EMERGING BARRIERS TO GIRLS EDUCATION

SECURITY AND COVID-19 EXPERIENCES

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Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn
PERL

About PERL

Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL)

The Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL) is a seven-year Public Sector Accountability and Governance programme, funded by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The focus of PERL is to support how governments organise their core business of making, implementing, tracking and accounting for policies, plans and budgets used in delivering public goods (economic stability and an enabling environment for private enterprise so as to promote growth and reduce poverty) and services to the citizenry, and how citizens themselves engage with these processes. Following recommendation from the Annual Review, the programme was extended for two-years shaped by new priorities and footprint of FCDO Nigeria. In line with the new strategic direction, programme areas have been refocused to prioritise Girls Education, Health and Open Societies. As such, the programme has honed its interventions to align its focus to the priorities of FCDO Nigeria.

The PERL programme is now also being delivered through two 'pillars' which plans and act together to support sustainable service delivery reforms: Pillar 1. Accountable, Responsive & Capable Government (ARC); Pillar 2. Engaged Citizens (the activities of the third Pillar 3. Learning, Evidencing and Advocacy Partnership (LEAP) have been embedded within the other two pillars). Further, the programme which previously worked at the Federal level, in the focal states of Kano, Kaduna and Jigawa, and through regional learning and reform hubs in the South West, South East and North East areas of Nigeria will now engage in the focal states with the Federal component to support vertical linkages.

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ACRONYMS

Acronym	Definition
ARC	Accountable, Responsive and Capable Government
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ECP	Engaged Citizens Pillar
EDOREN	Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria
ESSPIN	The Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GSF	Government Security Forces`
ISWAP	Islamic State in West Africa Province
JAS	Jama-atu Ahus-Sunna lidda-Awatiw Al-Jihad
JSS	Junior Secondary School
KALMA	Kano Literacy and Mathematics Accelerator Programme
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NCDC	Nigeria Centre for Disease Control
NECO	National Examinations Council
NGF	Nigeria Governors' Forum
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIPEP	Nigerian Partnership for Education Project
PERL	Partnerships to Engage, Reform and Learn
PFM	Public Financial Management
PLANE	Partnership for Learning for All in Nigerian Education
PTA	Parent Teacher Associations
RANA	Reading and Numeracy Activity
SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
SBMC	School-Based Management Committee
SEIMU	State Education Inspection and Monitoring Unit
SMoEST	State Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
SSS	Senior Secondary School
SSIT	State School Improvement Team
SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education Board
TDP	Teacher Development Programme
WAEC	West Africa Examination Council
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 1: Introduction

1.1   Background
1.2   Approach

Context

With 3.49 million out-of-school children, the North-West region has the highest number of out-of-school children in Nigeria.[1] Before the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, barriers to enrolment and regular attendance were already high for girls, who make up 60% of Nigeria's out-of-school children.[2] Insecurity challenges and risks — the rise of kidnapping threats and banditry attacks — compounded the already difficult considerations and complex rearrangements required to deliver education in emergencies.

Centered on Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano, this study aims to understand the experience of learning for girls, their fears and anxieties about insecurity, and the reasons that some girls stay in school and others do not. It provides a snapshot of the current realities girls between the ages of 11-17 years face which make it difficult to access, perform, finish and return to education – much of this captured in their own voices.

Approach

The study consisted of a literature review, followed by primary research using quantitative and qualitative approaches, including school-based survey. Overall, 872 participants contributed to the study, with the bulk of these students themselves. A total number of 713 adolescents were engaged in the school-based survey — 573 girls and 140 boys currently enrolled in secondary school. The accounts and perspectives of girls who had dropped out from secondary school within the study period (Jan 2019 to Dec 2021) were also gathered in small group discussions. Focus groups and in-depth interviews were held with educators (including classroom based female teachers), parents and caregivers, community leaders, and key informants in public and non-profit sectors.

Data was collected between November and December 2021, with a team of dedicated researchers assigned to each state. Six local government areas (LGAs) were selected in each state, distributed as two in each of the senatorial districts. The exception to this is Kaduna South senatorial district, where only one LGA (Kauru) was covered in line with a security advisory in force at the time. A high level of importance was placed on protection for all under-aged respondents and the critical importance of children's voices in evidence generation and the shaping of interventions.

Findings

Gendered Distance Learning Experiences

Globally, the pandemic came with a wave of sweeping school closures. Within weeks of the lockdown, all three states had rolled out remote learning initiatives, with UNICEF's vigorous support. Several challenges were noted to distance learning platforms. They include poor radio connectivity/frequencies, insufficient access to laptops and smartphone devices, low affordability of data, power outages, and a dearth of options to catch up with missed lessons.

More specifically, girls' education during the pandemic was not targeted in the design and deployment of distance learning initiatives, and thus did not fully consider their preferences. In some cases, these preferences reinforced the barriers to learning. For example, in Kaduna State, parents and caregivers relayed a preference to engage girls in petty trading and tailoring business/training, as a way to supervise their activities and ward off undesired adult attention or their own sexual conduct during the partial lockdown period. Protective tactics deployed by girls themselves also meant less social and interpersonal interaction. With domestic and care responsibilities, girls' learning time was also more limited than their male counterparts.

As a result, boys' access to and use of distance learning options and support outperformed those of girls in all surveyed categories.[3] There were significant gender disparities in interpersonal support for learning during the lockdown, with only 10% reporting visits with teachers compared to 21% of boys, and 13% tutored by an elder sibling or relative compared to 16% of boys. Post-lockdown, boys' education was also more likely to be prioritized by parents facing significant income shortages.

Impact of Insecurity on Girls' Education

In Kaduna and Kano states, school closures were extended or reintroduced after a brief period of reopening due to coinciding concerns on another alarming threat: targeted kidnappings at secondary schools and some tertiary institutions. Several North-West states have opted for school deboarding and closures as a mitigative policy - with Kaduna, Katsina and Zamfara states worst hit, along with Niger State in the North-Central region. State response to insecurity invertedly prompted changes in parental decisions and girls' access to schools. In parts of Kano, closure and deboarding of schools have led to longer walking distances for girls — who are now more exposed to harassment en route to and from their school — and increased transfer costs for families. Across Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano, insecurity has forced parents to think twice of their girls in school.

Rise in Gender-based Violence

National media reports and anecdotal accounts point to an alarming swell of gender-based violence, predominately during the lockdown period. Jigawa and Kaduna State both responded with legislative force and a stance that showed zero-tolerance for such acts. Visibility into the prevalence of reported offences is partly limited by data availability. In Kano and Jigawa states, there was a temporary decline in GBV incidents reported at trauma centres sampled for the purposes of this survey, suggesting that access restrictions to post-violence support services may have been the reason for the temporary decline. The qualitative component of the study received numerous reports of an increase in the rates of sexual violence, both domestic (marital) and young girls. Focus group accounts with caregivers, teachers and community-based actors indicate that many of these were perpetrated by close or distant relatives.

