



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



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Yobe STATE

Pride of the Sahel

Yobe Central Mosque

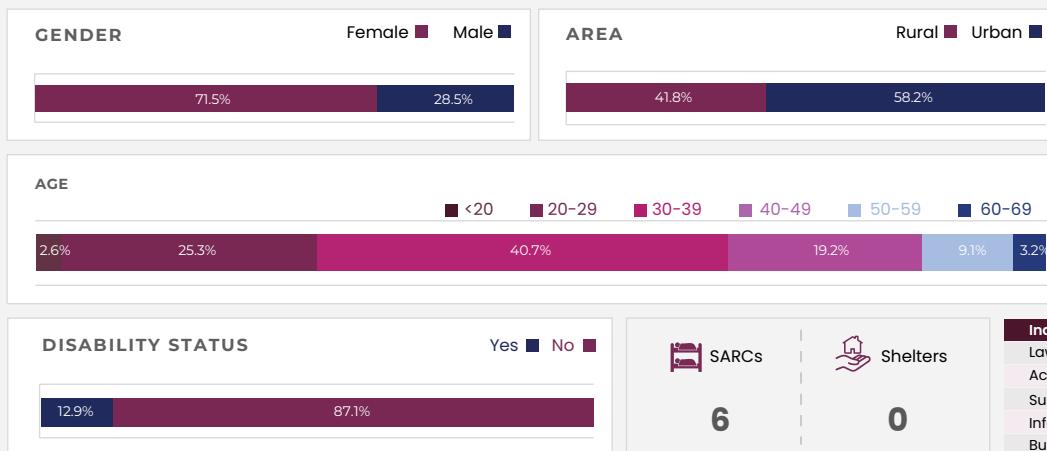
Yobe State

Population: 4,358,571

49.2% Female 50.8% Male

Overall Grade 67.5%

Respondents Demography (n = 1,083)



Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

BUDGET ALLOCATION

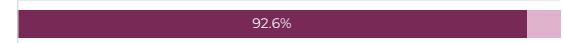
₦253.63m

(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)



Capital ■ Personnel ■ Overhead ■ (Actual Spend)



Per Capita Spending

₦109.61

| Total Grades | | |
|--------------|-------|---|
| 75.0% | 62.5% | — |
| 68.8% | 56.3% | — |
| 75.0% | 62.5% | — |

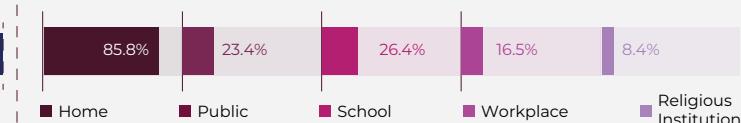
GBV Context 2025

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



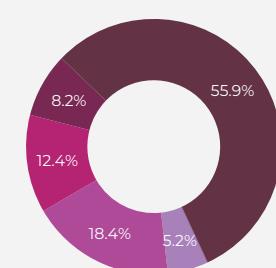
No ■ Yes ■

Where did you or the person experience the GBV?

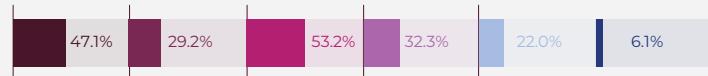


Home ■ Public ■ School ■ Workplace ■ Religious Institution ■

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



What form of GBV did you or the person experience?

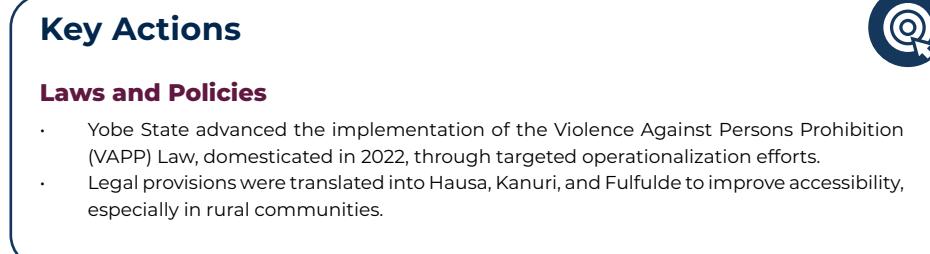
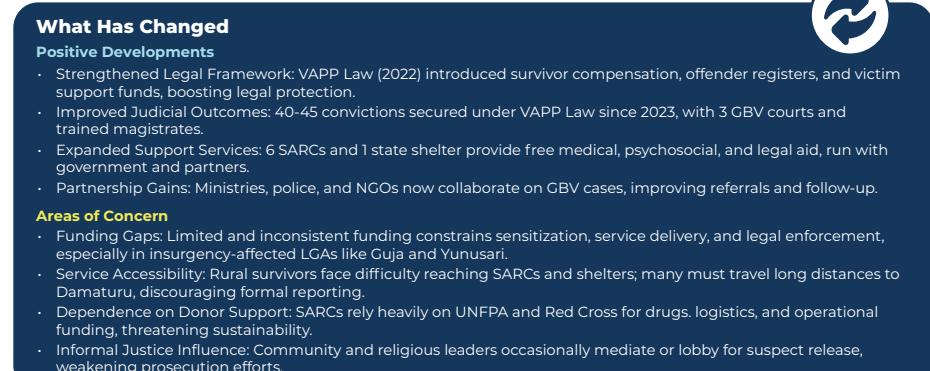
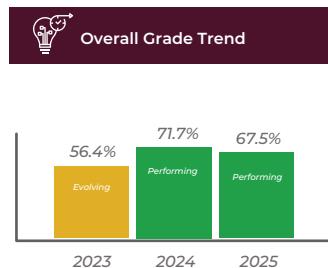


