

MANAGING CONFLICT IN NIGERIA

THE PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN YOBE STATE

The Managing Conflict in Nigeria (MCN) Programme aims to support Nigerians with conflict resolution, at both the state and community level. Our work focuses on reducing violence, promoting stability and strengthening resilience so that Nigerians feel more safe and secure in their communities.

We work in North Eastern Nigeria in three focal states – Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe – some of the country's most conflict-affected regions.

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This policy brief and other MCN publications are available at www.justice-security.ng



INTRODUCTION

This scoping study is not generalised research. It is a rapid assessment to understand the policy and programme pathways to addressing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) against women, girls, and boys in Yobe State, the northeastern geo-political zone, and beyond. The reported increase in violence in northeast Nigeria led the Managing Conflict in Nigeria (MCN) Programme to conduct a rapid assessment into the prevalence of SGBV in the state. The study aimed to understand the causes, types, and trends of SGBV in some communities.

The study draws on a desk review of research reports and programme documents and the authors' observations - who live in Yobe and relate with local citizens. Secondary data complemented qualitative data gathering through interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs), held across three local governments areas: Damaturu, Gujba, and Potiskum. Respondents were drawn across the security sector, Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs), government, women, young people, civil society, disability communities, and survivors of SGBV.



Findings are summarised into what is reinforced, what is new, and what needs further research.

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) affects women, girls, and boys and has devastating and long-lasting consequences. The Ngozi Okonjo Iweala (NOI) polls show that one in every three girls would have experienced sexual assault before 25 years. The Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey reports show that 28% and 7% of women of reproductive age have experienced physical or sexual violence, while 25% of married women have reported emotional, physical and sexual abuse from their spouse. These figures are high in the northeastern part of the country, with 29.5% and 15.7% of women reporting physical and sexual abuse, respectively. This situation is rooted in gender-based discrimination, social norms and gender stereotypes and can be exacerbated in humanitarian settings characterised by many uncertainties of which women and girls are at the receiving end. Yobe is no different.

The Demographics of Yobe

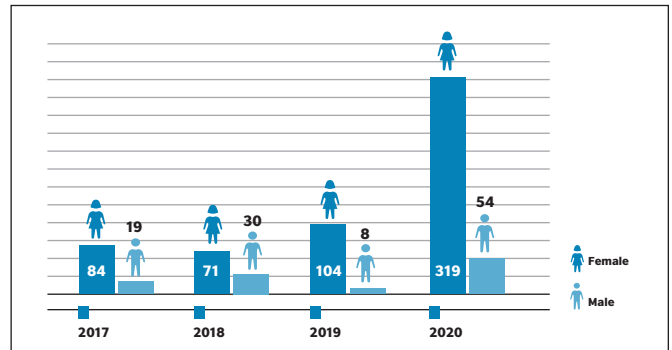
Yobe State, in northeastern Nigeria consists of 17 local government areas (LGAs) with multi-ethnic groups. There are Christians in Yobe, but the population is mainly Muslim, and Sharia law in social and family affairs is valid. Persistent security incidents associated with Boko Haram attacks on Yobe State communities have disrupted the local population's lives and livelihoods and displaced 112,269 people between 2015 and 2017. As the frequency of attacks intensified during the past several years, agricultural production and market performance also suffered. Consequently, staple food and cash crop production in Yobe and neighbouring Borno state has declined below average, while in some worst affected areas, there has been no production for three consecutive years. The majority of women in Yobe do unpaid reproductive work as homemakers. Few women, compared to men, engage in productive work as wholesale and retail traders, trading in food items such as dry fish, baobab powder, okro and clothing and related accessories. They sell in markets and from office to office to civil servants, while some girls hawk on the streets.

FINDINGS

Data from Sexual Assault Referral Centres

Data from SARCs in 2017 to 2020 highlights the gender and age range of those experiencing SGBV (see figure 1). Both females and males experience SGBV, but females are more affected. Those below age 18 experience SGBV more.