Reasons for School Absenteeism and Drop Out

Poverty, early marriage, and the perceived lack of safety in school are the three biggest barriers affecting girls and their education. Girls' education is often one of the first spending items to be deprioritised when household incomes are strained, particularly due to loss of a parent or illness for the areas covered by the survey.

In Jigawa

The main factors leading to secondary school female drop out are poverty, early marriage and the devaluation of girls' education. As the school closures stretched on, parents in Jigawa (and Kano – see below) voiced concerns that delays in completing school will have implications on marriage and out-of-school income generating activities become more of the norm. Prioritisation of boys' education over girls' appears to be driven by economic imperatives – to invest in the future breadwinners of the home.

In Kaduna

The greatest factors leading to higher number of out-of-school girls are insecurity, the deprioritisation of girls' education (in favour of boys'), and the personal loss of interest in girls themselves. Another trend noted in Kaduna was the disinclination towards public schooling. Out-of-school girl participants who were formerly enrolled in private schools indicated that they dropped out due to their parents' unwillingness to transfer them to public schools when they were no longer able to afford private school fees — despite free public secondary education in Kaduna.

In Kano

The three main factors observed were early marriage, changes in family and/or home life, and insecurity. Increased difficulty in accessing schools was also observed in some communities where schools had been closed due to kidnapping risks. The impact of girls and their families ranged from longer walking times, higher transport costs, to limited placement alternatives (especially where boarding facilities were preferred).

Boys, in contrast were more likely to have pull factors to the retention and completion of their secondary education. They include peer pressure, business interests, and the use of illicit drugs. They point to a loss of interest in schooling, related to perceived lack of job prospects on school completion. Overall, boys have had better access to educational support during the lockdown and were more likely to be prioritised when things got tough financially after the lockdown. However, both boys and girls were targeted by kidnapping attempts and were more likely to be physically and sexually assaulted during the lockdown.

Changing Perception and Attitudes with Girls

Underaged motherhood and teen pregnancy[4] were typically considered as legitimate reasons for girls to withdraw from school in their community. Most out-of-school girls indicated a willingness to return to school. This was dominant across all three states. However, re-entry has been constrained by access to viable options, an unwillingness to resume due to stigmatization amongst peers, the lack of awareness of learning programs, the affordability of school fees and associated costs, and early marriage (discouragement and lack of permission from spouse). There were mixed views on whether boys' education was more important than girls', with most indicating that girls' education is equally important. An emerging attitude was the drop in the value of education at the individual level. This was largely driven by the underlying economic issues and reinforced by greater involvement in income generating activities during and following the pandemic.

Changing Perception and Attitude with Parents and Caregivers

A growing tendency towards preferential treatment of boys' education over girls was observed. While often driven by pre-existing gendered norms on domestic and care responsibilities (Kano, Jigawa); this trend was also evident even where girls' education is strongly favoured (Kaduna). However, boys are seen as disadvantaged by doubtful economic prospects due to expectations of their future roles as breadwinners. In contrast, girls were seen as having marriage as a safety net.

Summary of Barriers to Girls' Education, Solutions and Proposed Policy Action

Policy Actions:

Our synthesis of these findings and girls' recommendations leads us to the following calls to action to support girls' retention and return to schools amidst endemic insecurity and poverty.

Adopt blended learning systems to address diverse access barriers and navigate unplanned interruptions in future:

Kaduna's experience shows the benefit of on-going deployment of distance-learning to supplement classroom-based learning – both in learning outcomes and enabling prompt pivots in a highly unpredictable environment.

Integrate day-care and early motherhood support into learning institutions:

Beyond just rolling out more vocational training options, it will be important to also provide day care and nursing stations at these facilities.

Integrate rapid response systems at the school and community level:

As the occurrence of new infectious diseases and insecurity persists (e.g., COVID-19, Ebola), building resilient school systems will become a top priority.

Dedicate resources to low hanging behaviour change management opportunities:

These could include exam fee waivers for recent dropouts, cross-subsidising school uniforms, textbooks, and transport stipends or service improvements.

Ramp up educational and vocational training programmes:

As a demand-driven policy initiative, it responds to the overwhelming support for girls to return to school.

Strengthen GBV early warning systems and enforcement for offenders:

This should include diversified reporting channels, investments in training for guidance counsellors and SBMCs, and local means of survivors' redress, protection and support.

Strengthen both infrastructural and legal protections for girls within schools:

Go beyond basic perimeter fencing in rolling out school infrastructural and security service upgrades.

BACKGROUND

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF 2020), there are 10.5 million[5] out-of-school children in Nigeria,[6] with children living in low income and conflict-ridden territories of Northern Nigeria more likely to be marginalised and under-served.

This is attributed to a combination of factors, including socio-cultural norms, insufficient educational facilities and insecurity stemming from criminal enterprises and insurgency. In March 2020, when the World Health Organisation declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a pandemic, girls were already more likely to be left behind by education providers in their countries.

COVID-19 is the greatest threat to education in living memory.

Both boy and girl learners faced new and compounding challenges in their education, as students were forced to remain at home, with limited and uneven access to structured learning, social protection and other benefits associated with schooling for months. Studies such as the regional reports on Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda,[7] Bangladesh and preliminary reports from Nigeria[8] conclude that girls were more at risk than boys of school dropout due to the long-term effects of lockdown, which include unwanted pregnancies, early marriage, and insufficient household financial resources. Before the pandemic, barriers to enrolment and regular attendance were already higher for girls in some locations,[9] who make up 60% of Nigeria's out-of-school children.[10]

10.5 million out-of-school children in Nigeria

60% regular attendance higher for girls
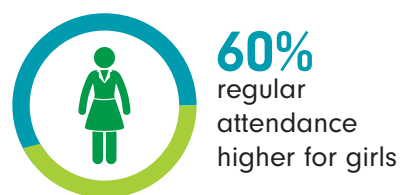
Girls were also more vulnerable to gender-based violence during this time. In June 2020, the 36 state governors in Nigeria unanimously declared a state-of-emergency over the rising incident rate of rape and other assaults against women and children.[11] This came after national outcry over the rape and murder of two young girls during the lockdown. By November 2020, UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed stated that at least 3,600 cases of rape were recorded during the nationwide lockdown occasioned by COVID-19 pandemic. This is a threefold national increase from the prior period.[12]

By the end of the year, the Malala Fund reported that school closures had forced an additional 39 million students out of school in Nigeria.[13] While it is unclear how many of these were short-term absentees or more permanent discontinuation cases, what is clear is that Nigeria is the global capital of out-of-school children. The statistics are alarming. One in three Nigerian children are not in school and for every five out-of-school children in the world, one of them is a Nigerian.[14]

3,600 cases of rape

Forced additional 39 million students out of school in Nigeria

These children have been affected by growing instability stemming from pre-2020 insecurity challenges that have yet to be properly documented, assessed, and disseminated. Notably, attempts have been made to understand how COVID-19 related protocols affected school and to assess their learning experience during the six-plus months of lockdown. These include independent research projects such as the Nigeria Economic Summit Group's "Learning in a Pandemic" (2021) and exercises by the Federal Government's "National Survey on School Resumption during COVID-19 pandemic" supported by Education in Emergencies Working Group and Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). However, most studies have opted for one of the two lenses and have not been as revealing of the personal experience of girls – their fears, coping mechanisms, and aspirations.

