for braille or printed content, and only 1.4% for screen subtitling.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of GBV education programs dropped significantly, from 57% in 2023 to 31.7% in 2025. This decline suggests that outreach efforts have been inconsistent and may not be reaching new or wider audiences. This trend could be linked to major funding cuts from external donors such as USAID and PEPFAR, which led many organizations to scale back their awareness activities.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Rivers State presents one of the most troubling GBV budget performances in 2024. Although ₦2.57 billion was allocated (0.32% of total budget), actual spending reached only ₦162.59 million—a dismal 6.3% execution rate that represents the lowest implementation performance among all states examined. This resulted in a per capita expenditure of merely ₦34.41, the lowest in the entire dataset, despite Rivers being a relatively wealthy, oil-producing state with substantial revenue. The stark gap between budget and execution suggests either severe administrative dysfunction or a fundamental lack of commitment to implementing GBV programs, leaving the state's residents with virtually no funded support systems for addressing gender-based violence.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Budget allocations for GBV-related programmes have consistently declined in Rivers State, falling from ₦3.63 billion in 2022 to ₦3.12 billion in 2023 and ₦2.57 billion in 2024. While the state has consistently included GBV-specific line items in its budgets, none of these allocations recorded any implementation over the three-year period. This persistent non-performance underscores systemic challenges in fund release and project execution. The state continues to struggle significantly with budget implementation. Recorded performance was 2% in 2022, 5% in 2023, and 6.3% in 2024. Per capita spending stood at ₦34.41 in 2024, ₦36.91 in 2023, and ₦18.64 in 2022. Although there was a slight rise between 2022 and 2023, the decline in 2024 reinforces a pattern of persistently low and inconsistent investment in GBV-related interventions. In the 2024 budgets, Rivers State has the lowest per capita spending nationally, followed closely by Anambra State.

Human Angle Stories

Ada (pseudonym) faced immense violence from her husband at the instructions of her mother-in-law. The abuse ranged from being pushed by her husband to induce labor according to her mother-in-law's wishes, which led to an episiotomy procedure that later developed into a fistula.

When she turned to the elders of her community in Rivers State, she was told that the man is the head of the home and should be obeyed. Six months after her first birth, her mother-in-law also began demanding that she get pregnant again. She ran away from the house and reached out to an NGO that offered her support, but all efforts to help her with her husband and newborn baby proved futile.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Only 22.8% of residents are aware of any GBV-related convictions, despite FIDA securing over 10 convictions in the past 12 months. This gap undermines public confidence in the justice system.	Establish a public communication strategy that regularly shares case outcomes through media channels, community meetings, and social media platforms to demonstrate accountability and build trust in the justice system.
	While declining, practices such as widowhood rites that prevent women from remarrying, community-based settlements with token and pressure on victims to forgive perpetrators continue to undermine formal justice in some communities.	Scale up targeted sensitization programs for traditional and religious leaders across all LGAs, emphasizing the legal consequences of GBV and the limitations of informal justice. Partner with progressive traditional rulers to champion reform within their communities.
Access to Legal Justice	Only two LGAs (Port Harcourt and Obio-Akpor) have optimal access to legal aid services, while riverine and distant areas like Ahoada, Khana, and Omoku remain underserved.	Establish legal aid desks in underserved LGAs. Deploy mobile legal aid clinics on a rotating schedule and provide transportation stipends to desk officers to enable outreach to remote communities.
	While 57.5% of residents are willing to serve as witnesses, stakeholders identified enforcement challenges including victims refusing to proceed to court due to fear and intimidation.	Develop and implement a comprehensive witness protection program that includes safe housing options, security escorts for court appearances, and legal protections against intimidation.
Support Services	The state has only one-government run SARC, complemented by GBV response facilities across all LGAs. Awareness of these facilities remains critically low (7.1%).	Expanding the number of SARCs, ensuring equitable coverage across LGAs. Conduct public campaigns involving media coverage, community announcements, and distribution of contact information through multiple channels including healthcare facilities, police stations, schools, religious institutions, and markets.
	Support services are not equally available across the state. Rural and riverine areas lack adequate resources, and facilities in areas like Okrika must refer cases to Port Harcourt, creating access barriers for survivors.	Establish mobile support units that can reach riverine and remote communities on a scheduled basis, while strengthening existing GBV response facilities in underserved LGAs.
Information and Awareness	Despite strong public support (91.6% of residents), a formal GBV curriculum has not been introduced in schools.	Pending the development of formal GBV curriculum, create and distribute state-level supplementary teaching guides and train teachers on integrating GBV topics into existing subjects.
	While efforts have been made to reach persons with disabilities using multiple formats, the lack of dedicated sign language interpreters limits consistent access.	Recruit or contract dedicated sign language interpreters for GBV awareness programs and ensure all public sensitization events are disability-friendly and accessible.
Budget and Spending	Rivers State allocated ₦2.57 billion for GBV in 2024 but spent only 6.3%, the lowest execution rate nationally, resulting in ₦34.41 per capita—also the lowest. Despite being an oil-producing state with substantial revenue, budget implementation remained under 7% for three consecutive years, with less than 1% spending on all GBV-specific line items since 2022.	Conduct immediate administrative review to identify and remove barriers preventing fund release. Implement mandatory quarterly disbursement schedules with oversight mechanisms to ensure at least 50% budget execution and operationalize stalled GBV-specific programs that have recorded zero implementation for three years.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | Invictus AFRICA



Sokoto State

Seat of the Caliphate

Palace of Sultan of Sokoto

Sokoto State

Population: 6,353,817

50.7% Female | Male 49.3%

Overall Grade 63.3%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,086)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

34.1% | 65.9%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

50.6% | 49.4%

AGE

<20 ■ 20-29 ■ 30-39 ■ 40-49 ■ 50-59 ■ 60-69 ■

3.4% | 37.3% | 35.1% | 15.4% | 5.3% | 3.5%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

15.9% | 84.1%

SARCs: 1

Shelters: 1

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦7.39bn
(This accounts for **1.6%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦1.94bn
(This accounts for **26.3%** of total allocation to the ministry)

26.3%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ (Actual Spend)

92.8% | 5.5% | 1.7%

Per Capita Spending

₦603.16

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	62.5%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	68.8%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	68.8%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	58.3%

GBV Context 2025

Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?

No ■ Yes ■

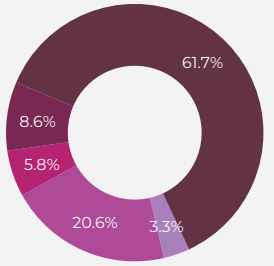
27.1% | 72.9%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

60.9% | 29.9% | 20.1% | 16.3% | 13.4%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

25.5% | 25.8% | 34.7% | 22.1% | 16.2% | 15.2%

Domestic ■ Physical ■ Sexual ■ Mental ■ Economic ■ Cultural practices ■

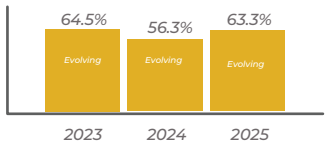
Where did you or the person first seek help?

38.9% | 23.5% | 7.8% | 19.1% | 4.4% | 2.8% | 3.0% | 0.5%

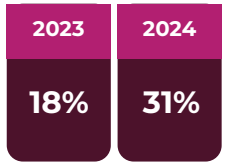
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

Trust ■ Services ■ Proximity or accessibility ■ Perception that they could help ■ Financial constraint ■

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



25%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	−1 ▼ LP 50.0%	LP 58.3%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 86.3%	−1 ▼ ALJ 56.3	ALJ 62.5%
Support Services	SS 75.0%	−1 ▼ SS 62.5%	SS 68.3%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3%	IA 62.5%	IA 68.3%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 50.0%	BS 58.3%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- The state secured three confirmed convictions from 14 cases filed in 2025, an increase from previous years when convictions were rare.
- Seventeen High Court judges and fifteen magistrates received specialized training on GBV and survivor-sensitive approaches in the past year.
- Public willingness to serve as witnesses in GBV cases rose from 68.2% in 2023 to 71% in 2025.

Areas of Concern

- Awareness of formal GBV laws dropped from 84.9% in 2023 to 58.9% in 2025, despite active campaigns.
- Awareness of state-provided legal aid services fell from 76% in 2024 to 59.5% in 2025.
- Public exposure to GBV awareness programs declined from 75.4% in 2023 to 60.1% in 2025.
- Only one SARC serves the entire state, with the state-owned shelter non-functional and planned expansion not implemented despite budget allocations.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Established legal provisions recognizing community and religious leaders as enforcement stakeholders.
- Sokoto State enforced education laws requiring girls to complete junior secondary school, helping to delay early marriage and reduce GBV linked to cultural practices.

Access to Legal Justice

- Established surveillance teams at ward level across 19 LGAs to monitor, report GBV cases and make referrals to the state as needed.
  Appointed a GBV Desk Officer in the Ministry of Justice to manage cases in collaboration with police family units and the CID's Family Unit.

Support Services

- Renovated and equipped the Nana Khadija SARC with partner support.
- Assigned ward-level GBV representatives with shared contact lines, supported by a survivor services directory and a hotline managed by the Ministry of Women Affairs.
- Established 244 GBV focal persons at primary health centers across the state, trained on case identification and first-line support.

Information and Awareness

- Leveraged AGILE project in over 100 schools to implement GBV sensitization providing life skills training to girls on GBV, sexual health, and reporting.
- Provided annual budget support to NGOs and CSOs for GBV programming through Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare.

Change Spotlight

Sokoto State has established a comprehensive surveillance and response system that operates across three levels: ward, local government, and state. This structure creates a direct link between communities and formal justice institutions. At the ward level, trained representatives receive and assess GBV cases, providing immediate support and determining next steps. Cases requiring medical attention are referred to the SARC for investigation and evidence collection. Simultaneously, survivors receive social support and counselling. The local government surveillance team monitors case progression, while the state response team, comprising the Ministry of Justice, Police, NAPTIP, Civil Defence, FIDA, health officials, and traditional leaders, coordinates final action. All stakeholders meet quarterly to track progress and address challenges.

This system has improved case reporting and follow-through. The Ministry of Justice reports that the reporting and prosecution process now operates at approximately 90% effectiveness. Civil society representatives confirm that the collaborative structure enables coordinated responses, with different actors speaking "in one voice" to support survivors from initial report through conviction. Traditional and religious leaders, once settling cases informally, now actively refer serious offenses to formal authorities after receiving training on their role within the system, demonstrating how formal and informal systems can work together effectively.

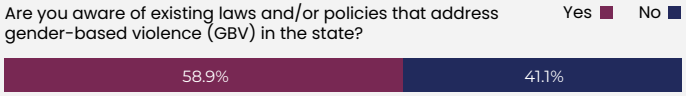
Sokoto State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 63.3%

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?

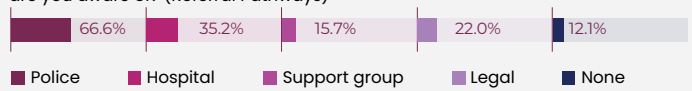
Yes ■ No ■



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)



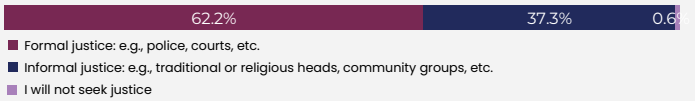
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

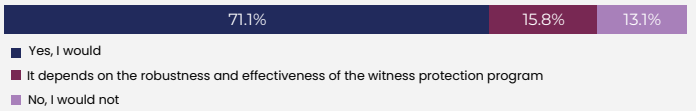


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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?

Yes ■ No ■



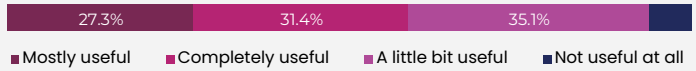
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?

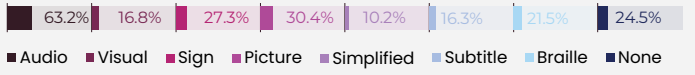
Yes ■ No ■



How useful is/was the content of the GBV awareness material in educating you on GBV?



Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Sokoto State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 63.3%

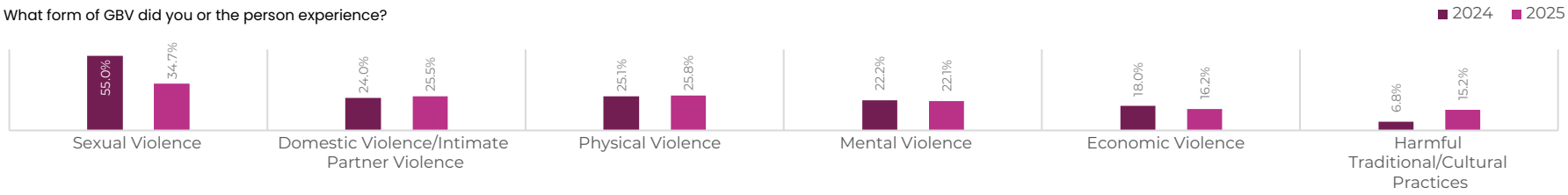
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



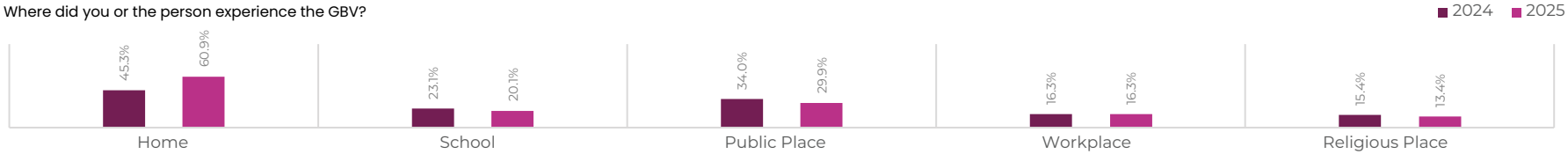
72.9%

of Sokoto State population have either experienced GBV or knows someone who have experienced GBV

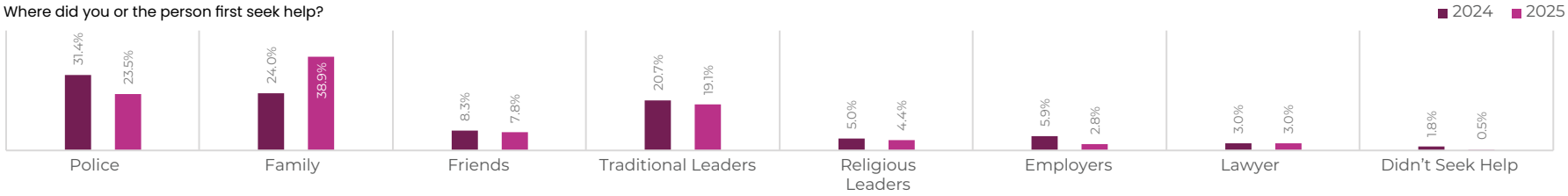
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



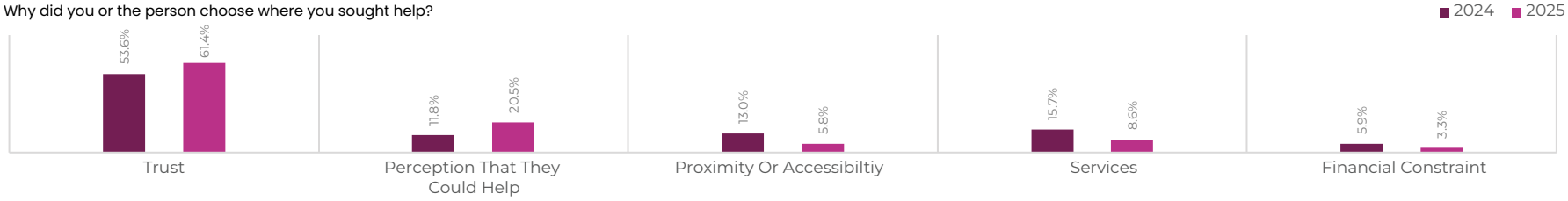
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?

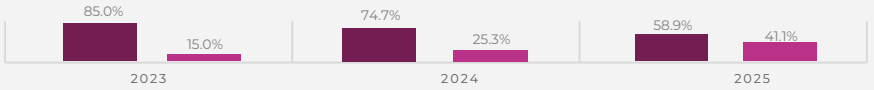


Sokoto State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

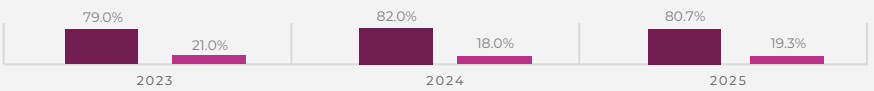
Overall Grade 63.3%

LAWS AND POLICIES

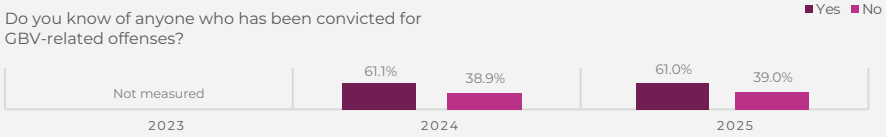
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



Do you think customary or religious laws and/or practices are sufficient in preventing and responding to GBV in the state?

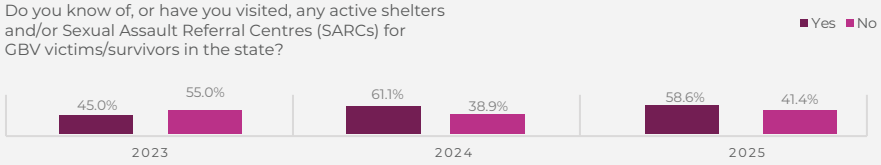


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

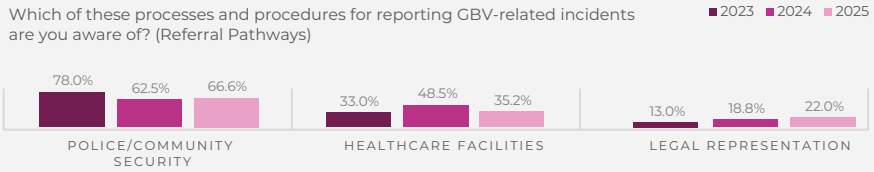


SUPPORT SERVICES

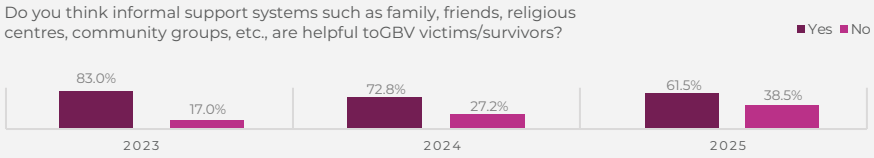
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



Which of these processes and procedures for reporting GBV-related incidents are you aware of? (Referral Pathways)

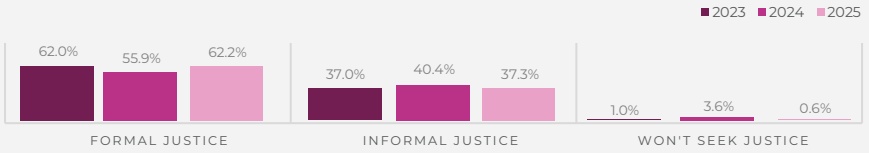


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

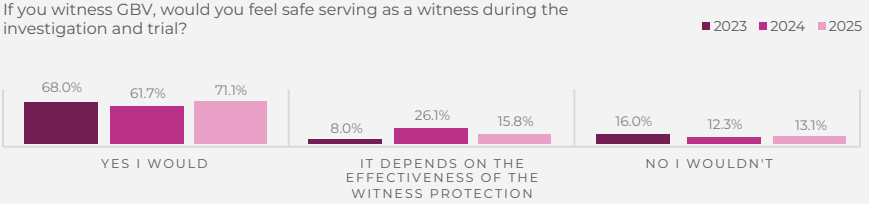


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

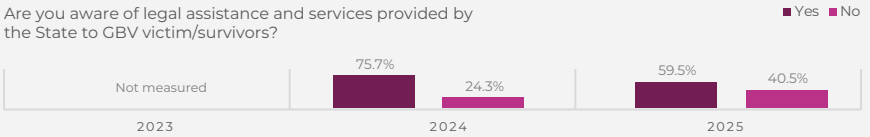
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



If you witness GBV, would you feel safe serving as a witness during the investigation and trial?