Figure 1: SARC clients by sex and age

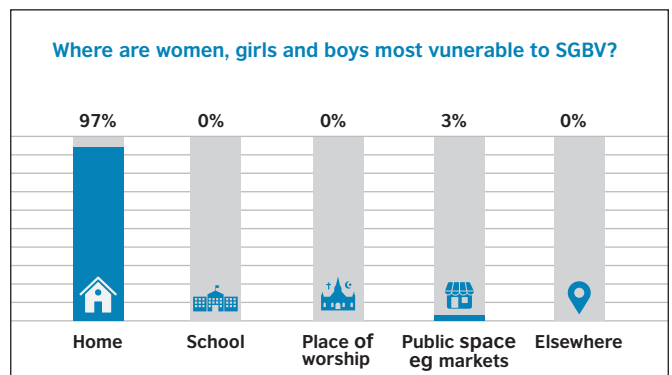


Source: SARC Statistics 2017-2020

Vulnerability at Home

Women and children are no longer safe in places where they were traditionally safe. Most studies show that SGBV occurs everywhere, including in families. The result of a poll conducted during the 2020 National Annual SARC Stakeholder Conference depicts this worrisome situation (see figure 2).

Figure 2: Where are women, girls and boys most vulnerable to SGBV?



Source: Amina Salihu, Mentimeter Poll at 2020 National SARC Network Conference

While there is limited data on the impact of COVID-19 on women - especially those with disabilities - available global evidence shows that domestic and gender-based violence - mostly perpetrated against women - stands out as one of the significant social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation has arisen chiefly from psychosocial and economic frustrations imposed by rapidly shrinking household resources, prolonged overdependence, limited access to services, and pre-COVID-19 existing negative culture-based gender beliefs and practices. As a result of heightened tensions in their homes and institutions, many women and girls with disabilities might suffer domestic and sexual violence more than ever. Those who survive violence may face additional obstacles to flee violent situations or access protection or essential life-saving services (such as sexual and reproductive health services). This could be due to factors such as lockdown or quarantine, inaccessible SGBV

intervention programmes, inaccessible public awareness information on COVID-19, as well as SGBV prevention and reporting protocols.

The SGBV Referral Pathway

An invisible but very important part of the SGBV infrastructure is the referral pathway. The pathway highlights the trail from the occurrence of abuse to finding response and protection, the roadmap to finding help, and whether the process is understood and known to the people.

The scoping study highlights the referral pathway in Yobe, based on information derived from the focus group discussions. The findings demonstrate that reporting may originate from a myriad of sources, including families, traditional rulers, community law enforcement agencies, e.g., vigilantes and Hisbas (community sharia authority), hospitals or the sexual assault referral centres. This initial report may then be escalated to the police and eventually to the courts. A common referral pathway begins with the family who submits a report to the local law enforcement system and then work with the police by reporting the case. The police escalate the case to SARC, which is located in the hospital, so that physical and psychosocial care is administered. Depending on the SARC advice, the police may arraign the offender in court via the legal system prosecution pathway. The court then examines the case and passes judgement which may be sentencing or an acquittal. Post court or during the legal process, the victims get continued psychosocial care and livelihood skills. This is the ideal scenario.

The reality from the scoping study is different. Families may not report a case to the Hisba or Vigilante. They can instead reach someone else they trust. Where they do, report to the Hisba, they may choose to intervene at the community level outside the formal legal framework. Where cases get to the police, the police may not respond with urgent action. Where the police responds and invites the SARC and hospital to review the case, the SARC may not have the first aid materials to be an effective first responder. The case may peter out. Where it does not, and the case is escalated to court, families may be discouraged by the cost of transportation, which they have to bear to and from their communities to the court. The cost of justice begins with paying for the transfer of the case to police CID in Damaturu before it can be tabled in court. The victim has little or no support to becoming a survivor due in part to the fact that they do not know how to access such support, inability to pay the transport to the location or wariness of stigma or retaliation, and so the victim is asked to keep a low profile. Legal aid is available pro bono, Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) also provides legal representation at no cost to the families affected, but sundry costs of logistics still must be borne by the families of the victim. This, together with a distance of about 300

kilometres, to get to the courts in the cities can be daunting and discourage seeking justice from the formal system. Families prefer to settle out of court, where the community justice process can be applied, and the victim and family compensated.