This study builds on ongoing reforms and lessons learned by the Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL) in education governance and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's (FCDO) wider support to Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano state governments. It provides a snapshot of current realities faced by girls in these environments and their own recommendations on how they can be better supported. The state reports also summarise how state governments moved quickly to respond to the sudden public health risk COVID-19 posed, and their ongoing attempts to manage insecurity challenges.

This report extends the continuing body of knowledge for the FCDO's portfolio of prior education sector programmes[15] and contributes to the sustainability of girl-child and education programs, by making recommendations useful to FCDO, its new Partnership for Learning for All in Nigerian Education (PLANE), and other stakeholders in the girls' education space in Nigeria. Crucially, it presents insights to inform the state governments of Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano on how to nuance existing policies for more effective delivery, especially in educating their girls.

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Approach

The study was conducted in close consultation with PERL state teams and the State Ministry of Education in each location. Research design was centered around uncovering insights and key findings in relation to the following questions:

01

What are the distinct vulnerabilities and experiences of secondary school - aged girls in Northern Nigeria of:

a) The COVID-19 pandemic and
b) Insecurity?

02

What barriers to girls' education have newly emerged or been reinforced by the twin phenomena of COVID-19 and insecurity?

03

To what degree are educators and public administrators aware of and addressing these issues?

04

How effective have these measures been? Do they respond to the critical needs and priorities of school-aged girls, their caregivers, and communities?

Different data gathering methods were used to address these key questions. The literature review covered diverse sources, including Nigerian media, NGO reports, security incident reporting databases, government documents, education reports including the annual school census, and academic publications. This served as a basis for the state-level context summaries Jigawa, Kaduna, and Kano, and the identification of common and distinct issues across these locations.

Table 1.1: Overview of Field Data Collection Tools and Methods		
Method & Type Of Respondent	**No. of Questions**	**No. of Respondents Targeted**
Structured Questionnaire: School-based Students	25	**180 secondary school students (135 girls, 45 boys)**
In-Depth Interviews: Female Classroom-based Teachers	12	**2 per Senatorial District**
Focus Group 1: Teachers, Head Teachers & Support Staff	14	**1 group per Senatorial District**
Focus Group 2: Out-of-School Girls	15	**12 or more girls per state**
Focus Group 3: Parents & Caregivers	16	**1 group per Senatorial District**
Key Informant Interviews: Policymakers, Education Providers, Community & Non-Governmental Stakeholders	12	**8-10 per state**

The desk-based literature review was supplemented by quantitative and qualitative primary research, with a focus on creating a closer impression of the direct experience of girls and gathering recommendations from a range of players who influence girls at the home, school, and community levels.[16] Field work exercises included questionnaire-based surveys, multiple actor-specific focus group discussions, and key informant interviews,[17] as laid out in Table 1.1.

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Data Collection

Data was collected between November and December 2021, with a team of dedicated researchers assigned to each state. Student interview questions sought information on living arrangements, access and receptiveness to distance learning tools, changing attitudes to gender relations, and perception of safety. Interview guides were developed in English and translated to the local language, Hausa by a professional translator.

A total of 713 students

872 Participants

👧 **573**   👦 **140**

16 female classroom-based teachers

Study focused on girls aged 14-19 years

41 parents and caregivers

26 key informant interviews

58 schools
surveyed across the three states

The study targeted a broad cross-section of adolescent girls ages 11-18 years – those who were enrolled in the schools prior to school closures, those who returned to school once the government announced their reopening and those who had since discontinued their education in the last 2-3 years. To enable some comparison to boys, male respondents of the same age and socio-economic background also participated in the study in each of the surveyed locations.

Overall, 872 participants contributed to the study. The bulk of these were students themselves. During the school-based survey, a total number of 713 adolescents were engaged — 573 girls and 140 boys currently enrolled in secondary school. Forty secondary school staffers also participated in focus group discussion (with a mix of gender and roles), while one-on-one in-depth interviews were held with another 16-female classroom-based teachers.

The survey was conducted with girls aged 14-19 years with the typical age being 15 years. Finally, 41 parents and caregivers provided their accounts to the research team, and 26 key informant interviews with education providers, community stakeholders and other key players were conducted.

Schools were selected in consultation with State Ministries of Education, with a purposive blend of boarding and day schools, public and private learning institutions, all girls and mixed gender schools, and junior and secondary levels. A total number of 58 schools were surveyed across the three states. The state-level execution reports in the Annex provide more details on range of school and location types for each surveyed state.

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Executive Chairman
Kaduna Universal Basic Education Board

Geographic Variation

A reasonable geographic spread was achieved, with consideration given to sampling across communities in rural, semi-urban and urban areas, and locations where research activities could be safely conducted without risking the exposure of respondents. Six Local Government Areas (LGAs) were selected in each state, distributed as two in each of the senatorial districts. The exception to this was Kaduna South senatorial district, where only one LGA (Kauru) was covered due to a security advisory in force at the time of the field visits.
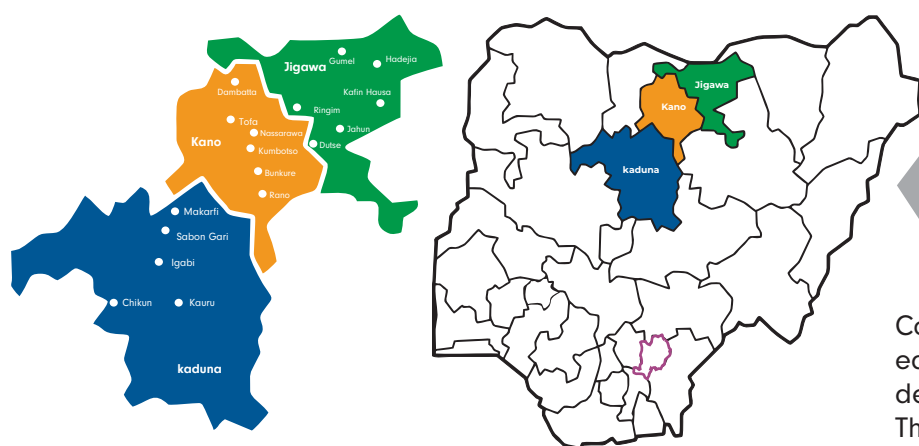
Consent taking was enforced with each student and/or the adult with designated responsibility for them. The exclusion criteria in place applied when:

a	Girls (and boys) were unwilling to take part in the study
b	Parents (day schools) and principals (boarding schools) did not give their permission
c	Interviews could not be held without exposing the students to undue danger or risk

A high level of importance was placed on protection for all under-aged respondents. Prior to fieldwork, each team identified local trauma support Non-Govermental Organisations (NGO) within their study areas. In the course of the survey, survivors of GBV and other forms of abuse were discreetly linked to non-governmental support groups, with their account lodged with relevant local authorities.