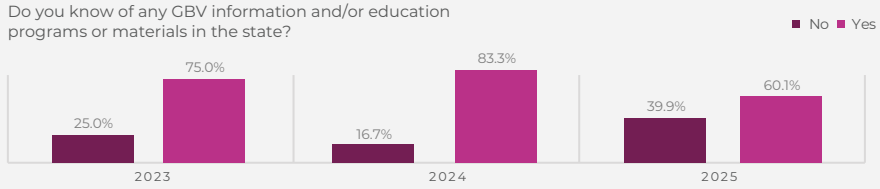


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

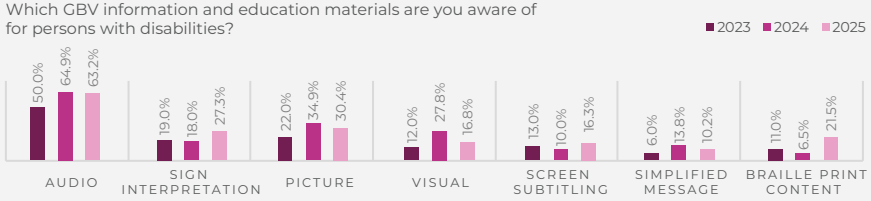


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?

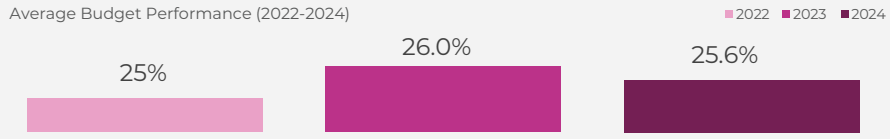


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

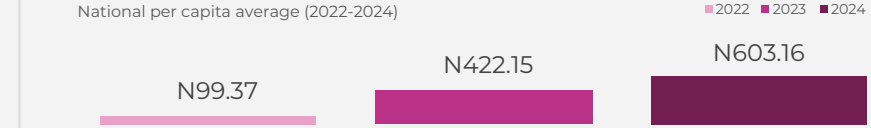


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

The Sokoto State VAPP Law serves as the main legal framework for addressing GBV in the state. It is a localized version of the federal act, adapted to reflect cultural and religious values. Although the law covers major GBV concerns and recognizes community and religious leaders as key stakeholders in enforcement, it excludes certain provisions, such as those related to marital rape. The law also intentionally avoided clearly defining the age bracket of a minor, as confirmed by civil society representatives.

In the past year, Sokoto State recorded three GBV-related convictions under the VAPP Law, which the Ministry of Justice considers an improvement over previous years. A key factor behind this progress is the training of judges on relevant legal provisions. As noted by the Ministry, "with interventions such as training judges on the laws and their provisions regarding punishment, the rate of convictions has improved." Public awareness of these convictions is also relatively high, with 61% of residents reporting they know someone who was convicted for GBV. This visibility reflects growing legal accountability, though further efforts are needed to strengthen the justice system.

Customary laws continue to play a vital role in community-level responses. A slightly higher proportion of residents (80.7%) expressed confidence in their effectiveness in preventing and addressing GBV, and 80.7% were familiar with specific customary practices that support GBV prevention. However, some customary practices persist, though, not widespread. Civil society representatives confirmed that early marriage has been "drastically reduced" through education policies requiring completion of Junior Secondary School (JSS), and traditional barbers practicing female genital mutilation "have been trained and enlightened on the risks attached to it."

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of formal GBV laws and policies declined steadily between 2023 and 2025, dropping from 84.9% to 75% in 2024 and 58.9% in 2025. Awareness of GBV-related convictions also dropped, falling from 61.1% in 2024 to 61% in 2025, even though stakeholders reported an increase in actual convictions. In contrast, confidence in customary and religious laws rose slightly over the same period. After dipping from 78.57% in 2023 to 61% in 2024, public trust rebounded to 80.7% in 2025.

These shifts suggest a growing information gap that may weaken the impact of formal legal protection. At the same time, informal systems remain widely trusted and may be filling the void left by declining public engagement with formal structures. Expanding access to information about prosecutions and convictions could strengthen deterrence and rebuild trust in formal justice mechanisms.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

GBV cases in Sokoto State are handled by a network of actors including community surveillance teams, the Ministry of Justice, police Family Units, and the State CID. These are supported by NGOs, FIDA, and traditional and religious leaders, creating a multi-layered response system. Stakeholders assessed the system as "very effective." This structure has contributed to improved case reporting, especially in areas where residents are more aware of formal legal frameworks. A majority of residents (62.2%) said they would seek justice through formal mechanisms such as the police or courts.

Engagement in justice processes is also growing. Over 71% of respondents said they are willing to serve as witnesses in GBV investigations or trials, while another 15.8% expressed conditional willingness if protection mechanisms are provided. This reflects a positive shift in public confidence, though concerns around safety and adequate support still remain.

State-supported legal assistance is available through pro bono lawyers, the Ministry of Justice, NAPTIP, and Legal Aid. Awareness of these services stands at 59.5%, showing moderate public knowledge. Stakeholders noted that while legal assistance is available, coverage is limited to Sokoto city metropolis, leaving remote areas such as Gada, Isa, Sabon Birni, and Kebbe, underserved due to insecurity and scarce resources.

Though there are no dedicated GBV courts, trained prosecutors and judges now handle such cases, supported by ongoing training for justice actors and community leaders. Family Support Units (FSUs) are present at both divisional and state levels in Sokoto, with the Ministry of Justice reporting active operations across all police stations. Traditional and religious leaders increasingly refer cases to formal institutions, although informal settlements still take place.

Alongside growing use of formal justice systems, there remains a strong reliance on informal mechanisms. A significant 80.6% of residents believe that traditional and religious systems play a helpful role in securing justice for survivors. This trust seems to stem from their accessibility,

cultural relevance, and perceived fairness, especially in areas where formal institutions are less present. Some stakeholders report that Informal justice systems, while widely used, can hinder accountability. When cases are resolved privately without court oversight, there is no formal record or legal consequence for perpetrators. This undermines the justice process and allows offenders to avoid prosecution, weakening the overall response to GBV.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public preference for formal justice mechanisms in GBV cases remained steady over the three-year period, with 61.9% in 2023, 56% in 2024, and 62% in 2025 indicating they would seek redress through the police or courts. At the same time, willingness to serve as a witness in GBV cases dropped from68.2% in 2023 to 62% in 2024 and rise to 71% in 2025. Together, these trends suggest a stable commitment to formal justice and a growing public confidence in the system's ability to protect and support those who come forward. This drop highlights a communication gap and underscores the need for more consistent outreach. If the state hopes to maintain or increase public engagement with formal justice channels, it must ensure that legal support services are visible, accessible, and well understood.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Sokoto has one main SARC: the Nana Khadija Centre at Specialist Hospital, managed by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs with support from partners. It provides medical, legal, and social services to survivors. Additional shelters are operated by NAPTIP and NGOs, but state-owned shelters remain non-functional, and planned new centers have yet to be established. Public awareness of survivor support structures is relatively high (58.6%), and awareness of broader services, including medical, psychological, and economic support, is slightly higher (61.1%). With only one SARC in the entire state, survivors, especially from remote areas, face delays and financial challenges in accessing care, often resulting in loss of critical evidence and reduced chances of justice.

These services are supported by a referral system that includes ward representatives, a state hotline, and directories managed by the Ministry of Women Affairs. Awareness of GBV reporting pathways is highest for police and community security channels (66.6%), followed by healthcare facilities (35.2%). However, awareness of support groups (15.7%) and legal representation pathways (22%) remains low.

Traditional and religious leaders play a central role in GBV response. They help raise awareness, support survivors, and refer cases to formal services. These leaders work within community surveillance and state response teams, which include civil society groups, youth and women's organizations, and government agencies such as the police, NAPTIP, and FIDA. Quarterly meetings help track progress, and strong collaboration has made the system effective in prevention, monitoring, and case referral.

Despite these formal mechanisms, many residents (61.5%) still rely more on informal support networks, such as family, friends, religious centers, and community groups. This preference reflects gaps in formal services, including limited availability, poor access in remote areas, and insufficient staffing. Strengthening formal services, especially by expanding coverage, improving staffing, and increasing visibility, will be essential to shift public trust and usage toward institutional support.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of shelters and SARCs improved slightly between 2023 and 2025, rising from 45% in 2023 to 61% in 2024 and 58.6% in 2025. Despite this modest gain, over 40% of the population still lacks knowledge of these services. Without broader awareness, many survivors may not know where to seek specialized care and support. At the same time, public trust in informal support systems, such as family, friends, and religious groups, declined. In 2023, 83.3% of residents considered these systems helpful, this increased to 73% in 2024 but fell to 61.5% by 2025. Although many residents still prefer informal support, the decline may reflect growing recognition of its limitations, especially in addressing serious or complex GBV cases that require formal intervention.

Awareness of referral pathways for reporting GBV incidents shifted over the period. Police-based reporting remained the most recognized, although it dropped from 77.8% in 2023 to 62.5% in 2023, and 66.6% in 2025. Legal referral awareness, while consistently low, showed gradual improvement, rising from 12.7% in 2023 to 18.8% in 2024 and 22% in 2025. These trends suggest fluctuating public understanding and emphasize the need for ongoing education on all available reporting options.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

In Sokoto State, GBV awareness is promoted through a range of community-led and institutional efforts. Religious and traditional leaders, women's groups, and community structures use pamphlets, rallies, events, and radio programs to spread key messages. The Ministry of Education carry out awareness in schools and tertiary institutions through lectures, symposiums, videos, and IEC materials, focusing largely on girls but reaching broader student populations.

A majority of residents (60.1%) reported exposure to GBV information and awareness programs, with more than half of those finding the content useful. Radio (47%) and NGOs/CSOs (28%) were the most common sources of information, followed by social media (27.4%), television (25.3%), and traditional leaders (17.9%). In contrast, schools (7.2%) and workplaces (5.5%) were the least cited, highlighting missed opportunities within formal institutions.

Although public support for GBV and child sexual abuse education in schools is high (77.6%), it is not yet part of the formal curriculum. Projects like AGILE have filled some of this gap, equipping thousands of girls with life skills related to GBV, sexual health, and reporting. Initial resistance has eased with sustained sensitization, and NGO and government programs have expanded coverage across most LGAs, boosting community support for prevention efforts.

While some inclusive formats like sign language and audio are being used in GBV awareness efforts, accessibility for persons with disabilities remains inconsistent and limited in scope. Audio content had the highest reach (63.2%). However, awareness of more inclusive formats such as simplified messages (10.2%), screen subtitling (16.3%), and visual aids (16.8%) was much lower. Stakeholders noted the need for broader use of diverse formats, such as simplified messages, Hausa translations, subtitles, and greater participation of persons with disabilities, to ensure that awareness programs

truly serve people with diverse disability needs.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, public awareness of gender-based violence (GBV) information and education programs in the state increased from 75.4% to 83%, then declined 60.1%. Although the majority of respondents were still aware, the drop suggests that a significant portion of the population remains uninformed. This decline raises concerns about the consistency and reach of awareness efforts, possibly linked to reduced campaign intensity or changes in program funding.

There was gradual progress in making GBV messaging more inclusive, especially through disability-friendly formats. Audio content had the widest reach across all three years, with 63.2% of respondents aware in 2025. However, awareness of other formats, such as screen subtitling, simplified messages, and picture-based content, remained low.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Sokoto State allocated ₦7.59 billion to GBV programs in 2024, representing 1.68% of its total state budget. Of the allocated amount, only ₦1.94 billion was actually spent, achieving a 26% implementation rate. This means nearly three-quarters of the budgeted resources remained unutilized by the end of the fiscal year. The actual GBV expenditure constituted 0.78% of the state's total spending, slightly lower than the budget allocation share. On a per capita basis, Sokoto State spent approximately ₦603.16 per woman on GBV-related programs.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Sokoto State has shown minimal growth in budget execution over the review period. In 2022, the state recorded a performance rate of 25%, which increased slightly to 26% in 2023 and then to 25.6% in 2024. Although the fluctuations were not drastic, the state's performance has remained low throughout the assessment period. Sokoto State also recorded several recurring GBV-specific line items over the review period. Notable among them was the "Procurement of Internet-Based Platforms for VVF and GBV Case Management at MAWCH and GBV Situation Room," with allocations of ₦40 million, ₦50 million, and ₦60 million in 2022, 2023, and 2024 respectively. Despite these repeated allocations, no implementation was recorded in any of the years. Additionally, the "Construction of One Central Shelter and Three Transit Shelters Across the State" was introduced in 2024 with an allocation of ₦100 million, yet no expenditure was documented. Per capita spending stood at ₦603.16 in 2024, ₦422.15 in 2023, and ₦99.37 in 2022. The marked year-on-year increases reflect a significant expansion in GBV-related investment, although the steep jumps also indicate uneven and rapidly shifting prioritization across the three-year period.

Human Angle Stories

Displaced by persistent insecurity in her community, 14-year-old Bashariyya sought shelter at an internally displaced persons (IDP) camp in Sokoto, where she later met a woman who promised her schooling and fair wages for domestic work in Abuja.

Instead, Bashariyya was subjected to degrading treatment, including starvation, physical assault, confinement in a dark room, and harmful ritual practices that left multiple burns and scars on her body. When her situation came to light, officials from the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons intervened to secure her safety and provide immediate care.

Her experience provides a critical learning moment for policymakers, response agencies, and traditional institutions to reinforce prevention systems, enhance cross-state coordination, and build stronger safeguards for vulnerable children.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	The Sokoto State VAPP Law retains most federal provisions but excludes marital rape and does not clearly define the age of a minor. Public awareness of formal GBV laws dropped from 84.9% to 75% in 2024 and 58.9% in 2025.	Review and update the VAPP law to include clearer definitions and omitted provisions like marital rape, in line with national standards, and intensify targeted public sensitization to improve legal awareness.
	Despite progress through education and training, traditional beliefs still hinder reporting. Families often avoid reporting rape due to stigma concerns and fear that victims will be unmarriageable.	Intensify community engagement programs with traditional and religious leaders to address stigma and cultural barriers to reporting. Document and disseminate success stories where formal justice led to positive outcomes.
Access to Legal Justice	Legal aid services are available through multiple channels but remain concentrated in urban areas, with remote communities underserved due to insecurity and limited resources. Public awareness of legal aid services declined from 76% in 2024 to 59.5% in 2025.	Expand Legal Aid Council offices to establish at least three additional satellite offices in underserved zones with dedicated staff and resources. Publish contact numbers and service locations across radio and posters, in all 23 LGAs.
	The state has no specialized GBV courts, and no judges have been officially designated to handle GBV cases.	Appoint 2 – 3 designated judges across the state within the next 12 months to prioritize GBV cases and ensure balanced distribution of caseloads.
Support Services	Sokoto has only one functional SARC (Nana Khadija Centre) serving the entire state, while the state shelter remains non-functional. Survivors from remote LGAs face access barriers such as transportation costs.	Establish at least two additional SARCs in underserved zones within the next 12 months, Rehabilitate and operationalize the state-owned shelter with trained staff and operational budgets for survivor intake and support.
	Public confidence in informal support systems dropped from 83.3% in 2023 to 73% in 2024, then 61.5% in 2025, possibly reflecting growing recognition of their limitations. However, 61.5% of residents still rely primarily on informal networks due to gaps in formal services.	Expand and intensify training of religious and traditional leaders to recognize the limits of informal mediation and encourage timely referrals to formal mechanisms. Use radio and community forums to promote awareness of available formal services.
Information and Awareness	Public exposure to GBV information programs increased from 75.4% to 83%, then declined 60.1%.	Pending the development of formal GBV curriculum, create and distribute state-level supplementary teaching guides and train teachers on integrating GBV topics into existing subjects.
	This could be partially attributed to the lack of comprehensive government-led awareness campaigns and absence of monitoring from the state leadership.	Establish an annual calendar of GBV awareness activities led by the Governor's office and Ministry of Women Affairs, with clear targets for LGA coverage, audience reach, and message penetration.
Budget and Spending	Sokoto State consistently fails to implement budgeted GBV programs, with a persistent 74% non-utilization rate over three years. Critical initiatives like the internet-based case management platform (allocated ₦150 million cumulatively across 2022-2024) and shelter construction (₦100 million in 2024) recorded zero implementation despite repeated budget allocations.	Establish a quarterly GBV budget tracking and accountability mechanism involving the Ministry of Women Affairs, Budget Office, and civil society organizations to identify implementation bottlenecks early and enforce expenditure of allocated funds. Prioritize completion of the shelter infrastructure and case management platform as immediate proof-of-concept projects to demonstrate commitment to GBV response.



Taraba State

Nature's Gift to the Nation

Mambilla Plateau

Taraba State

Population: 3,867,645

49.9% Female | Male 50.1%

Overall Grade 56.7%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,083)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

52.4% | 47.6%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

80.3% | 19.7%

AGE

<20 ■ 20-29 ■ 30-39 ■ 40-49 ■ 50-59 ■ 60-69 ■

5.8% | 36.7% | 33.6% | 13.4% | 7.5% | 3.1%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

9.3% | 90.7%

SARCs: 1

Shelters: 0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦5.75bn
(This accounts for **0.8%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦1.98bn
(This accounts for **34.5%** of total allocation to the ministry)

34.5%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ (Actual Spend)

92.6% | 5.7% | 1.7%

Per Capita Spending

₦1,028.01

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	50.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	50.0%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	50.0%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	50.0%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	83.3%

GBV Context 2025

Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?

No ■ Yes ■

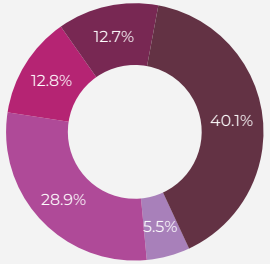
34.0% | 66.0%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

76.1% | 49.1% | 37.8% | 23.2% | 13.5%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

59.9% | 55.9% | 46.8% | 45.7% | 37.0% | 10.7%

Domestic ■ Physical ■ Sexual ■ Mental ■ Economic ■ Cultural practices ■

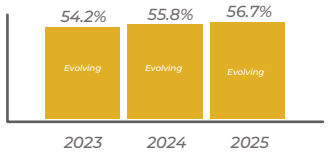
Where did you or the person first seek help?