Development Partner and Civil Society Presence in Yobe State

Our study found a robust community of development partners working in Yobe to address SGBV. For example, UN Women is working on voice and accountability matters using radio. The challenge is the lack of a strong radio frequency in Gujba, but Damaturu and Potiskum communities are reached via Sahel FM/AM Radio, Sunshine FM, Yobe Television and NTA Damaturu. The EU-UN Spotlight Initiative is working on the prevention of campus sexual violence at Yobe State University. Search for Common Ground has a series of youth clubs, which it has supported over the years. The rested FIDA project on reducing SGBV worked with traditional rulers' wives to remove the reluctance to report intimacy abuse to the traditional male ruler or Bulama, due to gender norm barriers. The Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) has been working on deradicalisation and reintegration in the North-East. The Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP) also established the women's peace network during its operation. CARE works on food nutrition, security & livelihoods, sexual and reproductive health rights, GBV prevention and response, and women's economic empowerment. Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI) humanitarian intervention is focused on IDP needs and rights. Conciliation resources work with its local partners Hope Interactive and the University of Maiduguri Muslim Women's Association to support young women in Yobe and Borno States.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions of the study will be presented as follows: (1) what knowledge is reinforced, (2) what knowledge is new, and (3) what knowledge requires more research.

What Knowledge Is Reinforced

All causes and drivers of SGBV identified in the literature hold in Yobe State, namely: SGBV is widespread but underreported because of strict gender norms, social stigmatisation and inadequate response services. These combined contribute to the 'silence' from victims who struggle to attain survivorhood. Reporting rape is sensitive and needs to happen within a safe space. A male-led structure will deter confidence to speak up about a rape experience. Poverty is facilitating harmful norms like forced marriage and unacknowledged prostitution. Our field study also showed the importance of trust and respect for protocols and etiquette in eliciting response on SGBV matters.

What Knowledge Is New

- The absence of a reimagined education for girls and boys in new ways that protect them and reduce the cost of education and vulnerability to SGBV is creating SGBV risks. Parents feel travelling long distances to day school and staying in boarding schools are dangerous for their children.
- The documented norm of women accepting that domestic violence toward them is justified is changing. However, while women know that violence against women is wrong and not justified, they cannot challenge it.
- The Yobe State House of Assembly has passed the VAPP Act, but Governor Maimala Buni is yet to sign it into law. This delay in assent has implications for the state's ability to be agile in confronting the prevalence of SGBV.
- Positive trends with import for programming are emerging through humanitarian actors' work, eliciting a breaking of the culture of silence, especially in the internally displaced persons (IDP) camps and host communities.
- An emerging form of slavery where girls are commodified and sold by their families as debt repayment or as punishment for being assertive appears to be a new detrimental norm.
- Although Nigeria has a National Sexual Offender Database - strategic for naming and shaming sexual offences - Yobe is not yet present on that database.
- There is a disconnect between the referral pathway in its ideal form and reality.