Ethical Considerations

All tools and questionnaires were vetted by a Gender and Social Inclusion expert. Student questionnaires were pilot-tested in at least one school per state prior to being rolled out. Consultants and participants were also expected to adhere to COVID-19 rules and safety measures throughout the study, especially but not limited to meetings with PERL state teams, visits to schools, and in-person interviews with government officials and in communities.

This report recognizes the critical importance of children's voices in evidence generation and the shaping of interventions where they are intended to be the primary beneficiaries. Guidance was given to mitigate against selection bias from interviewers and encourage openness in sharing their experiences and opinions. Pre-field work training covered safe practices in interacting with minors and guidance on dealing with sensitive topics, such as sexual abuse, physical assault, and death in the family. This was particularly relevant for focus group discussions (FGDS) with out-of-school girls, where closer contact and more personal stories were shared.

CROSS-CUTTING CHALLENGES

Section 2: Cross-cutting Challenges in Education Delivery

Pre-pandemic Advancements in Girls' Education

At the national and federal levels, two key policy shifts deserve a mention in relation to advancing the charge for targeted funding and programming for girls in the education sector. Firstly, the Education For All (EFA) international initiative launched in 1990, which as its second goal commits governments to "ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, those in difficult circumstances, and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality". Importantly, it also calls for a minimum budgetary allocation of 15% — 20% to be reserved for education service delivery, setting this as the international benchmark.[18] Secondly, the Universal Basic Education (UBE) initiative, enacted in 2004 as an expression of Nigeria's commitment to the EFA goals. The UBE was adopted across all states, and led to the setting up and subsequent strengthening of state-based institutions, in the form of State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEB).

A ripple effect has been observed in improved targeting and tailoring of development partner and non-profit support, including technical assistance on policy formulation, implementation and monitoring of girl-child education challenges and performance.

At the state level, DFID/FCDO has expended significant resources into supporting states to tackle their education sector challenges through a variety of broad-based approaches. These include areas such as teacher recruitment, deployment and compensation, gender disaggregated education data (including the annual school census), strengthening community-level support structures (predominately via School Based Management Committees or SBMCs), and civil society accountability.

In a bid to promote better public expenditure management and enhance service delivery, PERL provided technical support to improve planning, programme management systems, and the development of annual budgets from the State Development Plan (SDP), linked to the Medium-Term Sector Strategies (MTSS) and Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). Within this array, gender-specific interventions on education have been promoted and facilitated.

PERL Specific Interventions

In Jigawa

PERL supported the Teacher Recruitment and Deployment policy (2019, approved in 2021), which has influenced recruitment of more female teachers and more recently the Girl Child Education Policy (zero draft at the time of this report), furthermore setting up a multi-stakeholder coordination framework to drive its implementation.

In Kaduna

PERL supported the development of an Inclusive Education policy (2019), quality assurance and education sector strategic plans, along with the more recent Second Chance Education Policy Implementation framework (2022-2024).

In Kano

The Girls' Education Policy was developed in 2016, further building on a pre-existing Inclusive Education Policy (2015). More recently, in November 2021 the government introduced a girl education code in the 2022 state budget through the programme segment of the Chart of Accounts. This was adopted in the 2022 approved budget the following month, making it possible to track allocation and expenditure on girls education across state government public delivery for the first time.

Due to these state-led and donor-facilitated reforms and initiatives, there have been significant gains made in the last 10 years, particularly in financing for education broadly, as well as in the proliferation of specific programmes and policies seeking to address the unique challenges young girls face in access, retention, and transition in education.

Over the last three years, each state has allocated at least 22% of its state budget to education, with Kano and Jigawa consistently achieving a sector budget performance of over 70%"

Between 2019 and 2021, the average share of annual public funds set aside for education service delivery was 37.5% for Jigawa, 26% for Kaduna and 25% for Kano (See Table 2.1).

However, without budgetary data on girls' education and state-level benchmarks for spending in specific student segments within the public education system, it is difficult to assess the state financial commitment to secondary school girls in more detail.

22%

State budget allocation maintained

Kano and Jigawa consistently achieving above

70%

Funds set aside | 2019 - 2021

Kaduna 26%

Jigawa 37.5%

Kano 25%
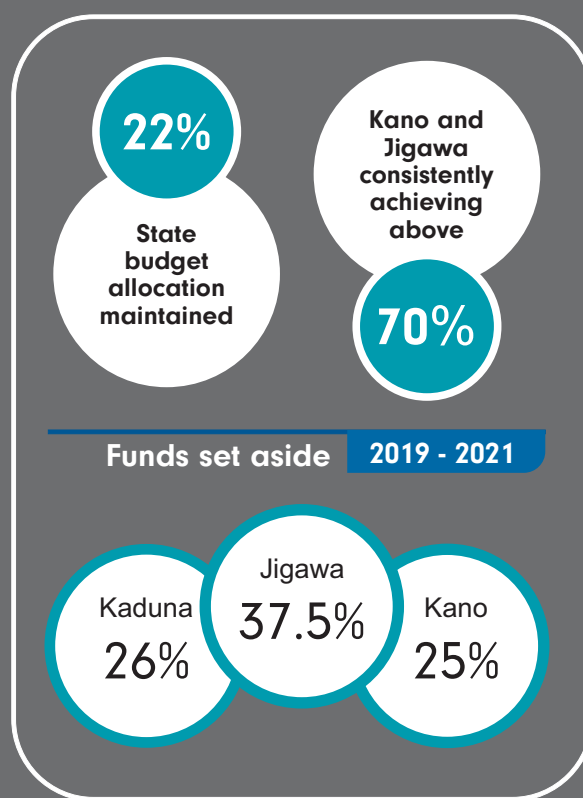
Table 2.1: Improvements in State Education Financing (based on budget and MTEF figures)

STATE	2019			2020			2021	3-yr Avg. Budget Share
	Share of Budget	Share of Actual	Sector Performance	Share of Budget	Share of Actual	Sector Performance	Share of Budget	
JIGAWA	33%	33%	79%	43%	44%	86%	37%	38%
KADUNA	27%	21%	76%	25%	22%	45%	25%	26%
KANO	22%	30%	73%	29%	30%	87%	25%	25%

Despite these financing triumphs, at the time the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) raised the alarm bells in February 2020, girls in Northern Nigeria were still more unlikely to attend schools and complete their education through to their final year of senior secondary school. Cultural and systemic barriers to girls' education in Nigeria, particularly in Northern Nigeria are well documented. Several studies have shown that the low level of girls' enrolment in formal education is due to instances of poverty, early marriage, a lack of adequate and quality education infrastructure, and generally lower value accorded to girls and women in the region.

Evidence gathered over the last decade from UK-funded programs, such as The Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria[19] (ESSPIN), Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria (EDOREN), and the British Council,[20] afford critical insight of the typical barriers to girls' sustained and meaningful participation in formal education and what happens when they are left unattended:

Physical Barriers

Girls' access to school is frustrated by long walking times which increase the risks of harassment and threats on commute to school, and the lack of sufficient class infrastructure.