21.1% | 38.3% | 6.7% | 10.7% | 17.5% | 2.9% | 1.7% | 1.1%

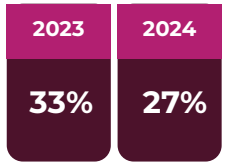
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

Trust ■ Services ■ Proximity or accessibility ■ Perception that they could help ■ Financial constraint ■

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



30%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 75.0%	−1 ▼ LP 50.0%	LP 50.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 61.3%	ALJ 62.5%	ALJ 50.0%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	SS 50.0%	SS 50.0%
Information and Awareness	IA 25.0%	+1 ▲ IA 50.0%	IA 50.0%
Budget and Spending	BS 48.3%	+1 ▲ BS 66.7%	BS 88.3%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Domestication of the Violence Against Persons and Discrimination Prohibition Law (2021), expanding the federal VAPP Act by adding anti-discrimination provisions.
- Creation of a Multi-Sectoral GBV Task Force connecting 40+ agencies, improving case reporting and inter-agency coordination.
- Introduction of Family Courts and Gender Desk Officers in major police commands, enhancing access to survivor-sensitive justice.
- Establishment of GBV clubs in 15 schools and peer-led vanguard groups under NAP TIP, integrating GBV education into school culture.

Areas of Concern

- No centralized GBV case-tracking system exists, and agencies could not provide conviction data, limiting accountability.
- Over 56% of residents are unaware of GBV laws, and conviction visibility remains low despite few prosecutions.
- Only one partially functional SARC operates in Jalingo, leaving most of the state without survivor support or shelters.
- Many residents (reported as 726%) believe customary or religious mechanisms resolve GBV cases, leading to informal settlements instead of justice.
- Awareness and sensitization efforts are largely donor-driven, raising sustainability concerns once external funding ends.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- The Taraba State Judiciary designated one of the High Courts as a Family Court in early 2024, specifically charged with hearing family-related cases and prosecuting offenders under the VAPP law.
- In collaboration with the government, the Comfort Human Rights Foundation developed a simplified version of the VAPP law and actively raised awareness through workshops and community meetings throughout 2024.

Access to Legal Justice

Multiple security agencies, including Police, Civil Defence, and Immigration, received training on GBV case management and were assigned gender desk officers at headquarters and area command levels.

Support Services

- Taraba State initiated construction of a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Jalingo, but the facility remains non-operational as of the assessment period.
- The Ministry of Women Affairs established and operationalized a comprehensive referral pathway system involving police, civil society organizations, health facilities, and the Ministry of Justice. Contact numbers of key officials were circulated across LGAs, enabling direct reporting from remote areas like Kurmi and Sardauna to the state capital, with cases handled within 24-48 hours of reporting.

Information and Awareness

- The Ministry of Women Affairs, with support from development partners, organized annual 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence campaigns. Activities included production and dissemination of IEC materials (stickers, banners, T-shirts, caps), town hall meetings, road walks, and consultations, though these efforts were concentrated in Jalingo and select urban areas.

Change Spotlight

Taraba State's most impactful achievement in the GBV response landscape was the establishment and operationalization of the State Multi-Sectoral GBV Task Force, led by the Ministry of Women Affairs in collaboration with NAPTIP, security agencies, CSOs, and community-based actors. This structure coordinates more than forty agencies including police, civil defence, judiciary, and healthcare institutions, ensuring that reported GBV cases are referred within 24 hours to the relevant authorities. Through this mechanism, GBV case handling has become more systematic, with improved referral follow-up, faster communication, and more consistent survivor support. The Civil Defence GBV desk and the Public Defenders Office also report closer cooperation with FIDA and NAPTIP under the Task Force framework, enhancing response efficiency and survivor safety.

Taraba State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 56.7%

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 ■



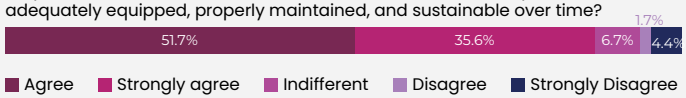
SUPPORT SERVICES

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)



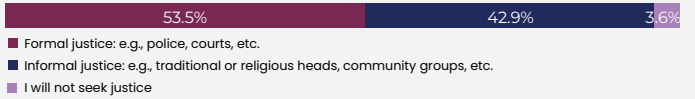
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

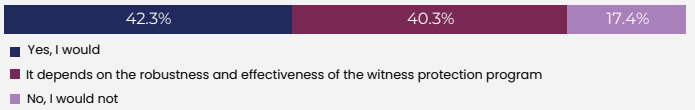


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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?

Yes ■ No ■



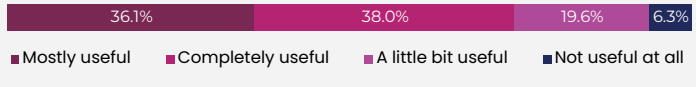
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?

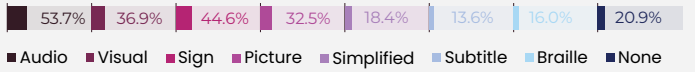
Yes ■ No ■



How useful is/was the content of the GBV awareness material in educating you on GBV?



Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Taraba State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 56.7%

Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



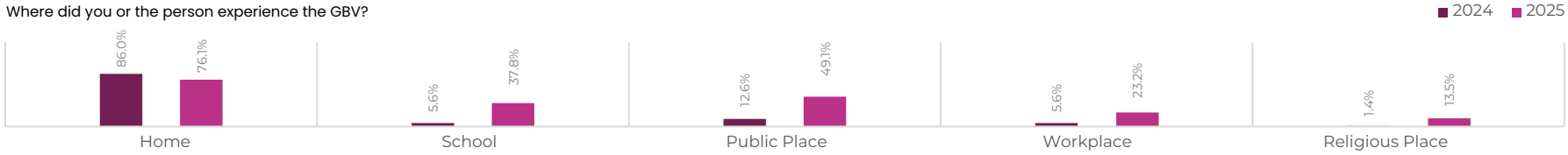
59.2%

of Taraba State population have either experienced GBV or knows someone who have experienced GBV

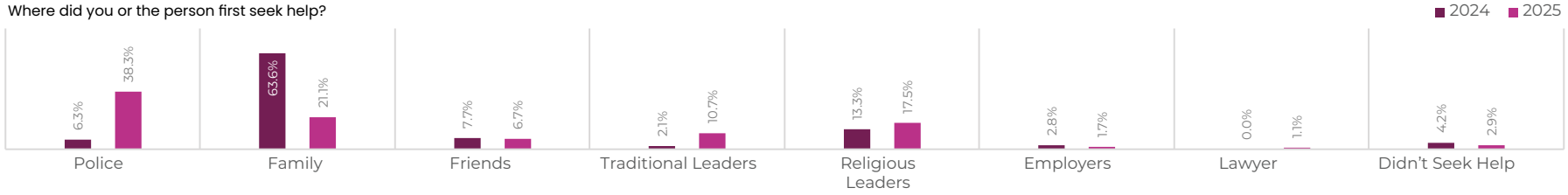
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



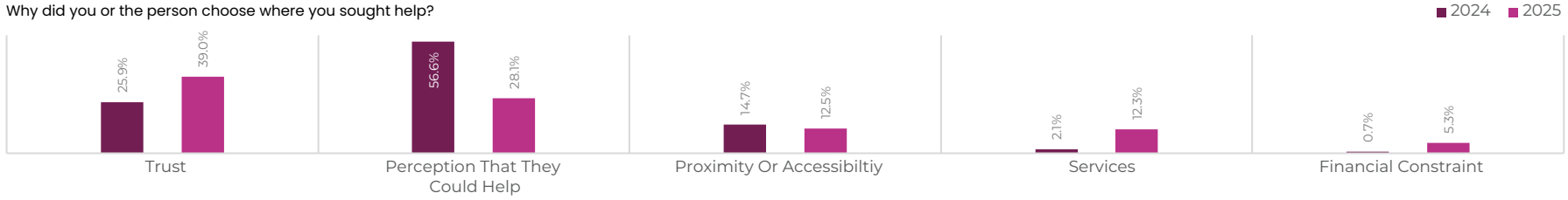
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?

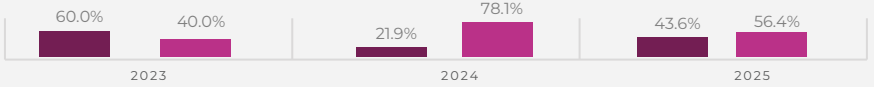


Taraba State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

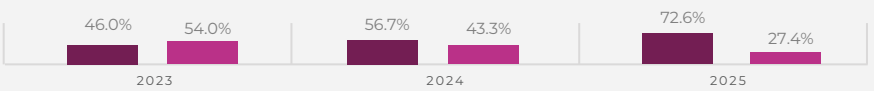
Overall Grade 56.7%

LAWS AND POLICIES

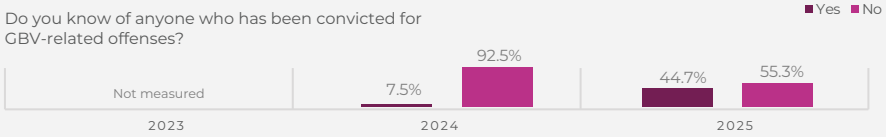
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



Do you think customary or religious laws and/or practices are sufficient in preventing and responding to GBV in the state?

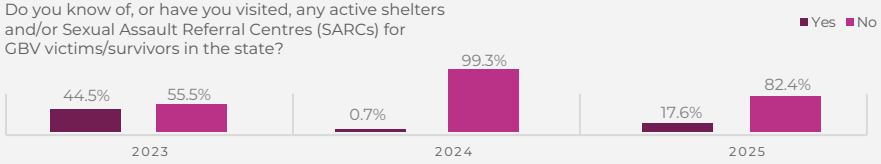


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

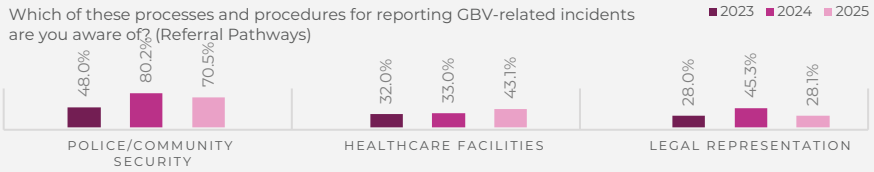


SUPPORT SERVICES

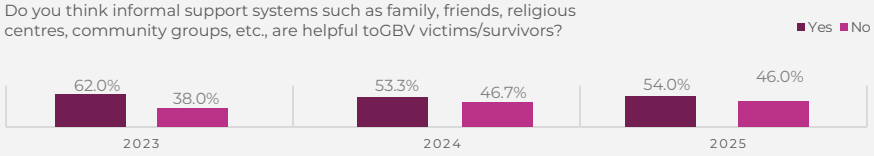
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



Which of these processes and procedures for reporting GBV-related incidents are you aware of? (Referral Pathways)

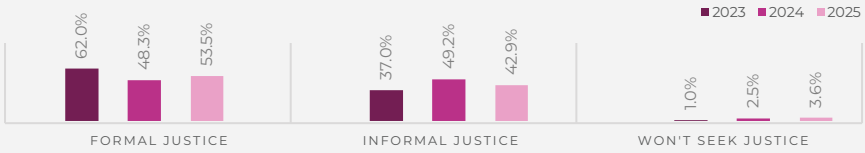


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

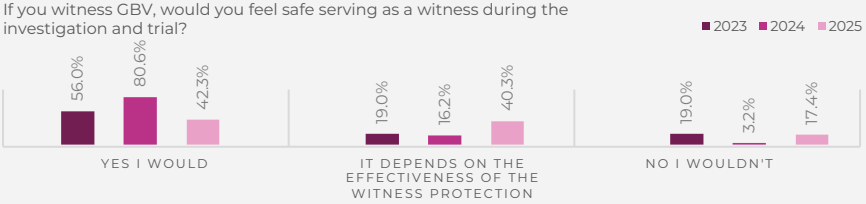


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

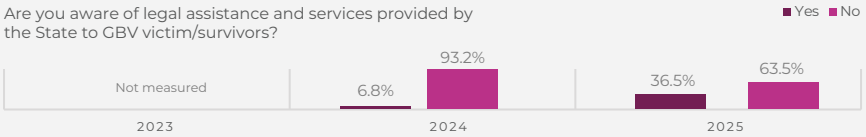
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



If you witness GBV, would you feel safe serving as a witness during the investigation and trial?

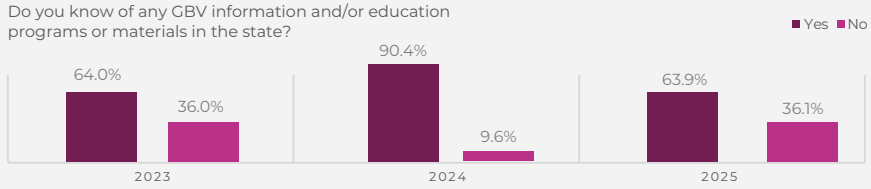


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

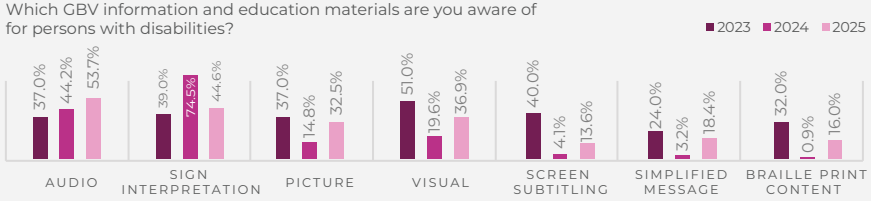


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?

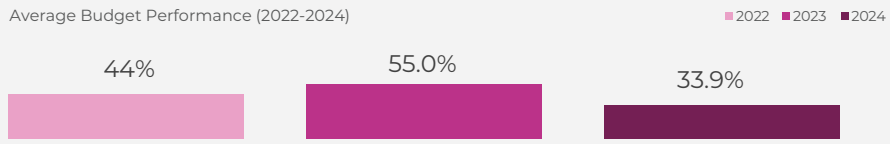


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

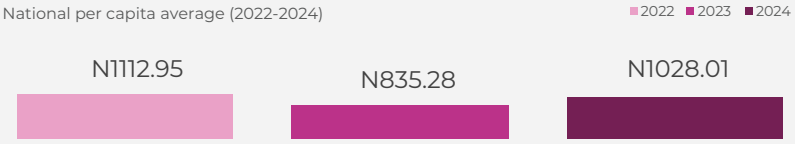


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Taraba State has made notable strides in establishing a robust legal framework to tackle GBV. In 2021, the state domesticated the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, enacting the Violence Against Persons and Discrimination Prohibition Law. This law surpasses the federal legislation by incorporating provisions against discrimination, showcasing Taraba's commitment to addressing violence and inequality within its justice system. Despite this legislative progress, awareness and enforcement remain limited, as 56.4% of respondents are unaware of existing GBV laws and policies, while only 43.6% demonstrate awareness, with television (40.6%), social media (40.8%), and radio (33.2%) serving as the main information sources.

Encouragingly, 54.3% believe these laws are effective, although weak implementation and visibility of convictions undermine this confidence. According to the Ministry of Women Affairs, in the past five to twelve months they have recorded about five to six perpetrators taken to court in conjunction with FIDA. However, this progress remains minimal as officials acknowledged that they are unaware of any convictions secured to date, coupled with lack of data on convictions. These underscore the absence of a coordinated system for tracking convictions and limited follow-through on prosecutions.

Customary and religious norms remain highly influential in shaping responses to GBV. The survey indicates that 66.2% of respondents are aware of customary or religious laws, and 72.6% believe they help prevent or respond to GBV. Yet, justice actors emphasize that these systems often obstruct formal prosecution. Religious and traditional practices, coupled with societal pressures to preserve marriages, impede GBV prosecution in Taraba State, with influential perpetrators often escaping accountability through compensation and blame-shifting onto victims, particularly women.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV laws fluctuated significantly: declining from 60% in 2023 to 22% in 2024, then increasing to 43.6% in 2025, suggesting inconsistent awareness campaigns rather than sustained progress. The belief that formal laws are effective dropped from 85% in 2023 to 57% in 2024, stabilizing at 54.3% in 2025. Trust in customary and religious systems decreased from 46% agreeing they're sufficient in 2023 to 56.5% believing they help in 2024, then rose to 72.6% in 2025, indicating persistent reliance on informal systems. Conviction awareness dropped throughout the assessment period from 57% in 2024 to 44.7% in 2025.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Awareness of legal aid services in Taraba State remains critically low, with only 36.5% of respondents aware of available legal assistance. According to officials, there is still no well-structured or widely accessible legal aid system for survivors, as the majority do not receive legal advice at the onset of their cases. Although free legal representation exists through the Ministry of Justice's Public Defenders Office, coverage is geographically limited. The Ministry's Alternative Dispute Resolution Department reported that legal aid is available only in Jalingo, Takum, Wukari, and Gembu (Sardauna LGA), representing just 4 out of 16 LGAs in the state.

When seeking justice, 53.5% of respondents indicated a preference for formal channels, while 42.9% still turn to informal systems involving traditional or religious leaders, and 3.6% said they would not seek justice at all. Those avoiding formal mechanisms cited corruption, fear of retaliation, financial hardship, and societal shame as key deterrents. The formal justice process has, however, become more structured and responsive through the establishment of a multi-sectoral task force. NAPTIP described this coordination system as involving more than forty agencies, including security forces, CSOs, and state and non-state actors. When cases are reported, they are referred within 24 hours to the appropriate divisional head or local authority. Taraba State has made progress in establishing specialized infrastructure for GBV response, including designating a High Court as a Family Court and stationing GBV desk officers at police headquarters and area commands. The state has also created dedicated spaces for handling sensitive cases confidentially and provided ongoing capacity building initiatives for officers, with 2-3 GBV training annually, covering topics such as VAPP Act and child protection.

Confidence in witness protection remains limited. Only 42.3% of respondents said they would feel safe serving as witnesses, while 40.3% stated their willingness depends on the robustness of protection programs, and 17.4% would not feel safe testifying at all. Stakeholders confirmed that witness safety remains a weak point, with limited resources for follow-up, relocation, or financial assistance for witnesses during court proceedings.

About 69.1% of respondents trust informal justice systems, believing they help survivors achieve justice, but multiple sources warn that these systems often hinder formal justice. Community leaders may settle serious offences like rape with monetary compensation rather than prosecution, and traditional mediators often prioritize peace over justice, silencing victims. Cultural pressure and community norms also drive families to prefer private settlements, discouraging public exposure to

GBV cases.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Preference for formal justice systems declined substantially from 62% in 2023 to 48.3% in 2024, then rose to 53.5% in 2025. Those who would not seek justice increased from 1.0% in 2023 to just 3% in 2024, and the 3.6% in 2025. Willingness to serve as witnesses improved considerably from 56% in 2023 to 81% in 2024, though this dropped to 42.3% in 2025 – a concerning sharp reversal. Awareness of legal assistance remained improved significantly from 7% in 2024 to 36.5% in 2025.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Taraba State's SARC infrastructure is limited, with only one functional SARC in Jalingo and plans for others in different zones still pending completion. The Ministry of Women Affairs noted that maintenance and continuity have been a significant challenge, as the SARC at the state headquarters is being used for other purposes. As a result, large parts of the state lack access to these services, and victims are temporarily housed in orphanages, which serve as improvised refuges.

Awareness of these formal support structures is extremely low, with only 17% of respondents aware of the SARCs, while a vast 83% remain unaware. Among those aware, 51.7% believe the facilities are functional and adequately equipped. Stakeholders, including FIDA and NAPTIP, confirm that funding constraints are a critical barrier to operational efficiency, affecting infrastructure, outreach, logistics, and medical supplies.

Despite these challenges, stakeholders described an active coordination structure led by the State GBV Task Force, established in 2022, which links security officers, NGOs, and gender desk officers to ensure referrals reach the appropriate agencies. Emergency contact numbers are shared across LGAs, allowing survivors and local leaders to reach officials directly. However, accessibility challenges persist, particularly for survivors in remote areas or under religious restrictions.