What Knowledge Requires More Research

- How effective the SARCs are and how much capacity they have to meet the needs of victims leading to an early transition to survivorhood, and societal trust and patronage?
- The degree of SGBV suffered by boys and men in the context of conflict and displacement
- How well the Family Support Unit under the police is equipped to support families?
- How effective the existing youth clubs across gender in tertiary institutions and communities are to prevent SGBV?
- Community driven options of safe school practices including an examination of all investigative reports on safe schools, livelihood, security and SGBV in North-East Nigeria to identify relevant, pertinent proposals for implementation
- The traditional leadership systems, especially those led by women, and how to integrate them into SGBV responses
- How can existing youth clubs across gender in tertiary institutions and communities can be strengthened?
- How best to reach rural communities in the context of insurgency so as to increase the rate of reporting and uptake of SARC services?
- Engaging the Ministries of Justice and Health to see how their data sources can be harnessed into a one-stop-shop on SGBV data.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the urgent action orientation of the study, the report structures recommendations into two sections: (1) programmatic recommendations for development partners, and (2) policy recommendations for government and non-government stakeholders.

The section examines some core lessons that could inform sustainable programming around SGBV in the Northeast and Yobe State. It also showcases tested programme interventions that could be applied to prevent SGBV in Yobe. This section concludes with possible steps for policy action. MCN is working with partners to take forward some of these recommendations.

Programmatic Recommendations

Advocate and collaborate: MCN is a development partner programme and not the State. Dialogues with frontline government players such as the Ministries of Justice, Health, Education, and Women Affairs and the State House of Assembly would be a sustainable strategic plan. MCN should bring to their attention the findings of this study and advise what kinds of investments are required for rethinking education, funding SARCs, assenting to the VAPP Act. MCN should facilitate peer conversations and cross-state learning with frontline responsive states on SGBV such as Plateau, Kaduna, Lagos, Ekiti and Edo States. MCN should lead the charge to ensure that all development partner interventions include SGBV indicator trackers concerned with safe spaces, access to essential services, voice and security for the vulnerable.

Build on what already exists: Some ideas already exist in the ecosystem that MCN has facilitated, for example, the establishment of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs), the Family Support Unit, the Voluntary Policing Sector Groups (VPSG), Traditional Justice System (TJS), Community Peace and Safety Partnerships (CPSP) and the women and youth peacebuilding initiatives. The MCN study on gender and COVID-19 in the Northeast is another rich resource. Past reports of safe schools' initiative, revamping livelihood, social and physical and security and reducing SGBV; are existing investments that can be strengthened and drawn upon, respectively, and need to be examined for pertinent recommendations.

Conclude what has begun: While the Yobe House of Assembly has passed the VAPP Act, the Governor is yet to assent to the bill. Passing a cogent VAPP Act,

which has prongs of awareness generation, support for frontline players, and stiff penalties for violators, will deter rape and encourage voice and accountability in Yobe. However, the passage of a VAPP Act would only be the beginning. Programmatic attention to implementing the VAPP Act and linking it to the existing national database on sexual offences (NSOD) viewed on the NAPTIP website will bring attention to the Yobe ecosystem, making duty bearers and communities more responsive to SGBV issues.

Sustain the legacy: As a development programme with a timespan, the MCN programme needs to think about legacy and sustaining the investments it makes. We recommend a partnership with development partners with a more extended period and more permanent work strategies, e.g. the UN system organisations such as UNICEF, and the UN Women, which has a women's leadership programme in Gujba, to extend community reach. Also, it is imperative to secure government buy-in and system strengthening activities for Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to mainstream interventions into the public sector system across Yobe state and LGAs, including SARCs.

Work with women: Facilitate an understanding of the intricacies of the local traditional leadership systems, especially those led by women, and integrate them into ongoing SGBV responses. Work with traditional women leaders, civil society, and other organisations to expand understanding and uptake of sexual assault referral centres and mechanisms. Support supply side (government) players to design interventions that centre the roles and needs of women and girls. Work with women including women with disabilities, by facilitating awareness of women's rights using social spaces like weddings, naming ceremonies, etc. Engage women religious leaders such as the "Mallamas" teaching Islamiyya (Islamic community education classes), FOMWAN and WOWICAN as strategic gender resources.