Economic Barriers

Poverty, or parents' inability to pay costs associated with schooling, including user fees, clothing, and school supplies.[21] These are a burden for the poorest wealth quintile, and gateway for child labour for girls, typically as domestic help and street hawking.

Health Barriers

Poor water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities and lack of access to menstruation kits affect whether Nigerian girls are able to participate fully in educational programmes.[22]

Personal Barriers

Girls themselves were found to be unwilling to go to school due to fears of bullying, corporal punishment and stigmatisation..

Social and Cultural Barriers

Ingrained gender norms which reinforce early marriages[23] over the education of girls has been a key deterrent, along with practices that encourage the forced marriage of girls with unwanted pregnancies or who are engaged in under-aged sex.

Trends and the Geography of Insecurity in North West Nigeria

The International Crisis Group estimates that over 8000 people lost their lives to violence in Nigeria's North West between 2011 and 2020.[24]

The conflict involves multiple armed organisations: criminal gangs, herder-allied groups, jihadists and vigilante groups.

According to a 2021 paper published by the Brookings Institute,[25] Nigeria's North West region has specific vulnerabilities that make it more susceptible to violent attacks. These include:

North West

8000
Lives lost

2011 - 2020

01 Its location between "two centres of jihadism", namely Boko Harm strongholds in the Lake Chad area (North East) and the Islamic State in West Africa province (ISWAP) base in southwestern Niger Republic, which increases the likelihood of their collaboration with actors there.

02 Porous Nigeria-Niger borders, which raise the potential of spill over of terrorist activities from neighbouring troubled West African states.

03 The proliferation of arms and weapons[26] trafficking mainly via Niger-Nigeria border, linked to but not exclusively serving terrorists' transactions.

04 An over-burdened security apparatus, resulting from the diminished presence of the federal government in the region earlier in the decade, as forces were deployed to the North East (Boko Haram), Niger Delta (militancy), and the Middle Belt (farmer-herder crisis).

05 Illegal mining activities in Katsina and Zamfara states, often controlled by terror groups who fund banditry and cattle rustling, and incite intercommunal violence locally.

06 Large expanses of forest area, spanning states such as Zamfara, Niger, Katsina and Kaduna, which are easy hiding ground for criminal networks and create difficulties for tactical operations.[27]

07 The interplay and strains of poverty and climate change.

However, local stakeholders and analysts, such as the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) have also drawn direct links between the increase in attacks by criminal gangs – or banditry – to terror groups[28] and more generally to the twin push factors of poverty and unemployment. Even prior to the pandemic and its consequent economic strains, the North West already had the highest poverty rate in the region and lowest human development indicators scores.

All focal study states have been affected by the regional wave of insecurity in northwest and north-central Nigeria to varying degrees, with Kaduna hit hardest of the three.

Figure 2.1 below shows that 4 of the 14 worst affected[29] LGAs across Nigeria are currently in

Kaduna, namely Chikun, Birnin Gwari, Igabi and Zagon Kataf. Kano and Jigawa are regarded as relatively peaceful.

The risk heat maps (Figure 2.2) below show a trend of violence that cuts predominately from Katsina and Zamfara in the northwest to Kaduna.

Figure 2.1: Primary threat actors associated with the Highest Rates of Conflict-related Fatalities in the 14 Worst -affected LGAs in Nigeria (22 Dec 2020 – 21 Dec 2021). Source: USAID-PLSO Incident Tracking
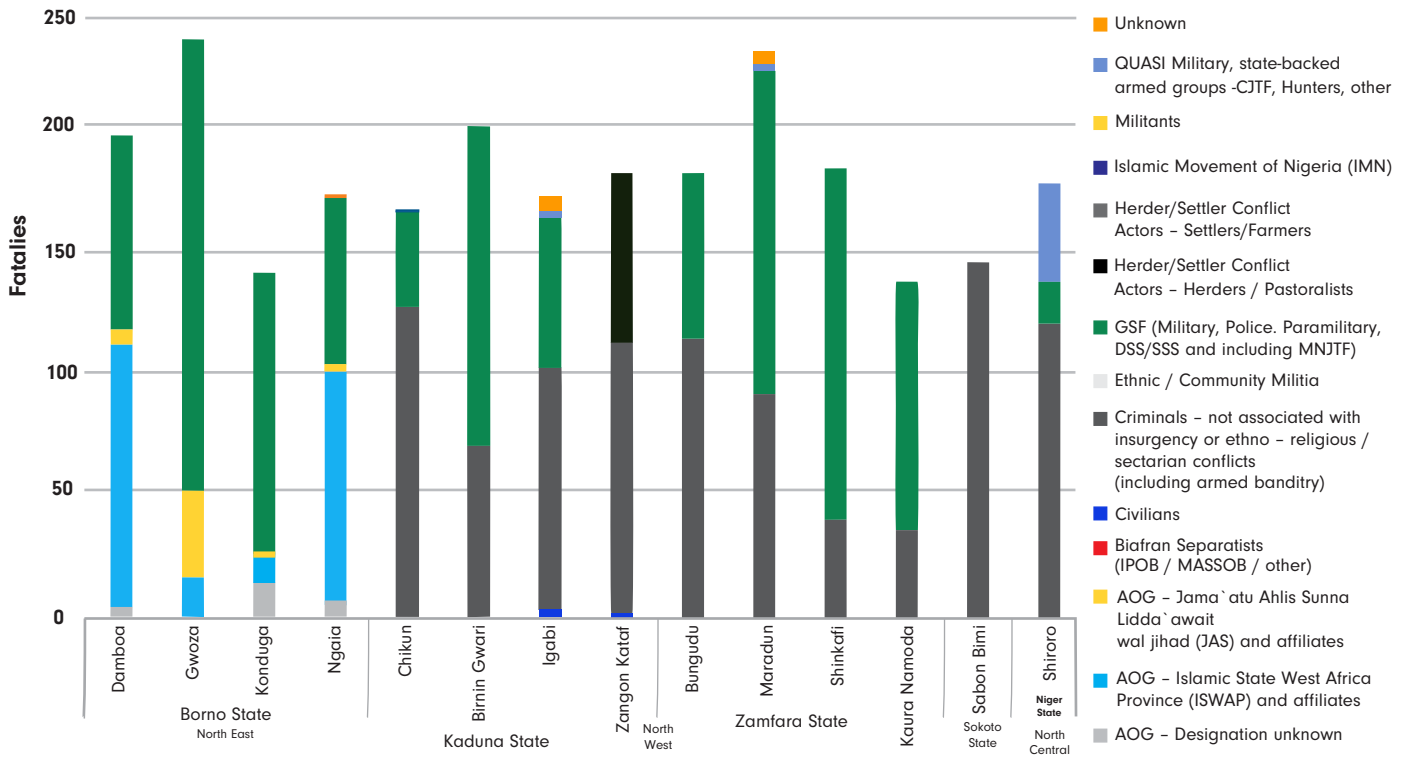
Note (I). Conflict-related fatalities displayed in this chart all fatalities associated with incidents of conflict violence that were initiated by one of the Primary. Threat Actors Listed here.