Informal and community-based support networks continue to bridge these service gaps, with about 54% of respondents believing they provide better or more reliable support than formal mechanisms. Organizations like the Christian Association of Nigeria and the Muslim Council often provide financial or material assistance, highlighting the crucial role of informal actors in supporting survivors.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of SARCs and shelters declined drastically from 45% in 2023 to just 1% in 2024, then increased to 17% in 2025, still significantly below 2023 levels. The perception that informal support systems are helpful decreased from 62% in 2023 to 53.3% expressing uncertainty in 2024, then shifted to 54% believing them better than formal systems in 2025. Awareness of referral pathways showed improvement: police pathways rose from 48% in 2023 to 80.2% in 2024, maintaining at 70.5% in 2025; healthcare pathways increased from 32% to 33% to 43.1%; and legal representation grew from 28% in 2023 to 45.3% in 2024, and declined again to 28.1% in 2025.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Awareness and public education on GBV remain limited, with 63.9% of respondents unaware of any GBV information or education programs, while only 36.1% report awareness. Among those aware, the main information sources include television (48.4%), social media (37.2%), and radio (34.3%), followed by health facilities (31.7%), NGOs/CSOs (24.9%), schools (16.8%), and religious centers (18.6%). The state employs diverse platforms to spread GBV-related information, including posters, banners, documentaries, stickers, jingles, and TV and radio programs. However, production and consistency of materials remain weak, with no new materials printed or made due to government priorities.

GBV education is supported by 86.7% of respondents, who agree it should be taught across all levels of education. The Ministry of Education has established GBV clubs in 15 schools in the state capital and plans to build capacity for safe reporting. However, GBV is not part of the formal curriculum, and there is no state funding for it. NAPTIP has also created student vanguards in primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions to spread messages among peers, but coverage remains limited.

Public sensitization activities are often concentrated around commemorative events, such as International Women's Day, the 16 Days of Activism, and the International Day of the Girl Child. The state has implemented programs like 'Second Chance Education on GBV' and 'Abundance of Girl Child Education' to raise awareness. Partnerships between government agencies and organizations have also contributed to awareness efforts, including campaigns like 'If You See Something, Say Something, Do Something.'

Use of disability-accessible materials varies among respondents. Over half (53.7%) reported using audio or spoken content, followed by sign interpretation (44.6%), visual content (36.9%), and picture-based messages (32.5%). Fewer respondents use simplified messages (18.4%), braille materials (16%), or screen subtitling (13.6%). The state has recognized the need for inclusive information dissemination, educating and supporting persons with disabilities on GBV prevention. These initiatives demonstrate a growing recognition of the importance of reaching marginalized groups with critical GBV information and services.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV programs declined significantly from 36% in 2023 to 9.6% in 2024, then improved substantially to 36.1% in 2025, though still below 2023 levels. Material usefulness perceptions improved: those finding materials mostly useful increased from 24% in 2023 to 36% in 2024 and 36.1% in 2025, while those finding them completely useful rose from 18% to 22% to 38%. Support for school-based education remained consistently high at 86.7% in 2025. Awareness of disability-accessible formats fluctuated significantly: audio/spoken content dropped from 44% in 2024 to 53.7% in 2025; sign interpretation increased from 74.49% in 2024 to 44.6% in 2025; visual content decreased from 19.59% to 36.9%.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

Taraba budgeted ₦5.85 billion for GBV—0.83% of its total state budget—but achieved notably better execution than many states, spending ₦1.98 billion, which represents 33.9% of the allocation. While still leaving over 66% of funds unutilized, this expenditure constituted 1.13% of the state's total actual spending, the highest percentage among all states reviewed. Taraba's per capita GBV spending of ₦1,028.01 is substantial, reflecting meaningful investment per citizen. Despite the execution gap, the state demonstrates genuine budgetary commitment to GBV interventions, with actual spending exceeding its proportional budget allocation in overall expenditure terms.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Over the last three years of the Womanity Index, Taraba State has consistently included gender-based violence (GBV) specific line items in its approved budgets for 2022, 2023, and 2024. Funding for the Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Development, along with other relevant ministries, fluctuated significantly. In 2022, Taraba received an allocation of ₦4.62 billion, with an actual performance of 44% (₦2.03 billion). The allocation decreased to ₦2.82 billion in 2023, achieving a performance of 43.1% (₦1.57 billion). In 2024, the allocation increased sharply to ₦5.75 billion; however, execution fell to a concerning 33.9% (₦1.98 billion). These patterns reflect persistent challenges in effective budget implementation. Per capita spending stood at ₦1,028.01 in 2024 (third highest nationally), ₦835.28 in 2023, and ₦1,112.95 in 2022. The fluctuations across the three years, with a high in 2022 followed by a decline and then a partial recovery, indicate inconsistent investment patterns despite comparatively strong overall spending levels.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Multiple agencies could not provide specific conviction data, indicating lack of coordinated tracking systems across security and justice agencies.	Create a centralized electronic database managed by the Ministry of Justice to track all GBV cases from reporting through conviction, with mandatory quarterly reporting from all security agencies, courts, and prosecution offices.
	Despite the VAPP law being enacted in 2021, 66.2% of respondents remain aware of customary and religious systems, with 72.6% believing they help prevent GBV.	Develop and implement a structured program to train traditional rulers, religious leaders, and community heads on GBV laws and their role in supporting formal justice processes, with signed commitments to refer cases to appropriate authorities rather than settling them informally.
Access to Legal Justice	Legal aid services exist in only 4 out of 16 LGAs (25%), with offices in Jalingo, Takum, Wukari, and Gembu. Survey data shows 63.5% of respondents are unaware of available legal assistance.	Establish legal aid desks in the remaining 12 LGAs, prioritizing border areas (Kurmi, Karim, Sardauna, Ussa) where GBV prevalence is higher, and deploy mobile legal aid clinics to reach rural communities quarterly.
	There is high rate of case withdrawal. The GBV Reporting Officer at Civil Defence stated that parents of survivors often report cases, but later opt out, unwilling to proceed to court, indicating systemic challenges in sustaining prosecutions, contributing to low conviction rates.	Require all security agencies to provide survivors with immediate access to legal counsel within 24 hours of reporting, provide hotline and ensure survivors understand their rights and options before making decisions about case withdrawal.
	Willingness to serve as witnesses dropped dramatically from 81% in 2024 to 42.3% in 2025, with only 42.3% feeling safe to testify and 40.3% stating it depends on witness protection programs.	Establish formal witness protection guidelines including safe houses, identity protection, transportation support, and psychosocial services for witnesses, and conduct public awareness campaigns on available protections to rebuild confidence in the formal justice system.
Support Services	There is a critical shortage of SARC and shelter as only one partially operational SARC exist in Jalingo out of 16 LGAs, with 83% of respondents unaware of any active SARCs or shelters.	Finalize construction and equip the SARC at the Specialist Hospital in Jalingo, and establish fully functional SARCs in Wukari (Southern zone) and Gembu (Northern zone), ensuring each facility has trained legal officers, medical staff, forensic equipment, counselling services, and 24-hour operation capacity.
	Only 39.5% of respondents are aware of available support services (medical, legal, psychosocial, economic), with 60.5% unaware. The Ministry of Women Affairs confirmed that sensitization reached only "about 8 LGAs" out of 16 (50%), leaving half the state underserved.	Transition from reliance on orphanages to purpose-built shelters with trained staff, security, counselling services, and economic empowerment programs, ensuring at least one shelter per senatorial zone and developing clear admission, case management, and exit protocols.
Information and Awareness	No GBV curriculum in schools despite high public support. While 86.7% of respondents support teaching GBV across all education levels, no standardized curricula exist. Current efforts reach only 15 schools in the state capital through an unfunded personal initiative.	The Ministry of Education and State Universal Basic Education Board should integrate age-appropriate GBV and child sexual abuse prevention modules into the curriculum from primary through tertiary levels, train guidance counsellors and teachers as facilitators, and allocate dedicated government funding for implementation across all 16 LGAs within the next academic year.
	Critically low program awareness, as 63.9% of respondents are unaware of any GBV programs or materials in the state. This is a big decline compared to 2024, when only 8% were unaware.	Expand year-round awareness campaigns beyond annual events by moving beyond concentration around 16 Days of Activism and International Women's Day to establish monthly community outreach programs in all 16 LGAs, especially in motor parks, markets, religious centres, and schools, and partner with community radio stations to broadcast weekly GBV prevention and reporting information in major local languages.
	There are limited disability-accessible formats for GBV awareness. While audio/spoken content (53.7%) and sign interpretation (44.6%) have some coverage, critical formats like braille (16%) and screen subtitling (13.6%) remain severely limited. The Head of Operations at NAPTIP noted efforts to reach persons with disabilities, but comprehensive multi-format approaches are not systematically implemented.	Develop comprehensive IEC materials in multiple formats including braille, large print, audio recordings, video content with sign interpretation and subtitles, and picture-based messages, ensuring distribution through health facilities, schools, police stations, religious institutions, and community centres in all LGAs, with specific targeting of persons with disabilities through their representative organizations.
Budget and Spending	Despite allocating ₦5.85 billion for GBV in 2024, Taraba managed to spend only 33.9% (₦1.98 billion), continuing a three-year trend of declining budget execution—from 44% in 2022 to 43.1% in 2023, and now 33.9% in 2024—even as allocations increased substantially	Conduct a thorough review of its procurement and disbursement processes to identify bottlenecks preventing the release and utilization of GBV funds, then establish quarterly spending targets with accountability mechanisms to reverse the declining execution trend.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



Yobe STATE

Pride of the Sahel

Yobe Central Mosque

Yobe State

Population: 4,358,571

49.2% Female | Male 50.8%

Overall Grade 67.5%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,083)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

71.5% | 28.5%

AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

41.8% | 58.2%

AGE

<20 ■ 20-29 ■ 30-39 ■ 40-49 ■ 50-59 ■ 60-69 ■

2.6% | 25.3% | 40.7% | 19.2% | 9.1% | 3.2%

DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■

12.9% | 87.1%

SARCs

6

Shelters

0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION ₦253.63m

(This accounts for **0.1%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE ₦234.96m

(This accounts for **92.6%** of total allocation to the ministry)

92.6%

Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ (Actual Spend)

16.0% | 49.9% | 34.1%

Per Capita Spending

₦109.61

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	62.5%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	68.8%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	56.3%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	75.0%

GBV Context 2025

Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?

No ■ Yes ■

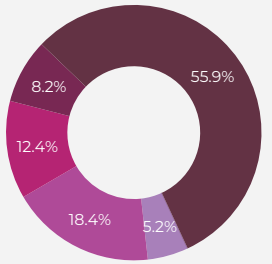
40.8% | 59.2%

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

85.8% | 23.4% | 26.4% | 16.5% | 8.4%

Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

47.1% | 29.2% | 53.2% | 32.3% | 22.0% | 6.1%

Domestic ■ Physical ■ Sexual ■ Mental ■ Economic ■ Cultural practices ■

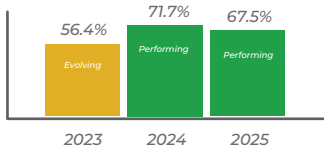
Where did you or the person first seek help?

29.3% | 42.6% | 10.3% | 9.8% | 3.4% | 2.8% | 1.1% | 0.6%

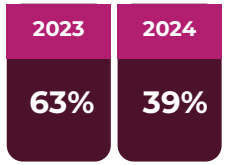
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

Trust ■ Services ■ Proximity or accessibility ■ Perception that they could help ■ Financial constraint ■

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



50%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 48.3%	+1 ▲ LP 66.7%	▲ LP 75.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 86.3%	ALJ 87.5	−1 ▼ ALJ 62.5%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	+1 ▲ SS 75.0%	−1 ▼ SS 68.8%
Information and Awareness	IA 61.3	IA 62.5%	IA 56.3%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+2 ▲ BS 66.7%	BS 75.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- Strengthened Legal Framework: VAPP Law (2022) introduced survivor compensation, offender registers, and victim support funds, boosting legal protection.
- Improved Judicial Outcomes: 40-45 convictions secured under VAPP Law since 2023, with 3 GBV courts and trained magistrates.
- Expanded Support Services: 6 SARCs and 1 state shelter provide free medical, psychosocial, and legal aid, run with government and partners.
- Partnership Gains: Ministries, police, and NGOs now collaborate on GBV cases, improving referrals and follow-up.

Areas of Concern

- Funding Gaps: Limited and inconsistent funding constrains sensitization, service delivery, and legal enforcement, especially in insurgency-affected LGAs like Guja and Yunusari.
- Service Accessibility: Rural survivors face difficulty reaching SARCs and shelters; many must travel long distances to Damaturu, discouraging formal reporting.
- Dependence on Donor Support: SARCs rely heavily on UNFPA and Red Cross for drugs. logistics, and operational funding, threatening sustainability.
- Informal Justice Influence: Community and religious leaders occasionally mediate or lobby for suspect release, weakening prosecution efforts.

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- Yobe State advanced the implementation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Law, domesticated in 2022, through targeted operationalization efforts.
- Legal provisions were translated into Hausa, Kanuri, and Fulfulde to improve accessibility, especially in rural communities.

Access to Legal Justice

- Significant steps were made in 2023 with the appointment of GBV Judges in all senatorial zones and the establishment of GBV desks across police divisions.

Support Services

- Yobe established and maintained between six SARCs and one shelters, mostly in urban centres like Damaturu, Potiskum, Gashua, Nguru, Gaidam and Gujba.

Information and Awareness

- State-level agencies, in collaboration with civil society organizations such as Yobe Peace and Community Development Initiative (YOPCODI), conducted sensitization programs through radio broadcasts and town hall meetings.
- Disability-friendly IEC materials such as audio and picture-based messages were developed.

Change Spotlight

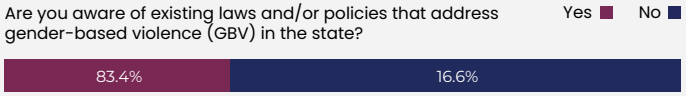
In 2025, the Ministry of Justice, in collaboration with the Yobe State Police Command, achieved a significant milestone in GBV case prosecutions. A 16-year-old rape survivor from Damaturu, initially hesitant to report due to stigma, was supported through the referral pathway established by the Ministry of Women Affairs. The case was reported to a GBV desk at the State CID, investigated promptly, and prosecuted under the VAPP Law. The Legal Aid Council provided free legal representation, and the designated GBV judge in Damaturu High Court secured a conviction within three months, sentencing the perpetrator to 25 years. The survivor received free medical care and psychosocial support at the Damaturu SARC, funded by UNFPA. This case exemplifies the strengthened coordination between ministries, police, and NGOs, leading to swift justice and comprehensive survivor support, boosting community trust in formal justice systems.

Yobe State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 67.5%

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

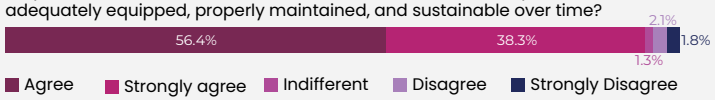


SUPPORT SERVICES

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)

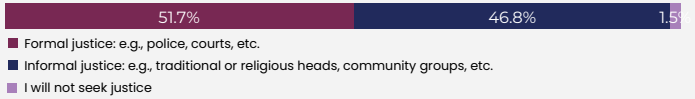


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors? Yes No

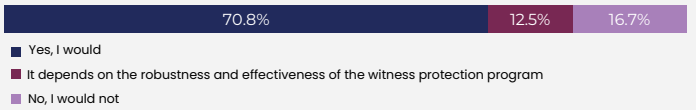


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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? Yes No

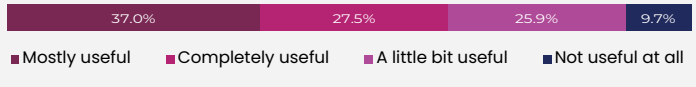


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

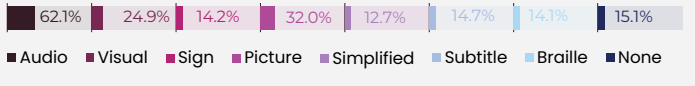
Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state? Yes No



How useful is/was the content of the GBV awareness material in educating you on GBV?



Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Yobe State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 67.5%

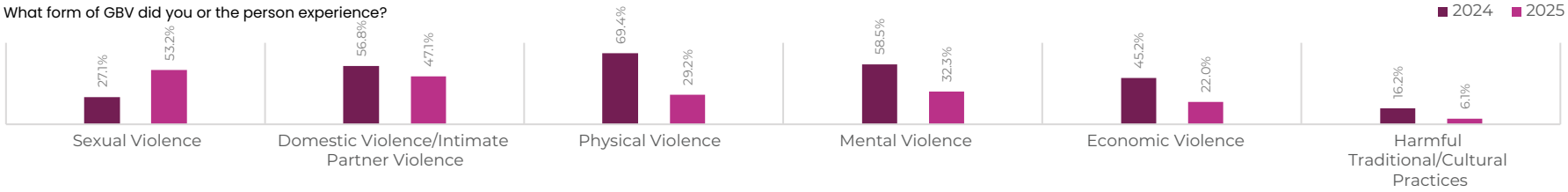
Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



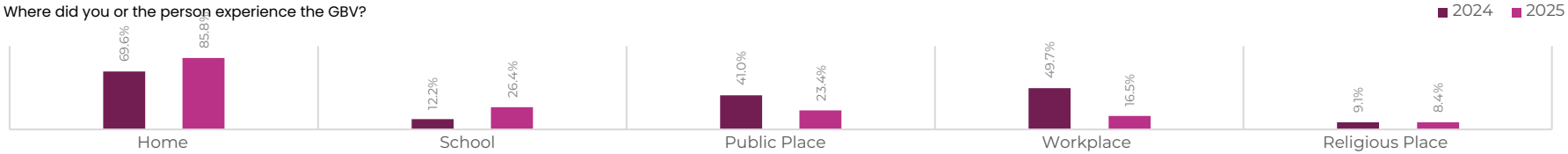
59.2%

of Yobe State population have either experienced GBV or knows someone who have experienced GBV

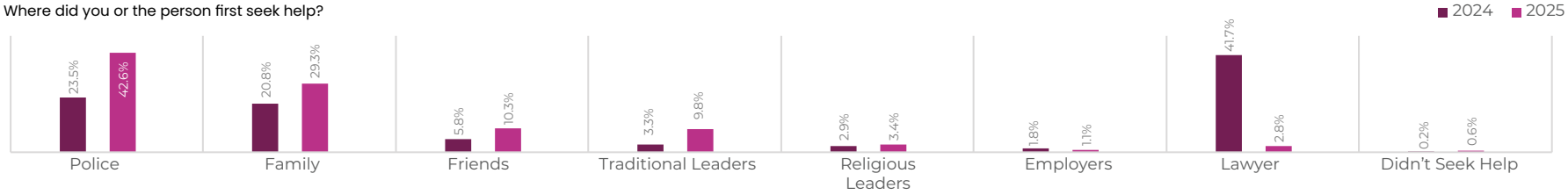
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



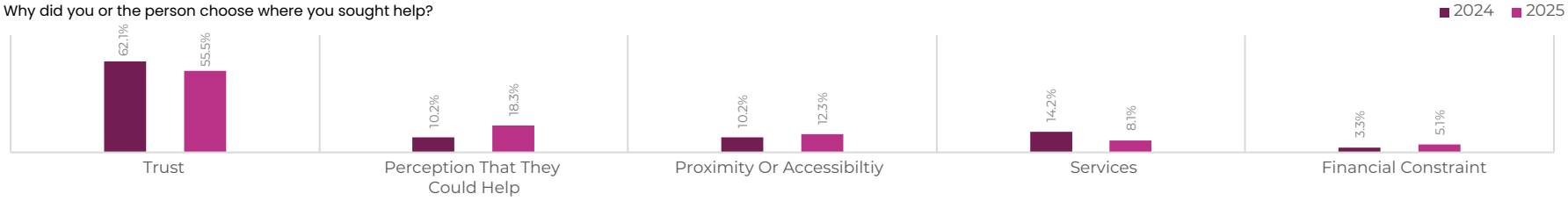
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?