Bring gender into the community justice system: Justice at the community level where social actors are empowered to protect, speak up and refer cases to institutions as may be required are an innovation worth studying and supporting. The Mobilising for Development (M4D) Sulhu project in Jigawa and the FCT Wives of traditional rulers are examples where women facilitate access to justice at the community level, using local mechanisms leading to early resolution of conflict, including GBV, and preventing

escalation. The Wives of Traditional Rulers lead the call to ban child marriage and demand instant redress around matters of domestic violence such as battery, abandonment, or harmful traditional practices, all acts disallowed under the VAPP Act. They seek justice through the authority of the traditional rulers over their subjects. Sulhu Ambassadors should include women because *ciwon ya'mace na mace ne* meaning only women can understand a woman's pains.

Create or revive safe spaces for girls: Peer to peer convening for girls, or girls' club, which represents safe spaces where girls can talk about dangers facing them, and organise to educate their parents, is recommended. Girls have no voice, so, they are not listened to; finding the knowledge and energy to organise and process their experiences will be difficult. A purple corner for orange talk organised by FACICP for women with disabilities (WWD) is a possible model that can be replicated in Yobe. Information on how to collect rape evidence is not widely understood. Such knowledge should be domiciled in SARCS but also within safe spaces for girls.

Work with boys and men: Intervention designs to work with male gatekeepers should include components that help boys and men centre themselves in the experience of rape, not just as perceiving themselves as the enemy and perpetrators but as preventers and protectors and solutions to the problem, in their roles as fathers, brothers, friends, teachers and community leaders. Voice and accountability should be the responsibility of men and boys because they are the gatekeepers and recognised decision-makers. They can become Anti-GBV champions to create awareness at the grassroots level and through peer-to-peer influence. Drugs abuse awareness and child spacing should be an agenda item of such collaborative strategies.

Build awareness in tertiary institutions: Students and faculty as Ambassadors against sexual exploitation can complement the work of Girl Ambassadors to help reduce the rate of exploitation among lecturers in universities and off-campus. Support to Women Academics to facilitate the development of gender policy on campuses. The Federal University Gashua and Yobe state university.

Advocate for a Survivor's Fund: This requires deliberate focus and investment. The mechanism for such a fund could be multilateral with crowdfunding attracted, so long as it has a robust corporate

governance structure, the Ekiti State model can be studied.



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Mainstream disability inclusion into SGBV

response: As UN Women advises, all preparedness (i.e., communication strategies) and response plans, ideally, must be inclusive of and accessible to users with disabilities. This includes the use of plain language, accessible formats. Institutional responses should differentiate the specific needs of women and girls with disabilities and the specific needs within each disability group. This ensures all people with disabilities who need it benefit from assistance without discrimination. Increase support for specialist organisations of women with disabilities to be able to provide local and regional support services.

Facilitate an active committee on the prevention of SGBV:

We uphold the UNFPA recommendation that a community-based committee dedicated to surveillance and prevention of SGBVs be urgently constituted in the camps and host communities. The committee should engage all stakeholders and draw up a comprehensive action plan for SGBV prevention. An audit of its effectiveness and the resources available to function effectively should be conducted where such already exists. The Committee should equally have the responsibility for the implementation of the VAPP Act and CRA when passed.

Conduct an impact assessment of SARCs and FSUs:

Review the operational guideline status, tools for community relations and access to services, and essential medication of the SARC and Family Support Units of the Police, to strengthen them where necessary. While the Police seemed to understand that SGBV affects both women and men, and all should enjoy protection, there is danger in the desire to 'course correct'. Focusing attention on boys may result in an equality approach to an equity problem. In other words, the evidence still shows that women and girls are the ones most affected by the impact of gender relations, and policy redress is needed to address that skew, but without shifting away attention from girls, to accommodate the experiences of boys.