■ Domestic ■ Physical ■ Sexual ■ Mental ■ Economic ■ Cultural practices

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



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 ■

83.4% 16.6%



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

Yes ■ No ■

84.0% 16.0%



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

Yes ■ No ■

52.1% 47.9%

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 ■

35.2% 64.8%



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

Yes ■ No ■

56.4% 38.3% 2.1% 1.8%

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



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

Yes ■ No ■

68.3% 58.4% 17.2% 17.6% 12.1%

■ 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 ■

67.7% 32.3%

ACCESS TO LEGAL JUSTICE



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

51.7% 46.8% 1.5%

■ 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?

70.8% 12.5% 16.7%

■ 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

67.3% 32.7%

INFORMATION AND AWARENESS



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

Yes ■ No ■

80.0% 20.0%



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

37.0% 27.5% 25.9% 9.7%

■ 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?

■ 62.1% ■ 24.9% ■ 14.2% ■ 32.0% ■ 12.7% ■ 14.7% ■ 14.1% ■ 15.1%

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

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

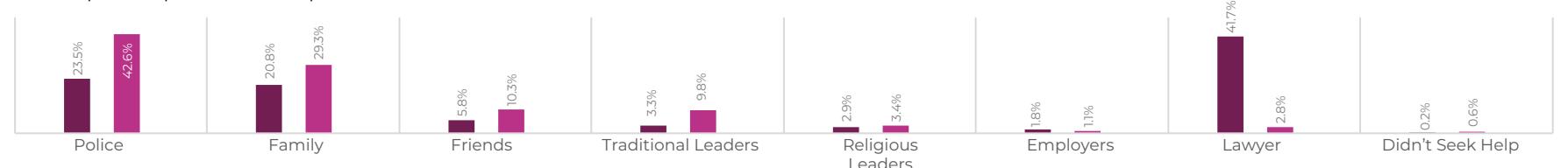
What form of GBV did you or the person experience?



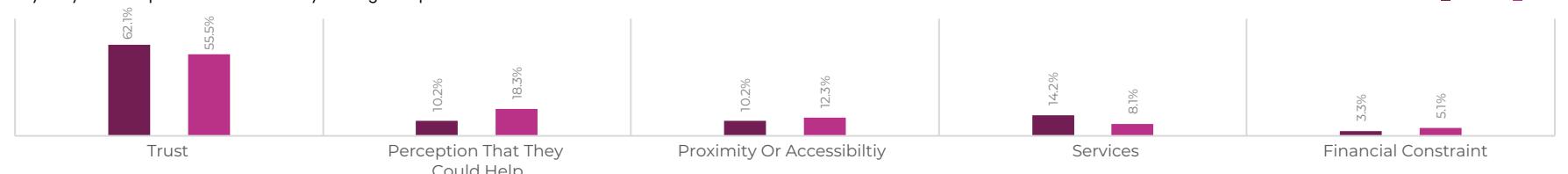
Where did you or the person experience the GBV?



Where did you or the person first seek help?