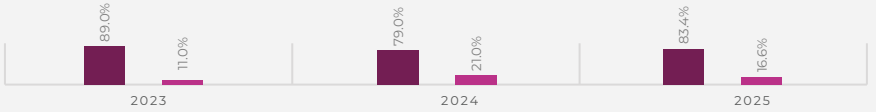


Yobe State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

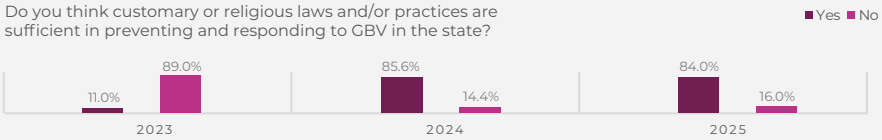
Overall Grade 67.5%

LAWS AND POLICIES

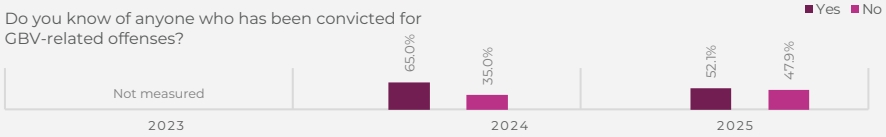
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



Do you think customary or religious laws and/or practices are sufficient in preventing and responding to GBV in the state?

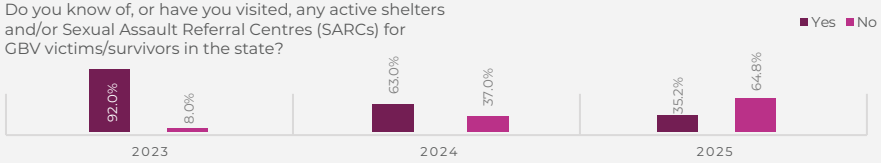


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

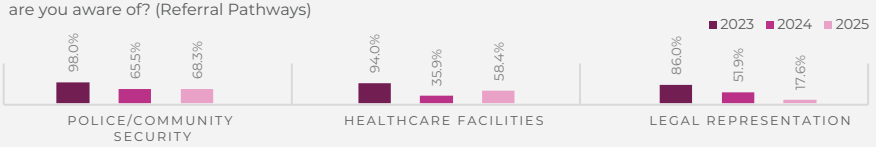


SUPPORT SERVICES

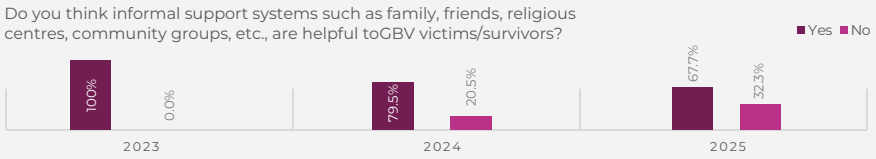
Do you know of, or have you visited, any active shelters and/or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) for GBV victims/survivors in the state?



Which of these processes and procedures for reporting GBV-related incidents are you aware of? (Referral Pathways)

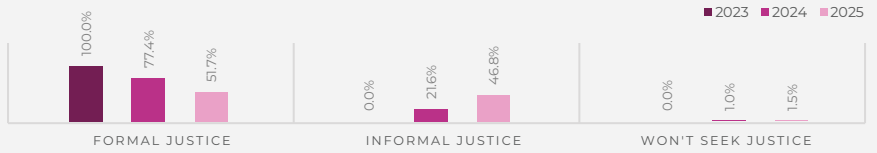


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

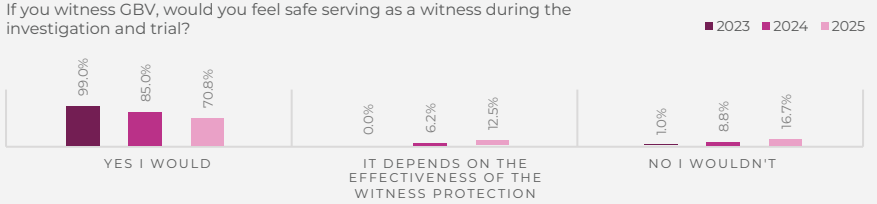


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

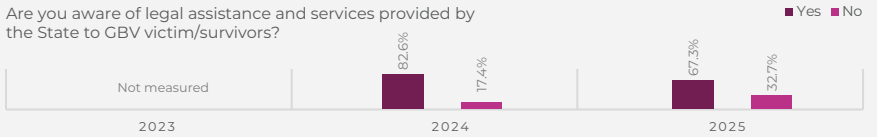
Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



If you witness GBV, would you feel safe serving as a witness during the investigation and trial?

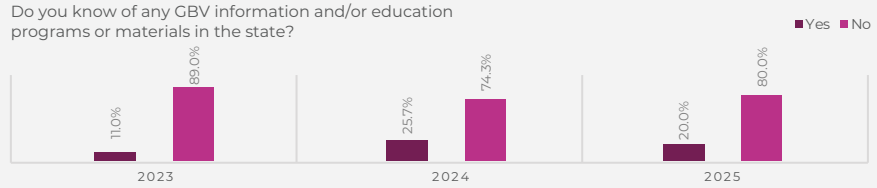


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

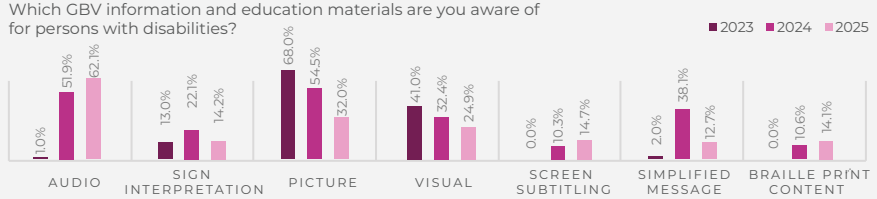


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?

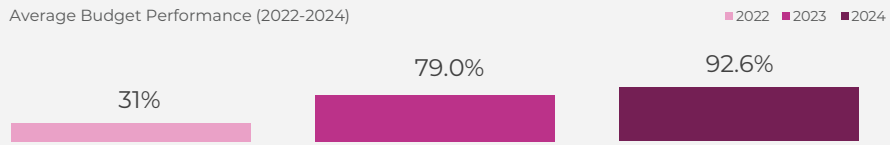


Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?

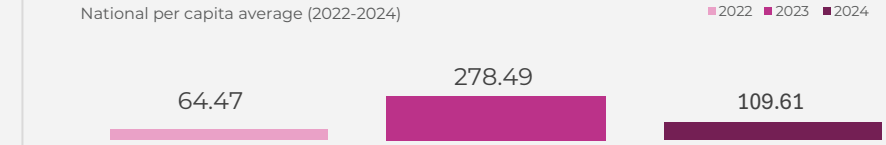


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Yobe State's legal framework for addressing gender-based violence (GBV) is anchored on the domesticated Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Law (VAPP Law, 2022), which closely aligns with the federal 2015 VAPP Act but is tailored to local cultural and religious contexts. A Deputy Director at the Ministry of Justice explained that the Yobe State VAPP Law is unique because it covers both civil and criminal offences and provides automatic compensation for survivors, while YOPCODI confirmed that it establishes protection orders, offender registers, and victim support funds in collaboration with NAPTIP.

Public awareness of GBV laws is relatively strong, with 83.4% of respondents aware of formal mechanisms addressing GBV, primarily through radio (46%), NGOs/CSOs (42.4%), and family networks (30.9%). Confidence in these legal frameworks is equally high, as 83.7% believe the laws are effective and sufficient to prevent and respond to GBV. However, awareness gaps persist in remote LGAs where insurgency limits outreach and legal education. Stakeholders noted that the exclusion of marital rape from the VAPP Law reflects sensitivity to local customs, though sensitization of religious and community leaders can bridge this gap.

Knowledge of conviction outcomes remains moderate, with 52.1% of respondents aware of individuals prosecuted or convicted under GBV-related laws. The Ministry of Justice reported about 40–45 convictions between 2023 and 2024, underscoring gradual but visible enforcement. Awareness of customary and religious frameworks is slightly higher at 85.7%, with 84% viewing them as supportive in preventing GBV, thus showing how traditional systems coexist with statutory laws in shaping community responses.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV laws has fluctuated over the last three years — 89% in 2023, declining to 79% in 2024 due to reduced sensitization funding and insurgency disruptions, before rebounding to 83.4% in 2025 following renewed advocacy campaigns. Confidence in the effectiveness of formal laws mirrored this pattern, with near-universal agreement in 2023 (100%), a dip to 65% in 2024, and recovery to 83.7% in 2025 after state-wide sensitization activities led by the Ministry of Justice and YOPCODI, supported by training of judicial officers and police prosecutors. Conversely, awareness of GBV convictions dropped from 65% in 2024 to 52.1% in 2025. Over the same period, belief in the role of customary and religious laws grew sharply from only 11% viewing them as sufficient in 2023 to 84% in 2025, indicating increasing integration of traditional authority into GBV prevention and response mechanisms.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Access to justice for GBV survivors in Yobe State demonstrates a dual reliance on formal and informal systems. While 51.7% of respondents prefer formal avenues such as police and courts, 46.8% still turn to traditional or religious leaders for mediation. Awareness of state-provided legal assistance is 67.3%, and 70.8% of respondents are willing to serve as witnesses, although concerns about retaliation persist.

Officials from the state reveal that GBV cases follow a structured process: they are reported to the police, investigated, and prosecuted by the Ministry of Justice. A court official confirmed that "once evidence is established, the court convicts and sentences accordingly." The Ministry of Justice also confirmed the existence of three dedicated GBV courts across the senatorial zones, with magistrates trained to fast-track GBV cases.

Legal aid services are available through FIDA, the Legal Aid Council, and the Victims Support Fund but remain concentrated in urban centers like Damaturu, Potiskum, and Gashua. The Police PRO noted that Family Support Units (FSUs) have been established in most divisions, enhancing case handling but facing challenges such as limited logistics and staff capacity. Informal systems like Zauren Sulhu remain influential, helping to mediate disputes early and refer complex cases to formal authorities, which officials said improve community reporting and witness cooperation. "Zauren Sulhu" is an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) committee established by the Yobe State government to resolve conflicts through peaceful means. It is composed of religious and community leaders, as well as security officials, and is tasked with addressing issues like farmer-herder conflicts, communal clashes, and other disputes within the state.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Between 2023 and 2025, reliance on formal justice systems declined significantly from 100% to 51.7%, while preference for informal systems increased, reflecting stronger community trust in traditional structures. Awareness of legal aid declined slightly to 67.3% in 2025 from the 82.6% in 2024. consistent

with reports of limited rural outreach. Willingness to serve as witnesses also dropped from 99% in 2023 to 85% in 2024 and 70.8% in 2025, indicating lingering fears despite stronger witness protection mechanisms. However, the establishment of specialized GBV courts and improved coordination among the Ministry of Justice, FIDA, and the Police have enhanced prosecution efficiency and reduced case delays to one or two months in some jurisdictions. Perceptions of informal systems' helpfulness increased from 10% in 2023 to 79.8% in 2025, underscoring the importance of balancing statutory and community-based approaches in GBV justice delivery.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

Yobe State's support services for GBV survivors show moderate accessibility and awareness. Only 57.9% of respondents are aware of available services, primarily through radio (49.1%) and NGOs/CSOs (36.8%), while awareness of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) or shelters stands at 35.2%. Of those aware, 94.7% believe these facilities are functional and sustainable.

Stakeholders confirmed that 6 SARCs operate across Damaturu, Potiskum, Gashua, Nguru, Gaidam and Gujba (which is currently not fully functional because of the insurgency), supported by one state-managed shelter in Damaturu. The Ministry of Women Affairs reported that these centres are jointly operated with UNFPA and the Red Cross, providing free medical, psychosocial, and legal support. YOPCODI official added that referral pathways are standardized and used across partners. Despite existing infrastructure, preference for informal support remains high at 67.7%, driven by cultural comfort and proximity to traditional networks.

Referral awareness remains highest for law enforcement (68.3%) and hospitals (58.4%), but significantly lower for legal representation (17.6%) and psychosocial support (17.2%). Officials from YOPCODI and the Police highlighted that survivors from conflict-affected LGAs like Gujba and Yunusari often travel long distances to Damaturu for services due to non-functional facilities in their areas.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of SARCs and shelters has declined considerably from 92% in 2023 to 63% in 2024 and just 35.2% in 2025, largely due to reduced funding for sensitization and insecurity in some LGAs. Nonetheless, perceived functionality has remained high above 90%. Stakeholders noted that while service numbers have not declined, visibility has, as outreach and transportation challenges restrict awareness campaigns. YOPCODI confirmed that case referrals rose to nearly 490 in early 2024 due to increased reporting and community confidence in SARC services. Preference for informal systems has also reduced marginally, indicating gradual acceptance of formal survivor support systems despite persistent access barriers..

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Public awareness of GBV information and prevention programmes in Yobe State remains relatively high at 80%. Radio (52.5%) and NGOs/CSOs (49.4%) are the primary information channels, while family and peer networks contribute to 31.9%. These programmes are widely valued, with 91.4% of respondents rating them as useful (37% mostly useful and 27.5% completely useful).

The Ministry of Women Affairs, in partnership with YOPCODI, Plan International, and UNICEF, coordinates GBV awareness across all 17 LGAs. The YOPCODI Coordinator explained that IEC materials such as posters, pamphlets, and radio jingles are produced in Hausa, Kanuri, and Fulfulde to reach diverse audiences. An Education Director added that schools are increasingly used for GBV awareness, employing role-plays, lectures, and case studies to reinforce behavioral change.

Access to disability-inclusive materials remains limited. Among respondents, 62.1% access audio content, 32% access picture-based formats, and 24.9% access visual materials. However, access to specialized formats is notably lower, with only 14% accessing braille materials and 14.2% accessing sign interpretation services. Officials acknowledged that although disability inclusion is improving, resource and technical constraints hinder full adaptation of IEC materials for people with disabilities.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV programmes declined from 89% in 2023 to 74% in 2024 before recovering to 80% in 2025, reflecting the uneven continuity of sensitization activities. The usefulness of GBV campaigns has remained consistently high, exceeding 84% since 2023, highlighting that while fewer people may be reached, the quality of communication remains strong. The expansion of community radio programmes and school outreach by YOPCODI and the Ministry of Women Affairs has helped sustain awareness levels, particularly in urban and semi-urban LGAs. However, formats inclusive of persons with disabilities continue to receive limited attention, as they are largely dependent on donor-supported initiatives.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

₦253.6 million is allocated to GBV initiatives, representing just 0.09% of its total state budget—a figure that reflects minimal prioritization of gender-based violence prevention and response. However, Yobe demonstrated remarkable budget discipline by spending ₦235 million, achieving a 92.64% execution rate that signals strong administrative capacity and genuine intent to utilize available resources.

The actual spend translated to ₦109.61 per capita, which remains grossly insufficient for comprehensive GBV services, including shelters, counseling, legal aid, and awareness campaigns. While the high utilization rate deserves recognition, the fundamental problem is the inadequate initial allocation.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

Over the past three years, Yobe State consistently included gender-based violence (GBV) specific line items in its approved budgets for 2022, 2023, and 2024. Implementation, however, varied significantly. While the GBV-specific line items in 2023 and 2024 recorded 0% implementation, the 2022 allocation achieved an exceptional performance of 286.7%. Budget performance within the Ministry of Women Affairs and other relevant ministries also fluctuated. In 2022, the ministry received an allocation of ₦410.07 million, with only 31% (₦128.85 million) expended. In 2023, the allocation increased to ₦731.87 million, resulting in a strong execution rate of 79% (₦576.41 million). The 2024 allocation decreased sharply to ₦253.63 million, but performance improved further to 92.6% (₦234.96 million).

Per capita spending stood at ₦109.61 in 2024, ₦278.49 in 2023, and ₦64.47 in 2022. The surge in 2023 followed by a significant decline in 2024 reflects a highly uneven investment pattern, indicating inconsistent prioritization of GBV-related spending over the three-year period.

Human Angle Story

Maryam was still mourning the death of her husband when tragedy struck. A man named Abdullahi from nearby Gashua had raped her daughter and got her pregnant.

Determined to seek justice, Maryam reported it to the police. The authorities arrested Abdullahi and facilitated an agreement: he would marry the girl when she gave birth and assume full responsibility for the child.

But after Maryam's daughter gave birth, Abdullahi vanished. His phone number became unreachable, leaving Maryam to shoulder the burdens alone, caring for her newborn grandchild amid financial strain and societal stigma.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	Marital rape was excluded from the Yobe VAPP Law, limiting full alignment with the Federal Act.	Conduct a comprehensive legal review and community dialogue to address the marital rape provision gap in the state VAPP Law. Engage religious and traditional leaders, women's groups, and legal experts to develop culturally sensitive approaches that protect all survivors while respecting community values.
	Harmful traditional practices such as forced marriage and resource denial (or financial/economic violence) persist in some LGAs	Scale up community sensitization targeting traditional and religious leaders to address harmful cultural norms.
Access to Legal Justice	Legal aid coverage strong in urban areas but limited in remote zones.	Expand legal aid coverage to all 17 LGAs through the deployment of mobile legal aid clinics and the establishment of community-based legal aid desks. Prioritize conflict-affected and hard-to-reach LGAs such as Gulani and Yunusari to ensure equitable access to justice for rural and displaced populations.
	Informal mediation still interferes with prosecutions; lobbying by local leaders reported.	Institutionalize training for traditional leaders on referral protocols to prevent extra-judicial settlements.
Support Services	Limited SARC coverage across the state: only three out of 6 established SARCs are fully functional (Damaturu, Potiskum, and Gashua). The facilities in Gaidam and Gujba are closed or non-functional due to insurgency.	Reopen and fully operationalize the two closed SARCs in Gaidam and Gujba as soon as possible, prioritizing security arrangements and staffing and establish additional SARCs in at least four underserved LGAs within the next one year.
	Survivors receive free medical and psychosocial services, but drug shortages and funding gaps persist.	Create a sustainable medical supply chain for all SARCs by allocating dedicated state budget for essential drugs.
	Economic reintegration support remains minimal and donor dependent.	Integrate livelihood and psychosocial reintegration programmes into survivor support packages, with regular funding from the state government.
Information and Awareness	IEC materials available in Hausa, Kanuri, and Fulfulde but not updated regularly across all LGAs.	Regularly update IEC materials and expand dissemination through community radio and schools.
	GBV education exists informally in schools; no standardized curriculum or guide approved by the Ministry of Education.	Develop and institutionalize a GBV and CSA school curriculum in collaboration with SUBEB and MoE.
	Usage of disability-inclusive formats low — only 62.1% use audio, 32% picture-based, and 14% braille or sign interpretation.	Produce disability-inclusive materials (braille, sign language, audio) to improve PWDs' access and participation.
	Awareness of disability-inclusive formats remains critically low, with no braille materials or sign interpretation in school services and no trained officers in government agencies to respond to cases involving persons with disabilities.	Train designated GBV focal officers in all government ministries and agencies on disability-inclusive communication, including sign interpretation, within 12 months. Mandate production of all GBV materials in accessible formats (braille, audio, simplified text, pictorial representation) and ensure at least one sign language interpreter is available at the SARC and police GBV desks during operating hours.
Budget and Spending	The absolute allocation of ₦253.6 million (0.09% of state budget) remains critically inadequate, resulting in a per capita spend of only ₦109.61.	Increase the GBV budget allocation to at least 1% of the total state budget while maintaining its demonstrated strong implementation capacity, which would raise per capita spending closer to adequate levels for delivering shelters, counseling, legal aid, and prevention programs.