Note that, in addition to those killed by the Primary Threat Actor in each incident, the fatality count also includes those deaths in the Primary Threat Actors' own personnel during the same incident as this is a more complete picture.

Figure 2.2: School Abductions in Nigeria (Infographics published by Nigerian Think Tank in September 2021)
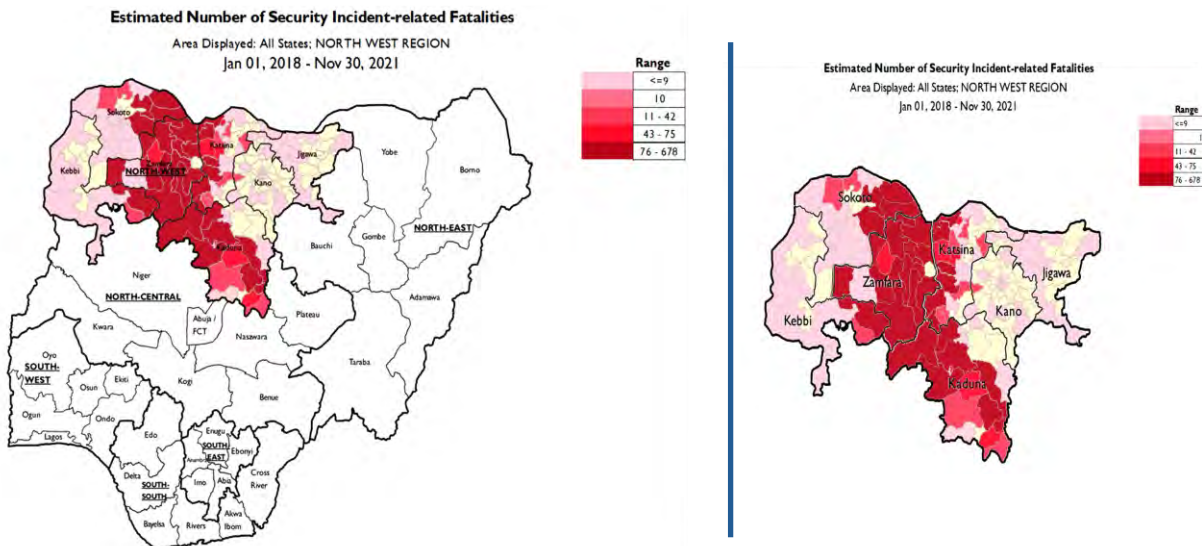
Source: SBM Intelligence

Total Security-related Incidents
Area Displayed: All States; NORTH WEST REGION
Jan 01, 2018 - Nov 30, 2021

Range
1
2
3 - 12
13 - 27
28 - 164

Total Security-related Incidents
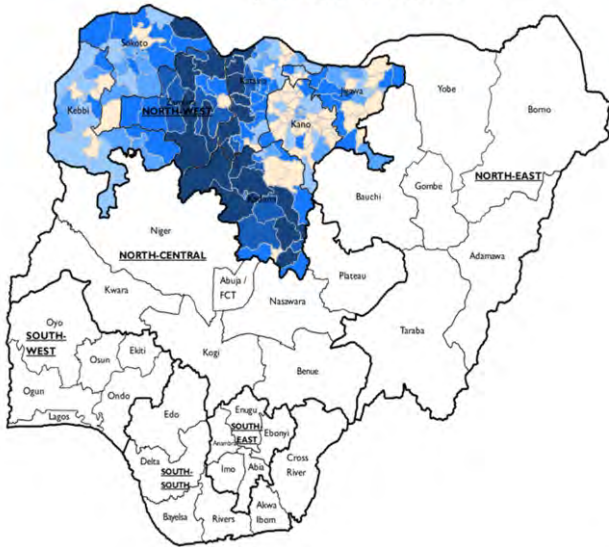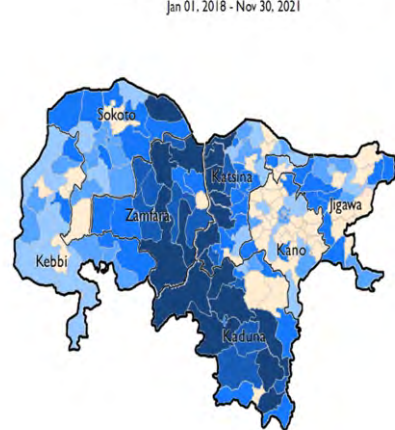Area Displayed: All States; NORTH WEST REGION
Jan 01, 2018 - Nov 30, 2021

Range
1
2
3 - 12
13 - 27
28 - 164

Source: PLSO Incident Tracking

Estimated Number of Kidnap Victims
Area Displayed: All States; NORTH WEST REGION
Jan 01, 2018 - Nov 30, 2021
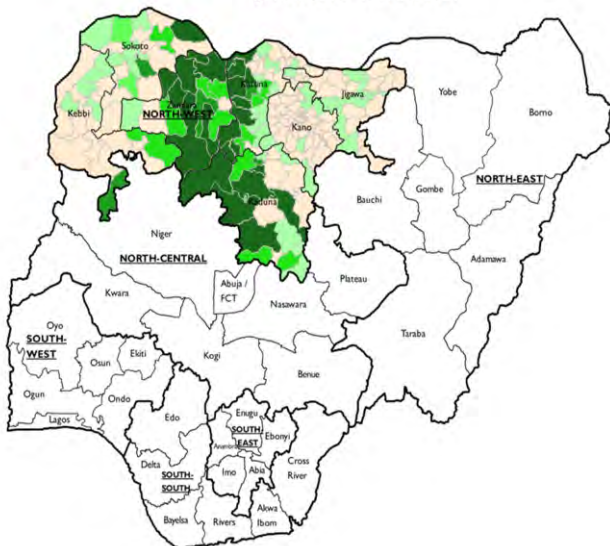
Range
<=5
6
7 - 21
22 - 38
39 - 654

Estimated Number of Kidnap Victims
Area Displayed: All States; NORTH WEST REGION
Jan 01, 2018 - Nov 30, 2021
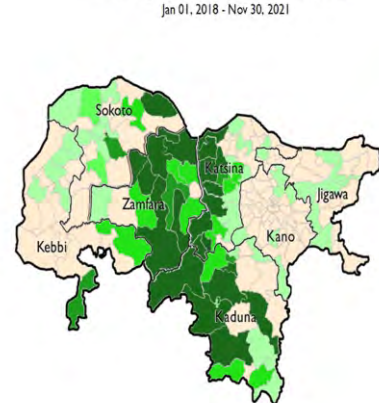
Range
<=5
6
7 - 21
22 - 38
39 - 654

Source: PLSO Incident Tracking

Insecurity has had severe consequences on education sector delivery. For instance, Boko Haram, carried out targeted attacks on secular schools[30] since it began its uprising against Western education. Similarly, between 2014 and 2020, there were a spate of abductions in Nigerian secondary and tertiary educational institutions.