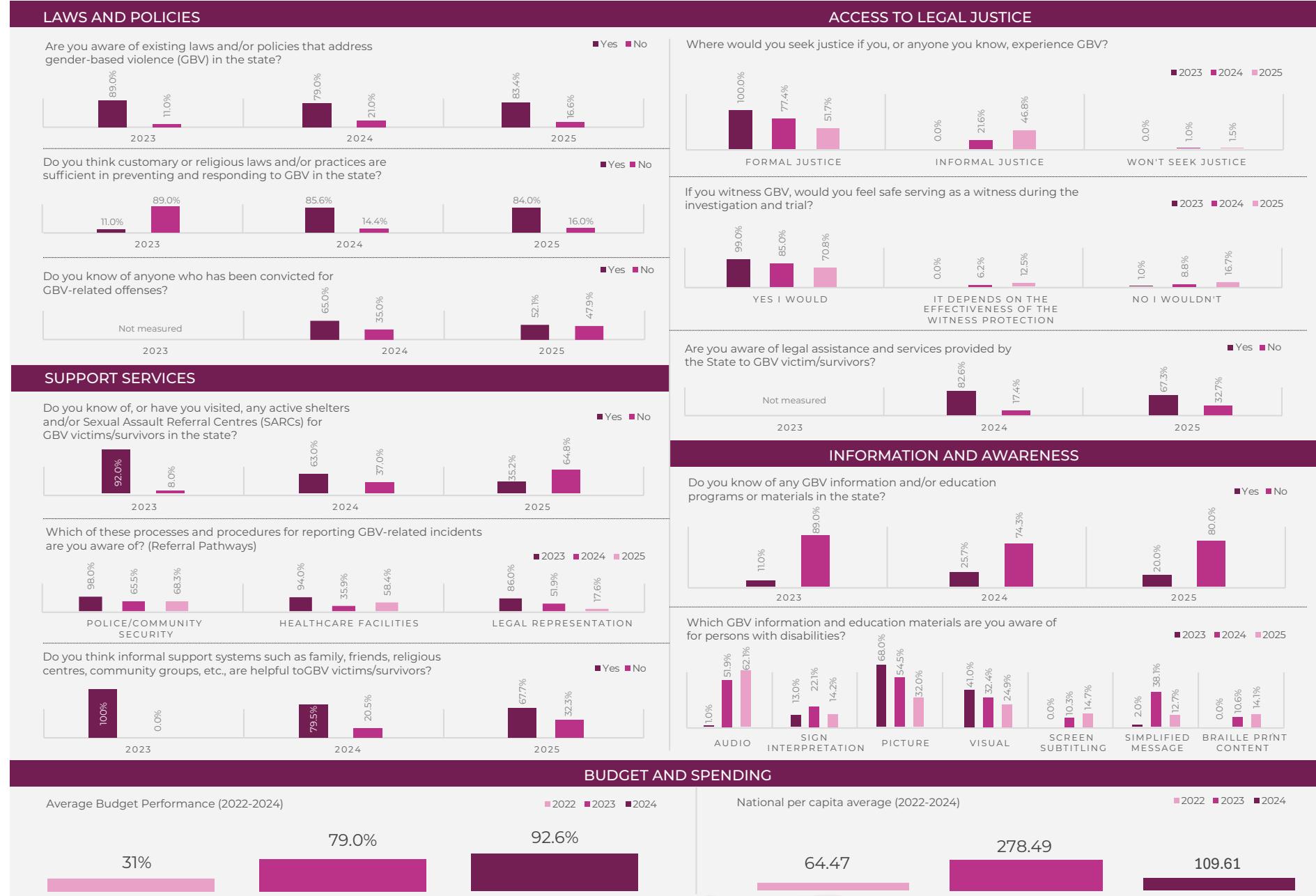


Why did you or the person choose where you sought help?



Yobe State GBV Trend (2023-2025)

Overall Grade **67%**





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. |

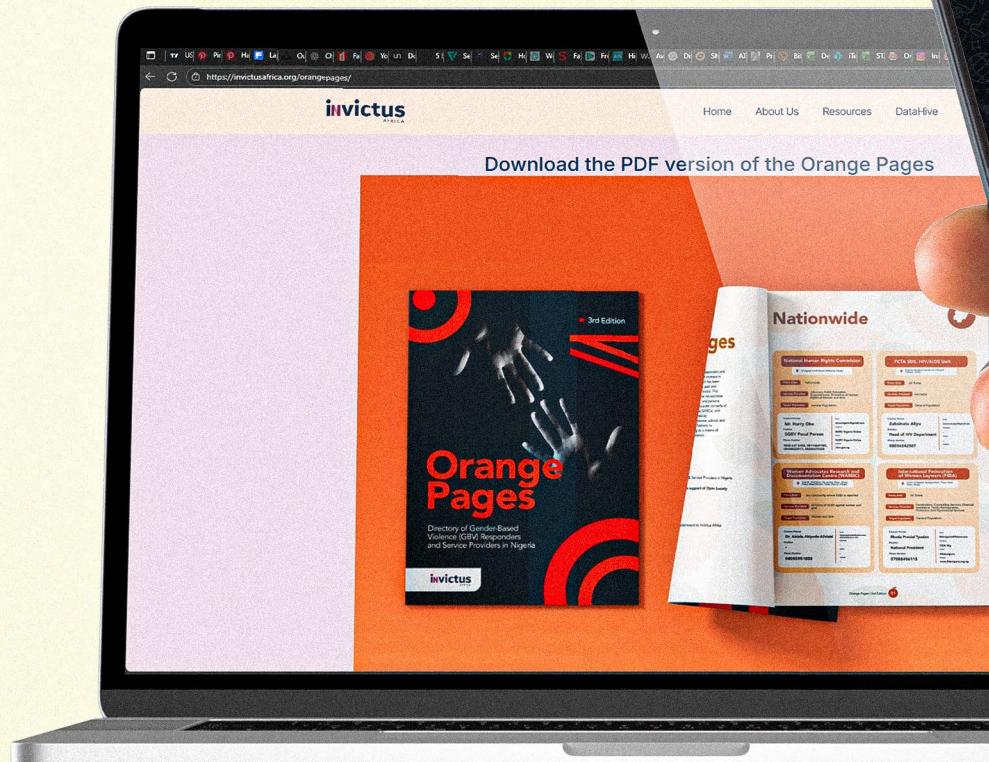


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