Womanity INDEX 2025 Edition | invictus AFRICA



ZAMFARA STATE

Farming is our Pride

Welcome to Zamfara

Zamfara State

Population: 5,832,815

50.7% Female | Male 49.3%

Overall Grade 47.5%

Respondents Demography *(n = 1,106)*

GENDER

Female ■ Male ■

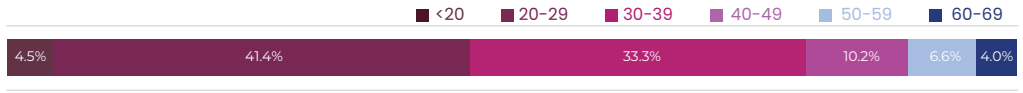


AREA

Rural ■ Urban ■

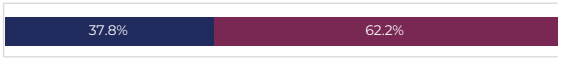


AGE



DISABILITY STATUS

Yes ■ No ■



SARCs: 1

Shelters: 0

Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

₦2.52bn

(This accounts for **0.6%** of the total state budget)

BUDGET PERFORMANCE

₦791.81m

(This accounts for **31.4%** of total allocation to the ministry)



Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ (Actual Spend)



Per Capita Spending

₦267.55

Indexes	Indicators				Total Grades
Laws and Policies	LP_1	LP_2	LP_3	–	50.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ_1	ALJ_2	ALJ_3	ALJ_4	43.8%
Support Services	SS_1	SS_2	SS_3	SS_4	50.0%
Information and Awareness	IA_1	IA_2	IA_3	IA_4	43.8%
Budget and Spending	BS_1	BS_2	BS_3	–	50.0%

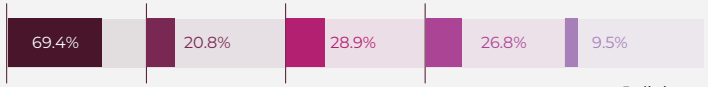
GBV Context 2025

Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?

No ■ Yes ■

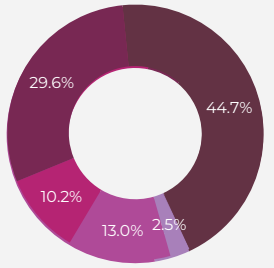


Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

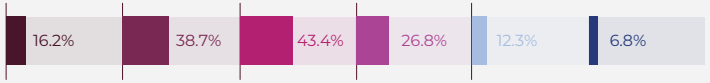


Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?

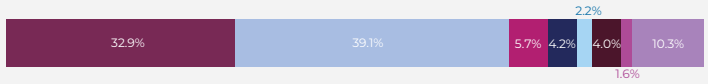


What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



Domestic ■ Physical ■ Sexual ■ Mental ■ Economic ■ Cultural practices ■

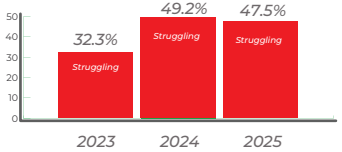
Where did you or the person first seek help?



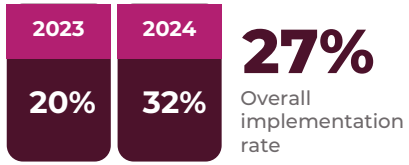
Family/relatives ■ Police/law enforcement authority ■ Friends/neighbors ■ Traditional/community leader or group ■ Religious leader (Pastor, Ulama, Imam, Deity) ■ Employer/Work colleague/Labour group ■ I did not seek help ■ Lawyer ■

Trust ■ Services ■ Proximity or accessibility ■ Perception that they could help ■ Financial constraint ■

Overall Grade Trend



Implementation Rate
(% of recommendations acted upon)



27%
Overall implementation rate

Index Grade Trend

Index	2023	2024	2025
Laws and Policies	LP 25.0%	+1 ▲ LP 58.3%	+1 ▲ LP 50.0%
Access to Legal Justice	ALJ 25.0%	ALJ 43.8%	ALJ 43.8%
Support Services	SS 61.3%	−1 ▼ SS 43.8%	+1 ▲ SS 50.0%
Information and Awareness	IA 25.0%	+1 ▲ IA 50.0%	−1 ▼ IA 43.8%
Budget and Spending	BS 25.0%	+1 ▲ BS 50.0%	BS 50.0%

What Has Changed

Positive Developments

- High public awareness of GBV laws (84.7%) and confidence in formal legal structures (83.5%)
- Increased awareness of convictions, with 76.6% of residents knowing someone convicted
- Public awareness of legal assistance rose from 37% (2024) to 75% (2025)
- Awareness of GBV information programs increased from 44% (2024) to 80.5% (2025), with 82.5% finding materials useful in 2025

Areas of Concern

- Unclear wording in laws around spousal rape creating enforcement ambiguities
- Widespread early/child marriage directly linked to increased GBV risk
- Informal justice systems obstruct formal justice, with frequent settlements and case withdrawals due to stigma and family pressure
- Absence of forensic labs and proper training hampers evidence collection and prosecution

Key Actions

Laws and Policies

- In 2022, Zamfara State domesticated the VAPP Act and enacted its Child Protection Law, creating a legal framework to address physical, sexual, psychological, and economic forms of violence against women and girls.

Access to Legal Justice

- The state established a GBV desk at the Police Headquarters in Gusau to handle gender-based violence cases, though coverage remains limited to the state capital. Legal aid services are provided through the Legal Aid Council, FIDA's state branch, and CSO pro-bono initiatives.
- FIDA trained paralegals in communities including Makoko, Bariga, and the LASU axis to serve as first responders.

Support Services

- The Ministry of Health operates one Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) at King Fahad Women and Children Hospital in Gusau, providing medical care, forensic examination, and referrals for survivors.
- The state has piloted mobile legal and medical outreach clinics in collaboration with CSO partners to extend services closer to remote LGAs.

Information and Awareness

- NGOs and civil society partners conducted sensitization campaigns in Gusau, Tsafe, and Maru in 2024, producing IEC materials in Hausa to improve community understanding of GBV.
- The Ministry of Women Affairs facilitated targeted community sensitization campaigns including radio jingles and community dialogues in local languages, engaging faith and traditional leader networks for messaging.

Change Spotlight

In 2022, Zamfara State took a significant step forward by domesticating the VAPP law and enacting its Child Protection Law. These legislative instruments represent the state's commitment to creating a comprehensive legal framework that addresses multiple forms of gender-based violence. The laws sit alongside the state's Sharia Penal Code and updated Administration of Criminal Justice Act (2023), creating a suite of GBV-related legal instruments. However, implementation remains a critical challenge. With only two convictions recorded in the past year and widespread case withdrawal due to family pressure and informal settlement practices, the gap between legislation and enforcement continues to undermine survivors' access to justice. The state's next phase must focus on operationalizing these laws through dedicated resources, specialized structures, and sustained political will.

Zamfara State GBV Assessment Survey

Overall Grade 47.5%

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 ■



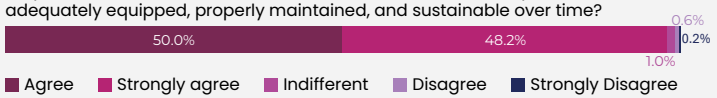
SUPPORT SERVICES

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?

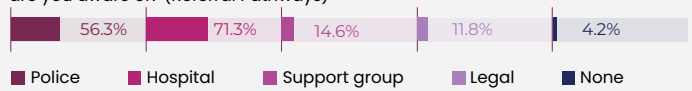
Yes ■ No ■



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)



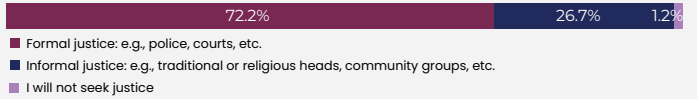
Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful to GBV victims/survivors?

Yes ■ No ■

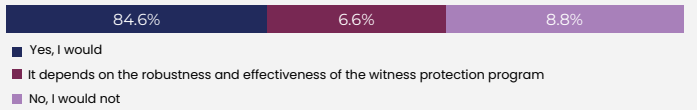


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

Where would you seek justice if you, or anyone you know, experience GBV?



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?

Yes ■ No ■



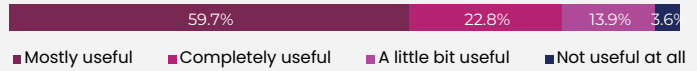
INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?

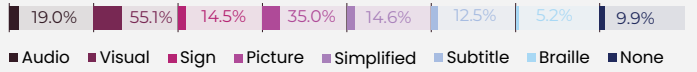
Yes ■ No ■



How useful is/was the content of the GBV awareness material in educating you on GBV?



Which GBV information and education materials are you aware of for persons with disabilities?



Zamfara State GBV Context Trend (2024-2025)

Overall Grade 47.5%

Have you or anyone you know experienced any form of gender-based violence in the last five years?



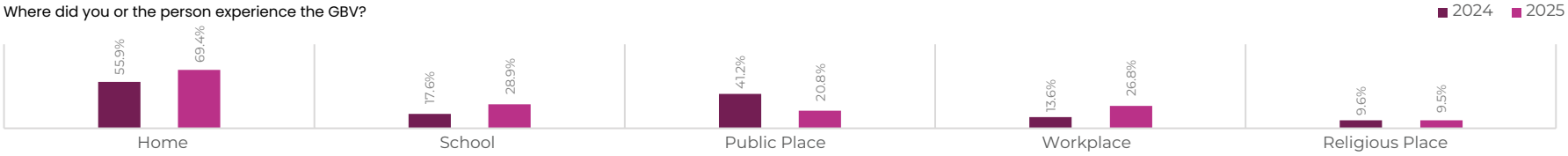
82.7%

of Zamfara State population have either experienced GBV or knows someone who have experienced GBV

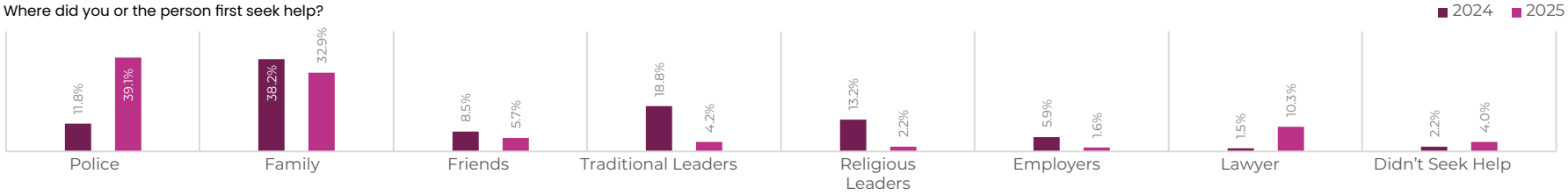
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



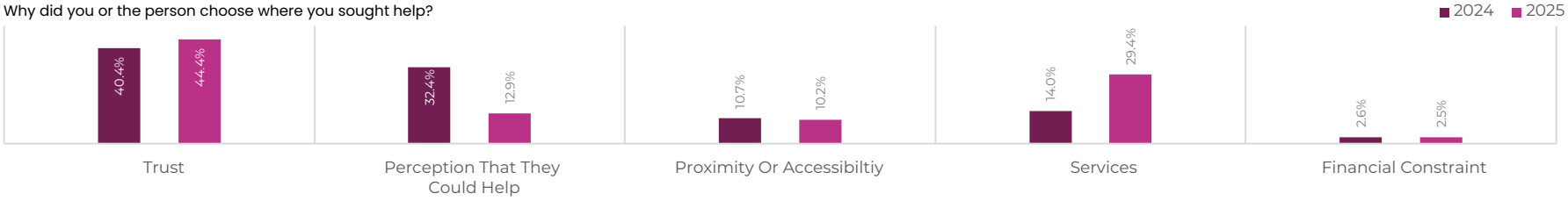
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?



Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?

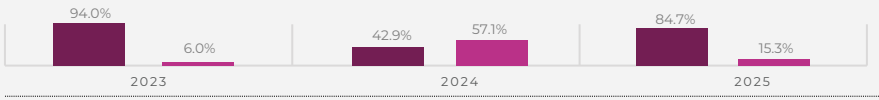


Zamfara State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

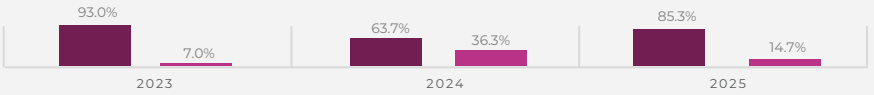
Overall Grade 47.5%

LAWS AND POLICIES

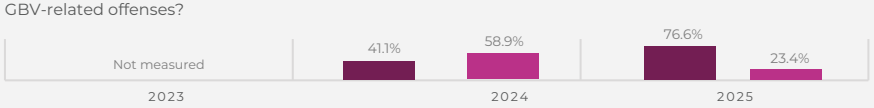
Are you aware of existing laws and/or policies that address gender-based violence (GBV) in the state?



Do you think customary or religious laws and/or practices are sufficient in preventing and responding to GBV in the state?

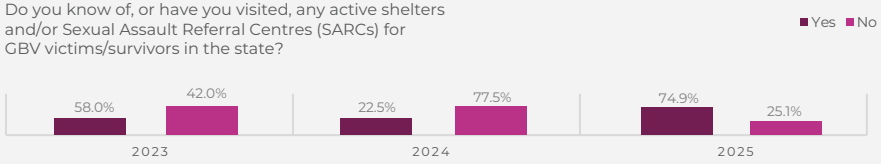


Do you know of anyone who has been convicted for GBV-related offenses?

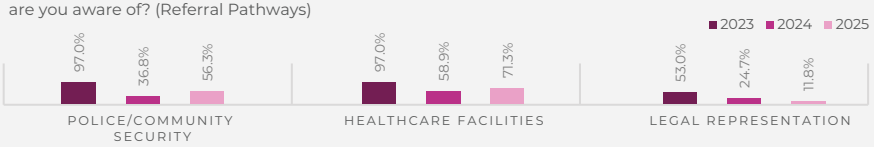


SUPPORT SERVICES

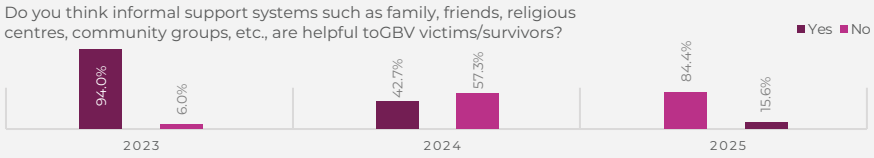
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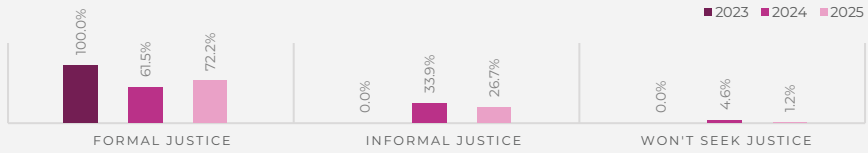


Do you think informal support systems such as family, friends, religious centres, community groups, etc., are helpful toGBV victims/survivors?

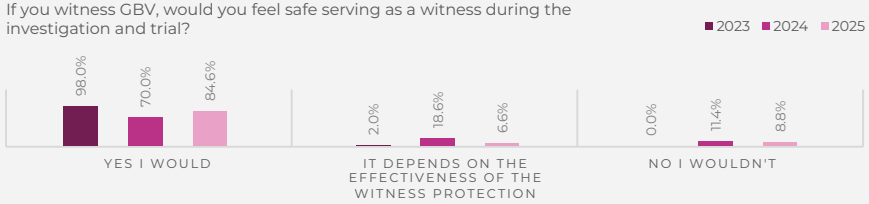


ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE

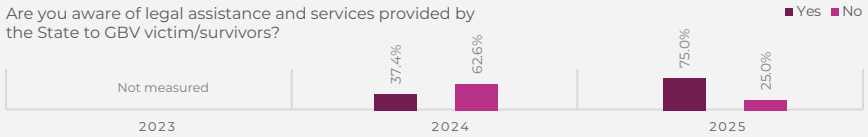
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If you witness GBV, would you feel safe serving as a witness during the investigation and trial?

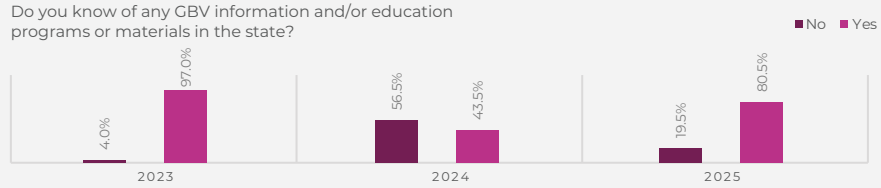


Are you aware of legal assistance and services provided by the State to GBV victim/survivors?

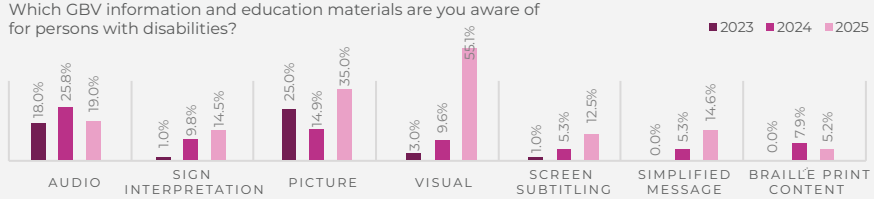


INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

Do you know of any GBV information and/or education programs or materials in the state?

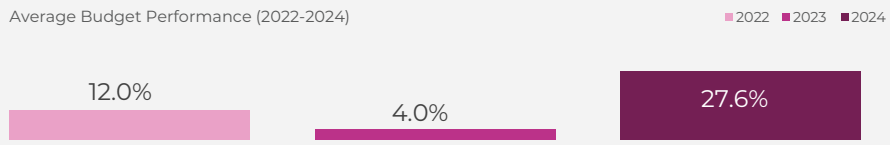


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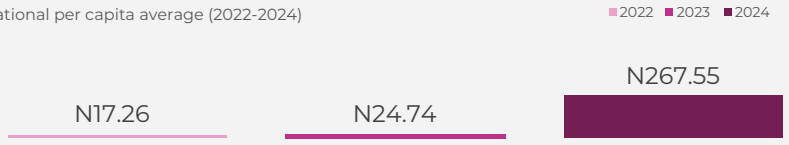


BUDGET AND SPENDING

Average Budget Performance (2022-2024)



National per capita average (2022-2024)





KEY INSIGHTS

Laws and Policies

Current State in 2025

Zamfara State's legal framework for addressing GBV has evolved significantly, with the state domesticating the VAPP law in 2022 and enacting the Child Protection Law the same year. These sit alongside updated Administration of Criminal Justice Act from 2023 and the state's long-standing Sharia Penal Code. The Ministry of Justice confirmed active participation in reviewing these laws to ensure they remain responsive to emerging GBV issues.