In October 2019, a statement made by Governor Nasir el-Rufai of Kaduna State alluded to "receiving intelligence for three months" that bandits and kidnappers in the North West were working with Boko Haram members to attack schools. The abduction of 344 boys from[31] the Government Science Secondary School in Kankara, Katsina (December 2020) and 27

students from an all-boys college in Niger State (February 2021) serves as a notable reminder that both boys and girls are susceptible. This can thus be considered as a second wave of school-based insecurity.

SCHOOL ABDUCTIONS IN NIGERIA

BREAKDOWN OF PEOPLE ABDUCTED

1409 STUDENTS **17 TEACHERS**

BREAKDOWN OF PEOPLE KILLED

9 KADUNA **3 NIGER** **3 ZAMFARA** **1 KEBBI**
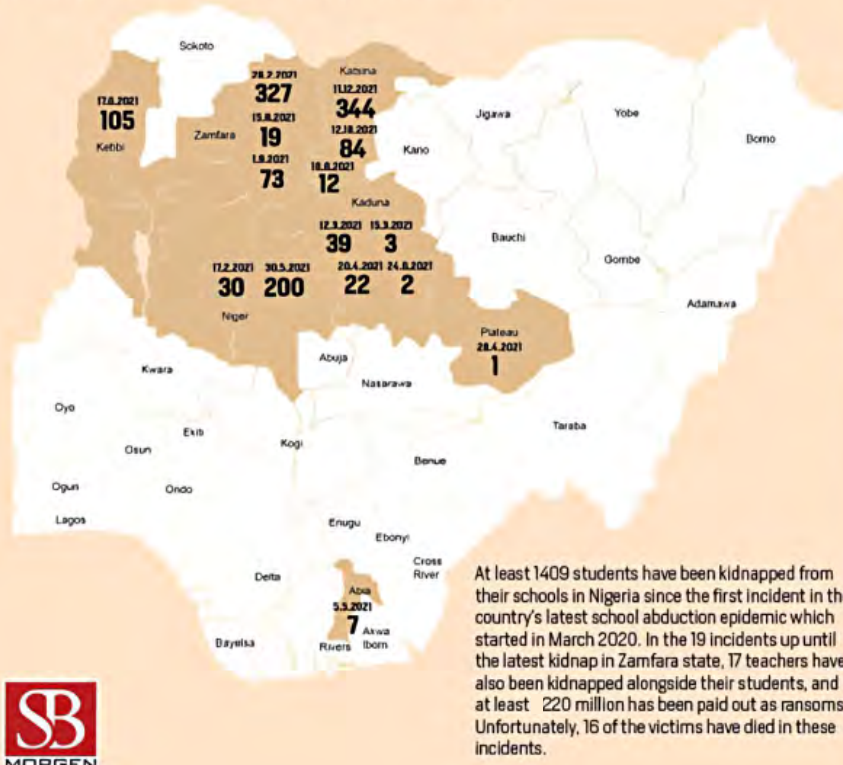
At least 1409 students have been kidnapped from their schools in Nigeria since the first incident in the country's latest school abduction epidemic which started in March 2020. In the 19 incidents up until the latest kidnap in Zamfara state, 17 teachers have also been kidnapped alongside their students, and at least 220 million has been paid out as ransoms. Unfortunately, 16 of the victims have died in these incidents.

MOST AFFECTED STATES

KATSINA	440
ZAMFARA	419
NIGER	236
KADUNA	206
KEBBI	105

School Abductions in Nigeria
(Infographic Published by Nigerian Think Tank in September 2021)
Source : SBM Intelligence

Much remains unknown about the effect of perceived school insecurity on learning outcomes. A recent study in East Africa found "negative effects of an unsafe school environment on learning outcomes for reading and math" of Rwandan students.[32] However, the body of work is still growing.

This report does not explicitly investigate academic achievement in relation to safety nor the impact of mitigation measures and conversion of boarding facilities on this particular learning outcome.

Compounding Implications of COVID-19 and Insecurity on Learning

The interplay of COVID-19 and insecurity had specific implications for the education system. Schools, their students, parents, and teachers were caught in the crossfire of their compounding effects, as state governments and educators across both the public and private sectors were forced to make tough decisions in response to the emergency situation.

Their broad impact on secondary school management on both demand and supply sides:

01 Prolonged school closures, leading to an inequitable distribution of learning materials and tutorials for children, particularly those from low-income families and in rural areas where access to electronic devices and transmission connectivity is lower.

02 Disrupted schedules and class group rotation, leading to fewer hours spent in classroom learning environments even as school resumed and fast-tracked curriculum. This favoured children with access to supplementary tutoring, remote learning options and other forms of after-school support.

03 Shifted the government funding priorities towards public health emergency response and mitigation, although significant resources were deployed in remote-learning programmes.

04 Delay of school- and sector- level data-gathering, as data collection activities were constrained with students and teachers alike out of session.

05 Impacted trauma on mental well-being and education performance as a result of reported and unreported cases of gender-based violence and other forms of abuse which increased threefold during lockdown.

Girls' Education and Gender-based Violence

The report also pays attention to accounts from girls on their experience and fears of gender-based violence (GBV) and exploitation and presents data on incident reporting from local trauma centres and security agencies.

GBV refers to

" any harm or suffering that is perpetrated against a woman or girl, man or boy and that has a negative impact on the physical, sexual or psychological health, development or identity of the person. "

Given this definition, both male and female respondents GBV risks and data were assessed. However, unequal gender power relations, girls' higher vulnerability to sexual harassment and physical or sexual assault, and the gendered nature of some consequences (unwanted pregnancies, reproductive health complications, etc.) warrant the particular attention paid to the girl-child experience. National reports and global trends also indicate that women and girls especially faced a higher risk of exposure to domestic violence, sexual assault and rape under pandemic-related stay-at-home orders.

In relation to education policy and outcomes, gender-based violence is important to bring to bear for a number of key reasons. These include:

The Effect

The devasting, long-term effects on survivors' physical, psychological and social well-being, with consequences on academic performance and school attendance, particularly in the case of teenage pregnancies.

The Need

The need to address underlying societal norms and behaviors that underpin violence, as part of a wider push for safer, more inclusive and empowering environments for school-aged girls.

The Role

The role educational institutions can play in stemming abuse and violence — through awareness, safeguarding and improved reporting channels — or exacerbating it. School environments may implicitly reinforce harmful gender norms and themselves be the setting of abuse, in the form of sexual acts in exchange for good grades, male dominance or aggressions.

The next sections build on these high-level assessments and present the key findings from the fieldwork conducted in Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano. Results of the survey are presented across the sample size at state level, including male and female respondents. Specific insights on the girl-child experience and female-only data are highlighted within the body of the text, along with comparisons to the male counterparts where relevant. Other findings from focus group studies and key informant interviews are integrated within the analysis, primarily as a means to triangulate the school-based survey data and provide wider contextual basis to ground insights from the main survey.