Manage research fatigue: Due to the community research fatigue reported as a risk to the study, an inclusive dissemination plan and early policy action will help alleviate this feeling and keep the field open for other social scientists. It is essential in that context to make consulted communities aware that the policy interventions are an outcome of their cooperation with the field staff. Feedback also means that we leave behind something valuable to the communities consulted.

Conduct further research: Attention to women and girls is justified. Studies show they are most exposed to SGBV. However, everyone has a right to dignity and safe spaces, so we must be concerned about reports of abuse of boys. Some questions to further explore are how prevalent is sexual abuse of boys, and in what instances does it occur? Is forced marriage a new kind of slavery, where girls are sold into families under the guise of marriage to settle debts or feed their family, but which they cannot leave without dire consequences?

Document and disseminate lessons: Development partners should continue to bring lessons and knowledge to the fore to inform policy and planning and to determine what works and what does not. This strategy requires monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) and review by enhancing local skills to do the same. MCN should centre MEL and communication skills in community partners.

Create incentives to report SGBV: Partners and NGOs should co-create strategies to incentivise the reporting of rape and sexual and gender-based violence, including the speedy and effective judicial processes for SGBV cases.

Policy Recommendations

Pay attention to the domestic sphere: SGBV interventions should be directed at those spaces where people used to be safe traditionally but are now unsafe. The home is one such place. Lack of voice and power within the household, economic activities that originate from the home, such as hawking or children embedded as domestic workers in families, are vulnerability points. Banning hawking may be an attractive policy decision to make, but it may be akin to a knee jerk response. Without a viable alternative to family income earning, a ban would only drive child hawking under the policy radar. It becomes an offence and a secret act that opens the girls and their families to more extortion, including sexual and financial types, and more vulnerability. We propose instead, attention to livelihood matters and opportunities, including alternative income sources, which in the first instance might be conditional cash transfers, new market opportunities and security to enable a return to a former or a better way of economic life. Genuinely free and safe education will also take girls and boys off street marketing.

Develop a more encompassing National Gender Policy: The 2021 review of the National Gender Policy (NGP) provides an opportunity to address gaps in the 2006 NGP, and encourage states to domesticate the policy. Although the NGP identifies disability as one of the grounds upon which women suffer discrimination, there is little reference to women's experiences with disabilities. This can be addressed by an analysis of all harmful cultural, religious, and social gender-biased practices, which reproduce gender inequalities, the establishment of mechanisms for enforcing laws that regulate and penalise discriminatory practices, and the affirmation of dignity for all women. A well-resourced implementation plan for the NGP with key performance indicators (KPIs) domiciled in each MDA will go a long way in ensuring women's rights are protected across sectors.

Create safe schooling: In the context of conflict, safety and security are of utmost importance. There needs to be a rethink of girls' education. More day schools located within the communities should be considered. The trauma of conflict lingers long after physical life appears to have returned to normal. People remember and worry about a return of old conflict vulnerabilities. To ensure girls finish a course of secondary schooling, SGBV and Human Rights activists have advised the

government to provide government day senior girls' secondary schools within communities due to insecurity and poverty. The government should listen to this demand and synergise the school calendar with economic realities. Girls and boys must help their parents with economic activities since this is a way of life, and also, go to school to learn.

Establish a central database of incidences of

SGBV: There is a need for the establishment of an SGBV Central Database for Yobe State led by government agencies working collaboratively with the Ministry of Women Affairs. The database should have a link to the national sexual offender database (NSOD) like Kano and Adamawa are working to establish as part of a community of practice on SGBV response in Nigeria. Such a central database will provide easy access to comprehensive and up-to-date information on governments and development partner responses to SGBV. It will increase opportunities for exchange of experiences and strengthen the knowledge-base for effective policy responses to prevent and address SGBV, while encouraging further collection, availability, use, analysis and dissemination of SGBV data.