When compared with the Federal VAPP Act of 2015, the scope is broadly similar in intent, with both frameworks recognizing multiple forms of GBV and providing for protective measures and penalties. However, the practical difference in Zamfara arises from legal pluralism and some drafting gaps in the state instruments that create ambiguities in enforcement. Diagnostics have flagged unclear wording around spousal rape, inconsistencies in the naming and role of the multi-sector response body and limited mandatory operational provisions such as guaranteed budget lines for SARCs and shelters.

Public awareness of GBV laws in Zamfara State is relatively high at 84.7%, and confidence in formal legal structures is strong, with 83.5% of respondents viewing them as effective tools for GBV prevention and response. Awareness of convictions has improved significantly, with 76.6% of residents knowing someone convicted for GBV-related offenses. Yet the stark reality is that only two convictions were recorded in the past year, unchanged from the previous year. This points to a critical disconnect between legal enforcement and actual justice outcomes, with survivors often withdrawing cases due to stigma, family pressure, and the slow pace of court trials.

Customary and religious laws significantly influence GBV outcomes in Zamfara State. About 83.4% of residents are aware of customary and religious laws addressing GBV, and 85.3% believe these systems help prevent and respond to GBV. This high confidence level, however, contrasts sharply with insights from justice sector actors. Multiple stakeholders described how informal systems obstruct formal justice.

Early/child marriage remains widespread across the state and is directly linked to school dropout, early pregnancy, and heightened risk of sexual and domestic violence. Families and community leaders frequently prefer mediation and monetary compromise for GBV incidents rather than formal criminal prosecution. However, there are signs of gradual change. Some religious leaders now condemn sexual violence in their sermons, which stakeholders noted "was rare before." Civil society organizations (CSOs) have also engaged faith and traditional leaders' networks for messaging, though transformation of deeply rooted social norms requires sustained resourcing and deeper engagement.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of GBV laws dipped from 94.2% (2023) to 43% (2024), then rebounded to 84.7% (2025), showing inconsistent advocacy efforts. Perception of convictions improved from 64% (2024) to 76.6% (2025), but actual enforcement is weak, as only two convictions in the past year. Attitudes toward informal justice mechanisms also saw shifts during this time.

Access to Legal Justice

Current State in 2025

Zamfara State has established basic structures for GBV response, though these remain concentrated in urban areas with limited reach to rural communities. Survivors typically report first to the police or sometimes to traditional leaders. If cases reach the police, they are opened, investigated, and possibly transferred to court. However, stigma, fear, and lack of belief in the system discourage survivors, with many cases withdrawn midway due to family pressure or community settlement.

Legal aid services are available but geographically limited. FIDA provides free legal aid to survivors of GBV from its office in Gusau, partnering with local NGOs and paralegals to extend coverage. However, FIDA estimates reaching only 30 to 40 percent of local government areas directly, with the rest remaining underserved. The Legal Aid Council is also active mainly in Gusau, with some presence in Shinkafi and Tsafe, but has not significantly expanded in the last year. However, public awareness of legal assistance and services stands at 75%.
Specialized GBV infrastructure remains minimal. The state has one GBV desk at police headquarters in Gusau, but coverage is very poor. Full Family Support Units, modeled on best practices, are not yet established across all commands or divisions. No specialized GBV court exists yet, and judges treat GBV cases alongside other criminal matters, which delays the process. While CSOs and donors have provided training sessions for selected police and judicial officers, training is not universal, and many frontline officers in rural LGAs remain untrained.

A critical weakness is witnessing safety. While 84.6% of residents say they would feel safe serving as witnesses, this represents stated willingness rather than actual protection mechanisms. The reality is that survivors and witnesses face threats and family pressure, contributing to high rates of case withdrawal.

Informal justice systems present a major obstacle to formal justice. Traditional and religious authorities are often the first port of call for families, and these informal systems frequently handle GBV matters through mediation, reconciliation, or customary sanctions. While accessible and sometimes restoring social harmony, they often prioritize compromise over criminal accountability, especially in serious sexual offenses. Despite these challenges, public preference for formal justice has increased. While 72.2% of residents would seek formal justice if they experienced GBV, this represents a more realistic assessment of actual behavior patterns, with 26.7% indicating they would seek informal justice and only 1.2% saying they would not seek justice at all.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public confidence in the formal justice system showed volatility over the assessment period. The proportion of residents willing to seek justice through official channels dropped dramatically from 100% in 2023 to 61% in 2024, before recovering to 72.2% in 2025. The corresponding preference for informal justice rose from 0% in 2023 to 34% in 2024, before declining to 26.7% in 2025, indicating persistent ambivalence about the formal system's effectiveness. Willingness to serve as a witness dropped from 98.3% in 2023 to 70% in 2024, confidence rebounded to 84.6% in 2025. Awareness of legal assistance services surged from 37% in 2024 to 75% in 2025, a dramatic increase that reflects intensified outreach by FIDA, the Legal Aid Council, and CSO partners.

Support Services

Current State in 2025

In Zamfara State, GBV response relies on a single formal SARC at King Fahad Women and Children Hospital (Gusau), offering medical, forensic, counselling, and referral services, but remote northern/border areas are severely underserved due to insecurity, poor roads, and no local sites, forcing costly/insecure journeys to Gusau. No statewide government shelters exist; a few ad-hoc CSO/donor-funded safe houses in select LGAs lack institutional funding. Still, 74.9% of respondents are aware of SARCs, among them, 50% agreed that the facilities are functional, equipped, and sustainable.

Referral pathways exist but are patchy. When survivors experience GBV in Zamfara, they can report to the police, present directly at the King Fahad SARC, approach health centres for initial care, or contact community-based organizations, FIDA, or Legal Aid Council for legal referral. Important informal entry points are religious and traditional leaders and community women's groups who often initiate referrals. The Ministry of Health confirmed that when survivors come to a hospital or clinic at the local level, they are referred to the SARC for special processes and services. However, health workers are not fully trained and lack information materials regarding survivors' needs.

In Zamfara State, 73% of people know about broader GBV support services, with varied awareness of reporting channels: 71.3% know hospitals/healthcare, 56.3% know police/security, but only 14.6% know support groups and 11.8% know about legal aid. Informal support systems, primarily families, still play the biggest role in supporting survivors. Families provide immediate shelter, moral support, and sometimes local mediation. Their accessibility is an asset, offering immediate, culturally sensitive assistance. Public perception has shifted significantly, with 84.4% of residents viewing informal support systems as helpful to GBV survivors.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Public awareness of SARCs and shelters dropped from 58.3% in 2023 to just 23% in 2024 and rebounded strongly to 74.9% in 2025. Confidence in facility quality remained relatively stable among those aware of services. In 2024, 48% of residents who are aware agreed these facilities were effective; this figure rose slightly to 50% (agree) and 48.2% (strongly agree) in 2025, representing 98.2% combined confidence. This consistency suggests that the Gusau SARC maintains operational standards even amid resource constraints.

Awareness of referral pathways diverged significantly by type. Healthcare facility pathways gained visibility, rising from 58.9% in 2024 to 71.3% in 2025 (though still below the 96.7% in 2023). Police/security pathways recovered modestly from 36.8% in 2024 to 56.3% in 2025, remaining far below the 2023 level of 96.7%. Most troubling is the collapse in awareness of legal representation pathways — from 52.5% in 2023 to 24.7% in 2024 to just 11.8% in 2025. This three-year decline indicates a major gap in communicating legal referral options despite stakeholders reporting that legal aid services remain available through FIDA and the Legal Aid Council. The perception of informal support systems fluctuated dramatically. After declining from 94.2% positive perception in 2023 to 43% in 2024, confidence that informal systems are better than formal systems rebounded to 84.4% in 2025.

Information and Awareness

Current State in 2025

Public exposure to GBV educational initiatives in Zamfara State shows moderate improvement, with 80.5% of residents indicating familiarity with GBV information and awareness programs. The perceived usefulness of these materials has also increased, with 22.8% of respondents finding content completely or mostly useful in 2025. However, NGOs serve as the main actors in providing awareness and services at the community level. These organizations run sensitization campaigns in schools, markets, and through radio programs, producing materials in Hausa to make messages accessible. In 2024, campaigns were conducted in Gusau, Tsafe, and Maru. Community-based organizations conduct house-to-house visits, offer social support to victims, train community volunteers, and engage religious leaders to speak about GBV.

The Ministry of Women Affairs has also facilitated targeted community sensitization campaigns including radio jingles and community dialogues in local languages explaining where to go for help. The ministry worked with partners to publicize the location of GBV desks at police stations. However, sustained, state-funded outreach and a toll-free or single hotline for the state remain outstanding priorities.

In contrast, the Ministry of Education has not conducted any awareness programs in recent years. Even during special days like International Women's Day, coverage is always low and mostly carried out by NGOs in urban areas. The ministry does not produce its own IEC materials on GBV, with

most materials in schools coming from NGOs or development partners distributed occasionally during awareness campaigns but not regularly. At the school level, GBV is not a formal part of the curriculum. Some NGOs run awareness sessions in secondary schools, but primary schools and tertiary levels are not covered. Teachers lack training to handle these topics.

There is overwhelming public support for GBV education, with 95.2% of residents believing that GBV and Child Sexual Abuse education should be taught in schools at all levels from nursery to tertiary. This support has remained consistent over the years, indicating strong community readiness for formal educational interventions that have not yet materialized.

Accessibility for persons with disabilities remains critically limited, and little progress has been made in ensuring that people with disabilities receive GBV education. The Ministry of Education confirmed: "We don't have braille materials or full sign interpretation in school services. This is a gap." Use of disability-inclusive formats shows limited reach — while 55.1% of respondents report using visual content, uptake of other formats remains low. Only 19% use audio or spoken content, 14.6% use simplified messages, 14.5% use sign interpretation, 12.5% use screen subtitling, and just 5.2% use braille-printed materials.

Changes Over Time (2023–2025)

Awareness of GBV information and awareness programs declined significantly from 96.7% in 2023 to 44% in 2024, before recovering to 80.5% in 2025. Perceived usefulness of GBV materials improved substantially. The proportion finding content "mostly useful" fell from 75.8% in 2023 to 24% in 2024, then rose to 59.7% in 2025, while "completely useful" responses declined from 21.7% in 2023 to 11% in 2024, then increased to 22.8% in 2025. Combined useful ratings reached 82.5% in 2025 compared to 97.5% in 2023 and just 35% in 2024.
Use of disability-inclusive formats showed mixed patterns. The proportion of respondents aware of audio or spoken content fluctuated from 18.3% in 2023 to 25.8% in 2024, then declined to 19% in 2025, while awareness of braille materials increased from 0% in 2023 to 7.9% in 2024 and then reduced to 5.2% in 2025. In contrast, awareness of visual content rose sharply from 3.3% in 2023 to 9.6% in 2024 and dramatically to 55.1% in 2025, indicating greater reliance on pictures, posters, and visual media in GBV awareness campaigns. Similarly, awareness of simplified messages increased from 0% in 2023 to 5.3% in 2024 and further increased to 14.6% in 2025, and screen-subtitled content grew from 0.83% in 2023 to 5.3% in 2024 and further to 12.5% in 2025. Use of sign interpretation also improved modestly, reaching 14.5% in 2025. These trends suggest growing adoption of visual and simplified formats but continuing underutilization of formats that specifically serve persons with hearing or visual impairments.

Budget and Spending

Budget Analysis 2024

₦2.87 billion is earmarked for gender-based violence (GBV) interventions, representing 0.66% of the state's total budget. This allocation, while modest relative to the state's population and ongoing security challenges, demonstrates a commitment to addressing GBV. However, the actual expenditure of ₦791.8 million accounts for only 27.6% of the budgeted amount, leaving approximately ₦2.08 billion unutilized. Although the per capita spending of ₦267.55 may appear adequate at first glance, it underscores the need for improved resource mobilization to ensure that the majority of allocated funds lead to effective and tangible services.

Changes Over Time (2022–2024)

In both the 2023 and 2024 budget years, Zamfara State, through its Ministry of Women Affairs, allocated ₦50 million annually for "Support for GBV Victims." In 2024, the state also introduced a major GBV-related capital project under the Ministry of Health: the "Construction of Farida VVF Hospital," with an allocation of ₦350 million. These allocations indicate a level of commitment to gender-based violence (GBV) response and prevention. However, as with many other states, the major challenge lies in fund releases and implementation. Zamfara recorded 0% execution on all GBV-specific interventions during the period under review.

Budget performance within the Ministry of Women Affairs and other relevant agencies showed some improvement, rising from 4% in 2023 to 27.6% in 2024. Despite this progress, the state remains significantly below the aspirational benchmark of at least 85% and above, highlighting ongoing structural and operational constraints. Per capita spending stood at ₦267.55 in 2024, ₦24.74 in 2023, and ₦17.26 in 2022. The sharp increase in 2024 after two years of extremely low spending reflects a sudden but uneven shift in investment, indicating that GBV-related funding in the state has lacked consistent prioritization over the three-year period.

KEY GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Index	Key Gaps	Recommendations
Laws and Policies	High public awareness of GBV laws (84.7%) contrasts sharply with only two convictions in the past year, revealing a critical enforcement gap despite a comprehensive legal framework.	Establish a dedicated GBV prosecution unit with specialized prosecutors trained in survivor-centred approaches, equipped with clear case management protocols to prevent withdrawals and fast-track trials.
	Early and child marriage remains widespread and directly linked to heightened GBV risk.	Launch a comprehensive state-level campaign against child marriage involving religious leaders, traditional authorities, and community women's groups. Establish economic incentives (conditional cash transfers, scholarships) for families who keep daughters in school past age 18, while simultaneously strengthening enforcement of child protection laws.
Access to Legal Justice	Only 30-40% of local governments have direct access to legal aid services, with most rural LGAs remaining underserved.	Expand legal aid services to all LGAs, prioritizing rural areas, and strengthen partnerships with NGOs for referral support.
	The state has only one GBV desk at police headquarters in Gusau, with no Family Support Units established across all police commands or divisions, and no specialized GBV courts.	Establish functional Family Support Units in all 14 police divisional headquarters across the state, with at least two trained officers per unit. Create at least one designated GBV court with two specialized judges to hear cases exclusively, ensuring expedited trials and survivor-friendly procedures.
	Informal justice systems routinely obstruct formal justice, with multiple documented cases of survivors being pressured to accept reconciliation and monetary compensation instead of prosecution.	Develop and disseminate clear protocols for managing cases where informal settlement is attempted, including mandatory referral to formal justice systems for all serious sexual offenses. Train traditional and religious leaders on the harm of forced reconciliation and the importance of supporting survivors' choices to pursue formal justice.
Support Services	Only one operational SARC located in Gusau serves the entire state, with remote rural LGAs in northern and border corridors severely underserved due to distance, insecurity, and poor transport links.	Establish at least two additional SARCs in underserved zones by 2026, prioritizing locations in northern LGAs and border areas. Partner with existing government hospitals to host these facilities, ensuring 24/7 operation with trained medical, psychosocial, and legal personnel.
	No comprehensive statewide network of government-run shelters exists, with only ad-hoc temporary arrangements through CSO and donor-funded pilots.	Establish at least one state-funded shelter with capacity for 15-20 survivors in Gusau within six months, with clear admission protocols, security measures, and wraparound services. Create additional shelter spaces in partnership with CSOs in at least three other LGAs, with guaranteed state budget allocation for operations.
	No toll-free or single state hotline exists for GBV reporting, limiting accessibility particularly for survivors in remote areas.	Establish a 24/7 toll-free GBV hotline operated by trained counsellors with capacity to receive reports in Hausa and English, provide immediate information and referrals, and dispatch mobile response teams where necessary. Widely publicize the hotline number through radio, posters in health facilities and police stations, and community announcements.
Information and Awareness	Awareness of legal representation pathways declined sharply from 24.7% (2024) to 11.8% (2025), indicating a major knowledge gap despite established referral systems among service providers.	Develop targeted public education campaigns specifically highlighting legal referral options, using radio jingles in Hausa and community dialogues. Ensure all frontline service providers at police stations, hospitals, and health centres actively inform survivors about available legal assistance and display visible information materials at all service points.
	GBV is not a formal part of the school curriculum at any level, with teachers lacking training to handle these topics, despite 95.2% public support for teaching GBV and Child Sexual Abuse education in schools.	Develop and adopt a comprehensive GBV and Child Sexual Abuse curriculum for integration into the state education system by 2026, covering all levels from nursery to tertiary. Train all teachers and school counsellors on GBV prevention, identification, and referral protocols through mandatory professional development programs.
	The Ministry of Education has not conducted awareness programs in recent years, with reliance entirely on NGOs and development partners for IEC materials and campaigns.	Allocate specific budget for the Ministry of Education to produce and distribute GBV IEC materials in Hausa and English to all schools quarterly. Mandate participation in annual GBV awareness weeks in all schools with activities tailored to different age groups, complementing NGO efforts with sustained government-led initiatives.
	Awareness of disability-inclusive formats remains critically low, with no braille materials or sign interpretation in school services and no trained officers in government agencies to respond to cases involving persons with disabilities.	Train designated GBV focal officers in all government ministries and agencies on disability-inclusive communication, including sign interpretation, within 12 months. Mandate production of all GBV materials in accessible formats (braille, audio, simplified text, pictorial representation) and ensure at least one sign language interpreter is available at the SARC and police GBV desks during operating hours.
Budget and Spending	0% execution rate on GBV-specific line items and overall 27.57% budget utilization in 2024 reveals severe implementation failures, with ₦2.08 billion of the ₦2.87 billion allocation remaining unspent despite documented commitments like the ₦350 million Farida VVF Hospital construction.	Strengthen GBV budget execution by establishing clear implementation plans, ensuring timely fund release, and conducting regular performance reviews to translate allocations into impactful interventions.



