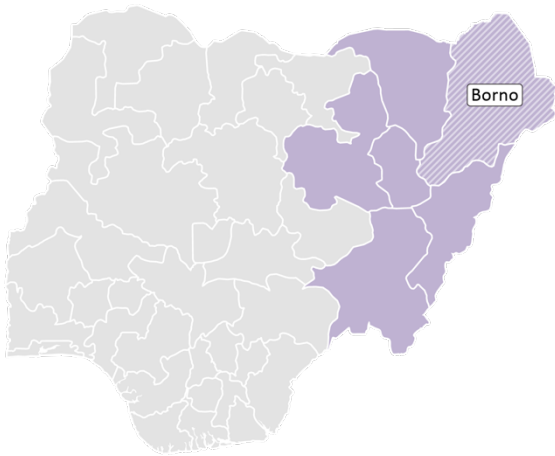




BORNO STATE SNAPSHOT: SOCIAL NORMS & WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



The Borno State brief is a part of a larger review of social norms, women's economic empowerment, and policy across six states – Abia, Borno, Edo, Kaduna, Lagos, and Niger – from varied geo-political zones in Nigeria. These states were chosen to reflect diverse contexts among Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) priority states. The full report consisted of a desk review, 36 in-depth interviews (IDIs), and two focus group discussions (FGD) with key stakeholders across the selected states and at the national level.

Throughout Nigeria, women are exposed to patriarchal social norms relating to decision-making, employment, land ownership, and access to school. Across states, this leads to negative outcomes for women's economic empowerment resulting in women often having limited access to public services, finances, legal and social protection, health services, education, and opportunities to participate in the economy. Women also make most of Nigeria's poor.

Borno State has the lowest cumulative rates of empowerment for women ages 15 to 49, with only 41% educational attainment, 47.8% employment, 22.5% participation in decision making, 12.5% ownership of a bank account, and 0.3% ownership of land and house assets. Notably, however, Borno has the second lowest prevalence of GBV (21.2%) (2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey).

Economic activities in Borno State are segregated by gender, with women participating primarily in the informal economy. They largely work from home, engaging in activities such as cap sewing, cola nut business and roasting of traditional delicacies. They also may rely on their daughters to hawk for additional income, undermining girls' education and putting them at potential risk of violence. Over a decade of insurgency and insecurity have resulted in disruption of livelihood, food insecurity, and weakened basic services protection mechanisms (UN Women of Africa 2020), compounding women's disempowerment.

The insurgency and insecurity are also leading to changing gender dynamics in Borno State. Displaced women and girls are experiencing heightened exposure to GBV, as sexual abuse and systematic rape are used as terror tactics. Sexual exploitation of women and girls displaced by Boko Haram and the Islamic State-West Africa (ISIS-WA) is widespread, not just by the insurgents but also by state security, military personnel, and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF). Domestic violence is also common and became more prevalent during the recent COVID-19 lockdown due to the food and financial insecurity associated with restriction in movement (O'Neil and Van Broeckhoven, 2021). At the same time, some women have taken on roles traditionally assigned to men. Kidnapping, death or separation of spouses has led to more women acting as heads of household and as sole decision-makers. Some are also becoming involved in vigilante activities or in guarding their communities (Nagarajan, 2017)



We currently have community-based planning process in the community where ideas and needs are gotten before planning commences for whatever will be done within the community. We also have women representatives that speak on behalf of other women in the community . . . they are taking part in decision-making.

In-Depth Interview, Community Representative

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COMMON GENDER NORMS RELATED TO WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



Families consider sons more deserving of care and investment.



Husband controls wife and provides permission for her to access health care, engage in income-generating activities, access financial services, and move outside the home.



Men should be the key decision-makers in their families and communities.



Women are not expected to control their own assets or property.



Women are expected to take care of most domestic and nurturing chores within the household.



In some circumstances it is appropriate for men to use violence to discipline their wives.¹

¹ Unlike the other norms, the issue of appropriateness to use violence to discipline wives did not arise from the interviews, it comes from the literature (2018 NDHS).

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GENERAL GENDER EQUALITY-FOCUSED LAWS, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMMES

- Borno State Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in 2017- 2019
- Borno State Action Plan for the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and related resolutions

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT-FOCUSED LAWS, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMMES

- No policy/programmes exist or information could not be located.

OBSERVATIONS ON POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Lack of domestication of the VAPP Act impedes the full elimination of trafficking. However, the state is making significant efforts to do so by supporting National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP). Additionally, the state is supporting the signing and implementation of a UN action plan to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children by the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). SAP WPS seems to have had limited influence on changing government policy, practice and institutional culture as yet (Nagarajan, 2017).