Demystify psychosocial care: Conflict and SGBV are life-shaping occurrences whose effects can linger within the minds and bodies of an individual directly affected, causing trauma. Although solutions are usually generic or communal in nature, unless the individual heals, the community cannot heal. Cross-generational anger, recycled anger, and aggression require machinery for retributive justice to moderate the harmful consequences of conflict and SGBV. Mental and psychiatric care is therefore needed, but it is stigmatised. In Yobe's ecosystem, campaigns are required to destigmatise mental care to allow people to talk openly about it and discuss where to find care. It should be a deliberate and seriously monitored aspect of post-traumatic care for SGBV and conflict.

Strengthen the criminal justice system: The Police, NSCDC, the courts are crucial to delivering justice and bringing closure to issues of SGBV. It is imperative to ensure independent investigations into abuses of power and violations of displaced persons, especially women and girls. Training the Police gender desk on the causes of SGBV and training Hisba, Hunters and Vigilantes on understanding the referral pathway and the criminal justice system are possible ways to strengthen the community justice system.

Encourage positive behaviour: Catching children when they are young before minds are shaped through curriculum review is a behaviour approach to driving change. Both secular, religious, and vocational schools should be involved in this exercise and approach. Learning should focus on children of both sexes, the content of which should include sexuality education, as may be appropriate in their social context. Children should be taught to know parts of the body that no adult or children have the right to touch, report infractions, the role of the Police, the penalty for SGBV, especially rape. All are important aspects of early education required. Children should also be taught about psychosocial care and not to blame or shame the victim.

Advocate for the executive assent to the VAPP

Law: Key stakeholders, including the Legislature, State Ministry of Women Affairs, International Civil Society Organisations, legislators and development partners, should advocate for the immediate Assent of the VAPP Law in Yobe State.

Conduct community sensitive campaigns on access to family planning:

Awareness-raising and sensitisation around family planning for men and women is crucial. The outcome could include spousal collaboration, better child spacing, and better care for children and families.

Ensure inclusive and accessible victim assistance services:

It is crucial to ensure that reporting mechanisms and victim assistance services are accessible to girls, boys and persons with disabilities. Service providers need to be proactive and innovative in reaching out to those who are isolated, including through volunteer networks, online counselling, and other technology-based solutions, so they are accessible and respond to the diversity of people, including those with disabilities.

Mainstream SGBV into development response:

The federal and state governments should review the various crisis response laws and regulations to make gender and SGBV more integral to all frameworks. Ensure independent investigations into abuses of power and violations of displaced persons, especially women and girls. The development sector and civil society should improve coordination and funding of multipartite humanitarian responses.

Provide easy access to referral and care services:

Government, UN agencies, international partners and

civil society organisations should work together to establish one-stop shop referral centres fully equipped with comprehensive services including police, documentation and first responders. Develop formal guidelines and simple flowchart diagrams detailing in visual and local languages, roles and responsibilities of different actors at different stages in the case management process.

Build capacity: To ensure that actors fulfil their roles and responsibilities and deliver on mandates, training and investment in human capacity is required. This is required at all levels, across all sectors, for statutory professionals and volunteer community workers, including: the police, health and justice sectors, and others. Government should work with development partners to build the capacity of the Ministry of Women Affairs on how to establish, coordinate and manage a central SGBV database effectively.

Strengthen and provide more SARCs: Access to SARCs in other communities in Yobe that do not have services nearby can help bring needed support early to underserved communities. Personnel of some existing primary health care centres may be trained and equipped to provide sexual assault referral services, including prevention awareness. Embark on SARC campaigns, explain the process to be easy to understand and use a human-centred angle to incentivise attendance. Also, information that the services are free will motivate community uptake.

Prioritise information and awareness in hard-to-reach communities: Hard-to-reach communities where information is not available due to technology limitations should be prioritised. In these places, women and girls have limited information about preventing, reporting SGBV and responding to need. Yet, the need for such is no less crucial than in the cities.

Find out more

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