PART 5

Appendix

Appendix A

Distribution of survey respondents across selected local government areas and wards in each state

State	LGA	Ward	Number of Respondents
Abia	Aba North	Eziukwu	86
Abia	Aba South	Eziama	101
Abia	Arochukwu	Ohafor ward 2	133
Abia	Bende	Bende	111
Abia	Ikwuano	Oboro I	113
Abia	Obingwa	Abayi II	85
Abia	Ohafia	Isiama	162
Abia	Osisioma	Amasato	85
Abia	Umuahia North	Urban II	113
Abia	Umuahia South	Ahiaukwu I	112
Adamawa	Demsa	New Demsa	106
Adamawa	Fufore	Ribadu	106
Adamawa	Girei	Modire/Viniklang	110
Adamawa	Madagali	Gulak	116
Adamawa	Michika	Bazza	115
Adamawa	Mubi South	Lokowa	111
Adamawa	Numan	Imburu	110
Adamawa	Shelleng	Kiri	90
Adamawa	Song	Sigire	104
Adamawa	Toungo	Toungo II	115
Adamawa	Yola South	Mbamoi	96
Akwa Ibom	Abak	Abak Urban III	89
Akwa Ibom	Eket	Urban I	88
Akwa Ibom	Ibesikpo Asutan	Ibesikpo I	70
Akwa Ibom	Ika	Ikot Okoro	85
Akwa Ibom	Ikono	Ndiya/Ikot Idaha	85
Akwa Ibom	Ikot Ekpene	Ikot Ekpene I	87
Akwa Ibom	Itu	West Itam	80
Akwa Ibom	Nsit Atai	Eastern Nsit I	67
Akwa Ibom	Okobo	Upenekang	90
Akwa Ibom	Oron	Oron Urban I	90
Akwa Ibom	Udung Uko	Udung Uko I	89
Akwa Ibom	Uruan	Southern Uruan I	75
Akwa Ibom	Uyo	Uyo Urban I	89
Anambra	Aguata	Ezinifite I	111
Anambra	Awka North	Ebenebe I	120
Anambra	Awka South	Amawbia I	111
Anambra	Ayamelum	Anaku	111
Anambra	Dunukofia	Ukpo I	116
Anambra	Ekwusigo	Ozubulu I	123
Anambra	Idemili South	Ojoto	111
Anambra	Nnewi North	Otolo II	111
Anambra	Onitsha North	Woluwo Layout	111
Anambra	Onitsha South	Fegge II	112
Anambra	Orumba South	Owerre-Ezukala II	121
Anambra	Oyi	Awkuzu I	117
Bauchi	Alkaleri	Birin/ Gigara/ Yankari	94
Bauchi	Bauchi	Birshi/Miri	97

State	LGA	Ward	Number of Respondents
Bauchi	Darazo	Darazo	118
Bauchi	Dass	Bundot	94
Bauchi	Giade	Zabi	93
Bauchi	Itas Gadau	Bilkicheri	94
Bauchi	Jama'Are	Jama'Are "D"	94
Bauchi	Katagum	Ragwam/Magonshi	95
Bauchi	Ningi	Bashe	130
Bauchi	Tafawa Balewa	Dajin	61
Bauchi	Warji	Katanga	112
Bayelsa	Brass	Brass I	111
Bayelsa	Ekeremor	Oporomor III	169
Bayelsa	Kolokuma/Opokuma	Kaiama	111
Bayelsa	Nembe	Ogbolomabiri I	111
Bayelsa	Ogbia	Otuabula	111
Bayelsa	Sagbama	Toru-Ebeni	166
Bayelsa	Southern Ijaw	Amassoma III	111
Bayelsa	Yenagoa	Epie II	112
Benue	Buruku	Shorov	84
Benue	Gboko	Gboko South	87
Benue	Katsina-Ala	Katsina-Ala Township	90
Benue	Konshisha	Mbayegh/Mbaikyer	90
Benue	Makurdi	Bar	96
Benue	Obi	Obirike-Ito	67
Benue	Ogbadibo	Al-Oodo I	73
Benue	Ohimini	Idekpa	72
Benue	Okpokwu	Ugbokolo	72
Benue	Otukpo	Otukpo Town Central	73
Benue	Tarkaa	Tongov	84
Benue	Ushongo	Lessel	85
Benue	Vandeikya	Vandeikya Township	84
Borno	Askira Uba	Uba	83
Borno	Bayo	Briyel	85
Borno	Biu	Dugja	87
Borno	Dikwa	Dikwa	101
Borno	Hawul	Kwajaffa/Hang	85
Borno	Jere	Mairi	100
Borno	Konduga	Auno/Chabol	100
Borno	Kwaya Kusar	Kubuku	86
Borno	Maiduguri	Gwange I	100
Borno	Ngala	Ngala	100
Borno	Shani	Shani	85
Cross River	Akpabuyo	Atimbo East	83
Cross River	Boki	Abo	114
Cross River	Calabar Municipality	Ward 1	84
Cross River	Calabar South	Ward 3	84
Cross River	Etung	Bendeghe Ekiem	111
Cross River	Ikom	Ikom Urban I	111
Cross River	Obanliku	Bendi II	111
Cross River	Odukpani	Odukpani Central	84
Cross River	Ogoja	Ogoja Urban I	221
Cross River	Yala	Okuku	117
Delta	Bomadi	Bomadi	96
Delta	Ethiope East	Okpara Inland	90
Delta	Ika South	Emuhu	94
Delta	Ndokwa East	Ashaka/Ushie	93
Delta	Okpe	Orerokpe	87
Delta	Oshimili North	Illah	97

State	LGA	Ward	Number of Respondents
Delta	Patani	Patani 2	114
Delta	Ughelli North	Afiesiere	95
Delta	Ukwuani	Umuebu	105
Delta	Uvwie	Urhumarho	101
Delta	Warri North	Abigborodo	86
Delta	Warri South	Ubeji	99
Ebonyi	Abakaliki	Azuiyiokwu Layout	93
Ebonyi	Afikpo North	Ezeke Amasiri	120
Ebonyi	Ebonyi	Kpirikpiri	95
Ebonyi	Ezza North	Okposi Umuoghara	90
Ebonyi	Ezza South	Onueke Urban	94
Ebonyi	Ikwo	Echialike	97
Ebonyi	Ishielu	Ezillo I	89
Ebonyi	Izzi	Agbaja Offia Onwe	91
Ebonyi	Ohaozara	Okposi Okwu	118
Ebonyi	Ohaukwu	Ezzamgbo	89
Ebonyi	Onicha	Ebia Oshiri	118
Edo	Akoko Edo	Igarra II	135
Edo	Esan Central	Ugbegun	112
Edo	Esan West	Emuhi / Ukpenu / Ujoelen / Igor	110
Edo	Etsako West	Auchi II	122
Edo	Igueben	Ekekhen / Idumuogo / Egbiki	116
Edo	Ikpoba - Okha	Idogbo	115
Edo	Oredo	Urubui / Evbiewen / Iwehen	129
Edo	Ovia North East	Iguoshodin	116
Edo	Owan West	Sabo	124
Ekiti	Ado	Dalimore	117
Ekiti	Ayekire (Gbonyin)	Ijan	112
Ekiti	Efon	Efon 2	151
Ekiti	Ido/Osi	Ido 2	114
Ekiti	Ikere	Agbado Oyo	112
Ekiti	Irepodun/ Ifelodun	Iyin 1	113
Ekiti	Isi/Orun	Ode Ise	113
Ekiti	Moba	Erimope 2	114
Ekiti	Oye	Oye 1	113
Enugu	Awgu	Ihe	146
Enugu	Enugu East	Umuchigbo	111
Enugu	Enugu North	New Haven	120
Enugu	Ezeagu	Oghe 1	111
Enugu	Igbo-Eze South	Unadu	108
Enugu	Nkanu West	Obe	99
Enugu	Nsukka	Ihe	163
Enugu	Udenu	Orba 1	111
Enugu	Udi	Eke	111
FCT Abuja	AMAC	Kabusa	170
FCT Abuja	Abaji	Abaji Central	170
FCT Abuja	Bwari	Bwari Central	171
FCT Abuja	Gwagwalada	Kutunku	172
FCT Abuja	Kuje	Kuje	171
FCT Abuja	Kwali	Kilankwa	173
Gombe	Akko	Tumu	170
Gombe	Balanga	Swa	85
Gombe	Billiri	Baganje North	95
Gombe	Dukku	Malala	114
Gombe	Funakye	Bajoga West	113
Gombe	Kaltungo	Kaltungo West	83

State	LGA	Ward	Number of Respondents
Gombe	Kwami	Malam Sidi	112
Gombe	Shomgom	Filiya	86
Gombe	Yamaltu Deba	Liji	167
Imo	Ikeduru	Akabo	89
Imo	Isiala Mbano	Amaraku	113
Imo	Isu	Ekwe 1	90
Imo	Ngor Okpala	Oharkelem/Nneorie	94
Imo	Nwangele	Abaja	96
Imo	Obowo	Umuariam/Achara	115
Imo	Oguta	Oguta A	89
Imo	Okigwe	Urban Ward 1	126
Imo	Orlu	Amaifeke	93
Imo	Owerri Municipal	Ikenegbu 1	92
Imo	Owerri West	Obinze	112
Jigawa	Dutse	Limawa	111
Jigawa	Gagarawa	Gagaraw Gari	92
Jigawa	Gumel	Gusau	95
Jigawa	Gwaram	Basirka	113
Jigawa	Hadejia	Kasuwar Kudu	95
Jigawa	Jahun	Jahun	110
Jigawa	Kafin Hausa	Kafin Hausa	94
Jigawa	Kaugama	Dakaiyawa	95
Jigawa	Kazaure	Unguwar Arewa	94
Jigawa	Malam Madori	Garin Gabas	92
Jigawa	Roni	Amaryawa	92
Kaduna	Birnin Gwari	Magajin Gari I	83
Kaduna	Chikun	Narayi	97
Kaduna	Giwa	Kidandan	84
Kaduna	Igabi	Rigasa	99

State	LGA	Ward	Number of Respondents
Kaduna	Ikara	Saulawa	80
Kaduna	Jaba	Chori	83
Kaduna	Jema'A	Kafanchan A	100
Kaduna	Kaura	Manchok	84
Kaduna	Lere	Lere	86
Kaduna	Sabon Gari	Basawa	89
Kaduna	Soba	Soba	83
Kaduna	Zangon Kataf	Zonkwa	100
Kano	Ajingi	Ajingi	66
Kano	Bunkure	Bunkure	67
Kano	Dambatta	Dambatta West	69
Kano	Dawakin Tofa	Dawanau	69
Kano	Fagge	Sabongari West	67
Kano	Kabo	Kabo	69
Kano	Kibiya	Fassi	70
Kano	Kumbotso	Danbare	66
Kano	Kura	Karfi	69
Kano	Rimin Gado	Rimin Gado	66
Kano	Sumaila	Sumaila	67
Kano	Tofa	Janguza	66
Kano	Ungogo	Rangaza	67
Kano	Warawa	Danlasan	68
Kano	Wudil	Wudil	70
Katsina	Batagarawa	Ajiwa	87
Katsina	Daura	Kusugu	84
Katsina	Dutsinma	Kutawa	86
Katsina	Funtua	Maska	86
Katsina	Ingawa	Jobe	84
Katsina	Kafur	Masari	91

State	LGA	Ward	Number of Respondents
Katsina	Kankia	Kafin Soli	88
Katsina	Malumfashi	Karfi	105
Katsina	Mashi	Mashi	84
Katsina	Bakori	Kabomo	88
Katsina	Rimi	Kadandani	83
Katsina	Safana	Safana	86
Kebbi	Aleiro	Aleiro	84
Kebbi	Arewa Dandi	Kangiwa	111
Kebbi	Argungu	Argungu Central	207
Kebbi	Badugo	Badugo	109
Kebbi	Birnin Kebbi	Birnin Kebbi Central	84
Kebbi	Fakai	Fakai	82
Kebbi	Jega	Jega Central	82
Kebbi	Kalgo	Kalgo	82
Kebbi	Koko/Besse	Koko	81
Kebbi	Wasagu/Danko	Danko	84
Kebbi	Yauri	Birnin Yauri	83
Kogi	Adavi	Inozomi/Osisi/Ipaku	113
Kogi	Ankpa	Suburb 1	69
Kogi	Bassa	Mozum	67
Kogi	Dekina	Anyigba	110
Kogi	Idah	Ega	68
Kogi	Ijumu	Iyara	86
Kogi	Kabba/Bunu	Okekubun	87
Kogi	Lokoja	Lokoja – E	86
Kogi	Mopa-Muro	Agbajogun	86
Kogi	Ofu	Ejule Alla	66
Kogi	Ogori-Magongo	Okibo	114
Kogi	Okene	Obehira Uvetta	116

State	LGA	Ward	Number of Respondents
Kwara	Asa	Ogele	90
Kwara	Edu	Tsaragi III	111
Kwara	Ekiti	Osi 1	88
Kwara	Ifelodun	Share 11	84
Kwara	Ilorin East	Gambari I	88
Kwara	Ilorin South	Balogun-Fulani III	88
Kwara	Ilorin West	Oloje	89
Kwara	Moro	Shao	111
Kwara	Offa	Essa C	88
Kwara	Oke Ero	Ekan	88
Kwara	Patigi	Patigi I	113
Lagos	Agege	Dopemu	112
Lagos	Badagry	Ganho	114
Lagos	Epe	Popo Oba	112
Lagos	Eti-Osa	Obalende	111
Lagos	Ikorodu	Owutu	115
Lagos	Kosofe	Ketu	115
Lagos	Lagos Island	Idumagbo	114
Lagos	Mushin	Papa Ajao	164
Lagos	Surulere	Tejuosho	111
Nasarawa	Akwanga	Akwanga East	113
Nasarawa	Doma	Madaki	121
Nasarawa	Karu	Uke	111
Nasarawa	Keana	Oki	112
Nasarawa	Keffi	Kofar Goriya	111
Nasarawa	Kokona	Garaku	111
Nasarawa	Lafia	Ciroma	110
Nasarawa	Nasarawa Eggon	Nasarawa Eggon	113
Nasarawa	Wamba	Wamba East	91

State	LGA	Ward	Number of Respondents
Niger	Bida	Masaga 1	86
Niger	Bosso	Bosso Central 2	77
Niger	Chanchaga	Minna Central	73
Niger	Edati	Enagi	73
Niger	Gurara	Lambata	69
Niger	Katcha	Katcha	86
Niger	Lavun	Kutigi	87
Niger	Mariga	Bangi	87
Niger	Mashegu	Mashegu	85
Niger	Munya	Sarkin Pawa	71
Niger	Paikoro	Paiko Central	69
Niger	Rijau	Rijau	88
Niger	Wushishi	Zungeru	74
Ogun	Abeokuta South	Ake 2	105
Ogun	Ado-Odo/Ota	Ado-Odo 1	111
Ogun	Ijebu-North	Ago-Iwoye Urban 1	83
Ogun	Ijebu-Ode	Ijasi/Idepo	90
Ogun	Imeko-Afon	Imeko	134
Ogun	Obafemi-Owode	Oba	112
Ogun	Odeda	Osiele	112
Ogun	Odogbolu	Ibefun	82
Ogun	Sagamu	Sabo 1	84
Ogun	Yewa North	Ayetoro 1	112
Ondo	Akoko North West	Odo-Irun/Oyinmo	113
Ondo	Akoko South West	Akungba I	111
Ondo	Akure South	Owode/ Imuagun	112
Ondo	Idanre	Irowo	112
Ondo	Ilaje	Mahin III	111
Ondo	Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo	Ileoluji IV	112

State	LGA	Ward	Number of Respondents
Ondo	Okitipupa	Okitipupa I	112
Ondo	Ondo East	Ateru/ Otasan/ Igba	111
Ondo	Owo	Isaipen	111
Osun	Boluwaduro	Oke Baale	89
Osun	Boripe	Oja Oba	74
Osun	Ede North	Olusokun	99
Osun	Ede South	Kuye	84
Osun	Ife Central	Ilare I	99
Osun	Ife North	Ipetumdu	91
Osun	Ife South	Ayesan	83
Osun	Ifedayo	Balogun	71
Osun	Ifelodun	Owode	70
Osun	Isokan	Alapomu	109
Osun	Iwo	Isale Oba	93
Osun	Oriade	Iwoye	87
Osun	Osogbo	Oke Otan	99
Oyo	Afijio	Awe II	98
Oyo	Akinyele	Ojoo/Ajibode/Laniba	101
Oyo	Egbeda	Olodo/Alakia	89
Oyo	Ibadan North	Ward III	125
Oyo	Ibadan North East	Ward 9	81
Oyo	Ibadan North West	Ward 10	73
Oyo	Ibadan South East	Ward 9	124
Oyo	Ido	Apete	82
Oyo	Iseyin	Koso I	100
Oyo	Kajola	Isia	93
Oyo	Ogbomosho North	Aaje/Ogunbado	142
Oyo	Ogbomosho South	Ijeru I	80
Oyo	Olorunsogo	Onigbeti I (Iyamopo)	89

State	LGA	Ward	Number of Respondents
Oyo	Oluyole	Olomi/Olunde	109
Plateau	Bassa	Buhit	113
Plateau	Jos North	Tudun Wada/ Kabong	129
Plateau	Jos South	Vwang	112
Plateau	Kanke	Kabwir Pada	112
Plateau	Langtang North	Pajat	115
Plateau	Langtang South	Mabudi	111
Plateau	Mangu	Mangu II	112
Plateau	Pankshin	Pankshin Central	111
Plateau	Shendam	Shendam Central A	111
Rivers	Ahoada-East	Ahoada I	84
Rivers	Ahoada-Wast	Okarki	84
Rivers	Asari Toru	Buguma East I	84
Rivers	Degema	Degema I	83
Rivers	Eleme	Akpajo	84
Rivers	Emohua	Emohua I	83
Rivers	Gokana	Bodo I	103
Rivers	Ikwerre	Igwuruta	83
Rivers	Khana	Bori	85
Rivers	Obio-Akpor	Elelenwo	103
Rivers	Oyigbo	Oyigbo Central	87
Rivers	Portharcourt	Portharcourt Township	84
Sokoto	Bodinga	Bodinga/Tauma	91
Sokoto	Gada	Gada	88
Sokoto	Goronyo	Goronyo	95
Sokoto	Gwadabawa	Gwadabawa	92
Sokoto	Illela	Illela	90
Sokoto	Kware	Kware	92

State	LGA	Ward	Number of Respondents
Sokoto	Shagari	Shagari	90
Sokoto	Sokoto North	Magajin Gari B	90
Sokoto	Sokoto South	Tudun Wada A	89
Sokoto	Tambuwal	Tambuwal/Shinfiri	90
Sokoto	Wamakko	Bado/Kasarawa	90
Sokoto	Yabo	Yabo B	89
Taraba	Ardo Kola	Sunkani	111
Taraba	Bali	Badakoshi	112
Taraba	Donga	Fada	111
Taraba	Gassol	Mutum Biyu I	110
Taraba	Kurmi	Baisa	142
Taraba	Lau	Lau I	135
Taraba	Takum	Manya	111
Taraba	Wukari	Puje	113
Taraba	Zing	Zing A I	112
Yobe	Bade North	Katuzu/Takari	130
Yobe	Damaturu East	Nayinawa/Bulabulin	105
Yobe	Fika South	Daya/Chana/Kukar Gadu	84
Yobe	Fune South	Ngelzarma	99
Yobe	Geidam East	Hausari Bakin Kasuwa	85
Yobe	Gujba East	Gujba/Katarko	84
Yobe	Karasuwa North	Bukarti	130
Yobe	Nangere South	Sabongari-Nangere	65
Yobe	Potiskum South	Bolawa 'B'	75
Yobe	Tarmuwa East	Mafa	99
Yobe	Yusufari North	Sunomari	127
Zamfara	Anka	Dan Galadima	120
Zamfara	Bakura	Bakura	120

State	LGA	Ward	Number of Respondents
Zamfara	Bungudu	Bungudu	87
Zamfara	Gusau	Gusau	112
Zamfara	Kaura Namoda	Kaura Namoda	107
Zamfara	Maradun	Nassarawa	120
Zamfara	Maru	Maru	97
Zamfara	Shinkafi	Shinkafi	136
Zamfara	Talata Mafara	Mafara	121
Zamfara	Tsafe	Tsafe	86

Appendix B

Number of Key Informant Interviews (KII) conducted per state

State	KII Count
Abia	10
Adamawa	10
Akwa Ibom	10
Anambra	10
Bauchi	8
Bayelsa	10
Benue	6
Borno	7
Cross River	10
Delta	10
Ebonyi	7
Edo	9
Ekiti	9
Enugu	8
FCT	9
Gombe	6
Imo	10
Jigawa	10
Kaduna	9
Kano	10
Katsina	9
Kebbi	9
Kogi	8
Kwara	9
Lagos	7
Nasarawa	6
Niger	9
Ogun	8
Ondo	10
Osun	6
Oyo	9
Plateau	10
Rivers	9
Sokoto	10
Taraba	7
Yobe	9
Zamfara	8
Total	321

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