JIGAWA

Section 3: Jigawa State

Context

March

23 March:
Mandatory closure of private and public schools across North West states

April

19 April: Jigawa records first case, Kazaure lockdown
22 April: Ban on public gatherings and prayers, 524 deported Almajiri quarantined
30 April: Jigawa records first death, two more LGAs locked down
10 May: Lockdown ordered in Ringim and lifted in Auyo, Gujungu

Home Based Learning
7 April: Timetable for radio learning program for primary and secondary students published
15 April: New Jolly Phonics Website launched for pupils in primary schools

May

5 May: Committee set up to investigate cause of over 100 mysterious deaths. No link to COVID-19 found

13 May: Governor Badaru announces a new daily stipend of up to N10,000 for state's frontline healthcare workers

June

Pandemic Fight Continues
5 June: Food relief distributed to 71 Tsangaya schools in Maigatari and Babura
8 June: Suspension lifted on weekly markets
10 June: NCDC accredits Jigawa lab
11 June: 2020 State Budjet cut by 19% to mitigate the effects of COVID-19
20 June: Interstate travel resumes

July

COVID-19 Restrictions Eased Nationwide
2 July: Eid-El-Kabir celebrarions cancelled
14 July: The Jigawa Government announces an 18 month tax holiday for all existing SMEs

133 Days

August

Partial Reopening of Schools
3 August: Reopening of 40 schools for SS3; all govt workers resume duty
24 August: Jigawa Government releases N90m for child nutrition

September

84 Days

October

Schools Open State-wide
24 Oct: Jigawa reopens schools in a phased manner with junior secondary students attending in the morning and senior secondary students attending in the evening

November

December

Forced Closure of Schools
11 Dec: 333 Students abducted in Katsina
15 Dec: Jigawa orders immediate closure of public and private schools. Similar actions taken in Kano, Kaduna, Zamfara & Katsina
21 Dec: 11 of 14 new Infections in National Youth Service Corps

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **No. of Days School Closed:** up to 217 days
- **No. of Students Affected:** 1.4 million
- **C19 Infections:** 403 (at Dec. 2020)
- **C19 Severity:** 27th highest, less than 1% of cases outside Lagos

Figure 3.1 Timeline of state-led actions and related COVID-19 events in Jigawa State

> Jigawa

Jigawa has a more agrarian workforce than the other states in the study, according to the line ministry, over 90% of the inhabitants of the state depend on agricultural enterprises for their livelihood, with others supplementing their salaried income with earnings here.

Jigawa's COVID-19 taskforce enforced less-stringent containment protocols at the state-level; partial lockdowns were mandated at the LGA level on a case-by-case basis. Nevertheless, lower income rural households in depressed communities struggled with late rains, limited access to markets and other pandemic-related economic constraints, tipping the scale for many who were just getting by prior to 2020.

JIGAWA

> "
>
> My rice fields have almost dried up because we can't access the farm. Sometimes I had to sneak very early in the morning to get there. It was one of the most depressing moments I have experienced.
>
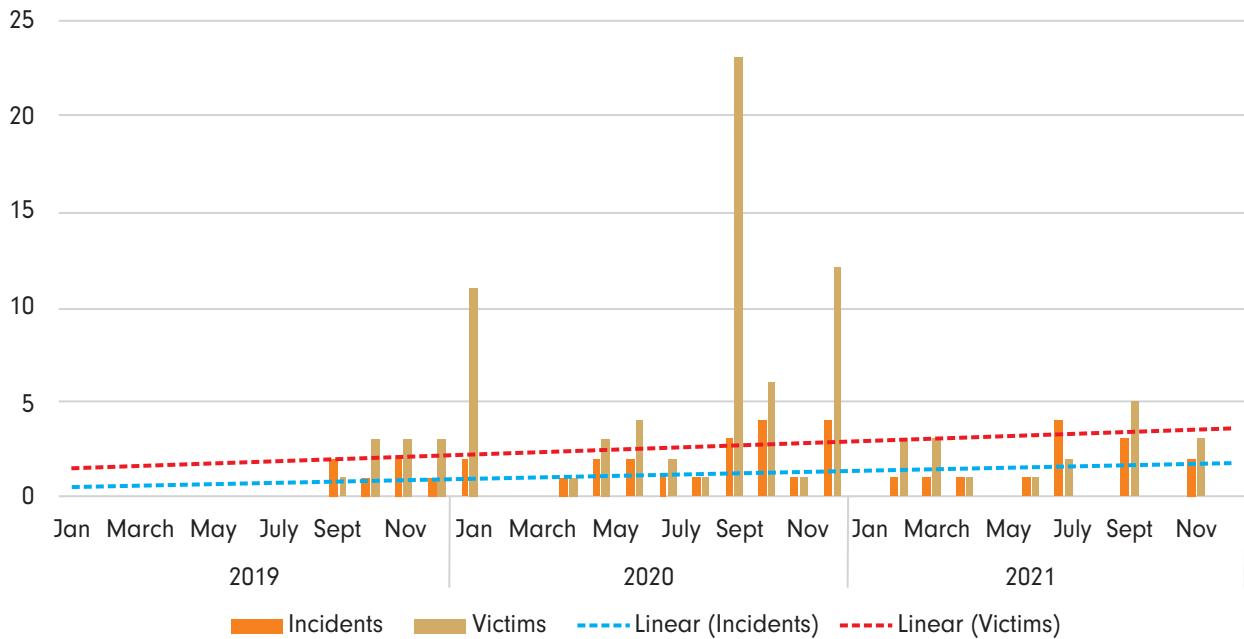> — Parent and Caregiver, Hadejia

> "
>
> Honestly life was very difficult. It has reached the extent where people were sharing food with their neighbours and when the food was depleted completely and it became so hopeless. People no longer eat three times a day.
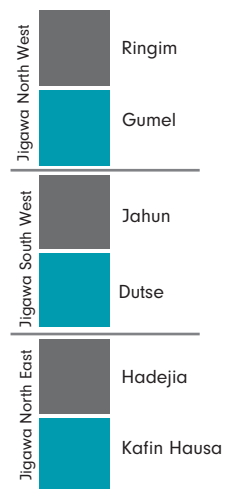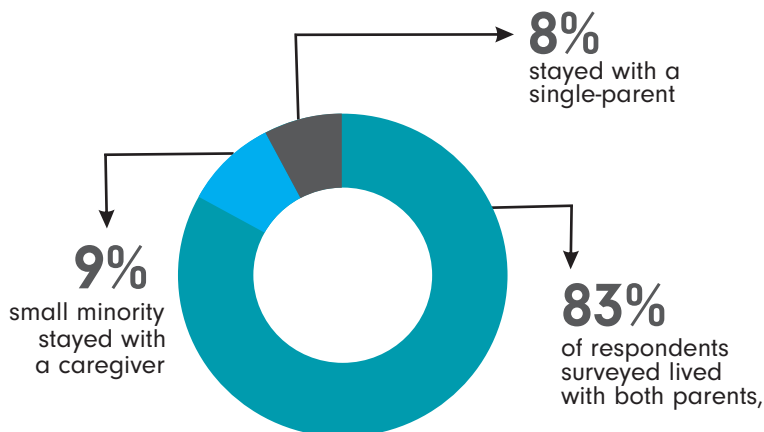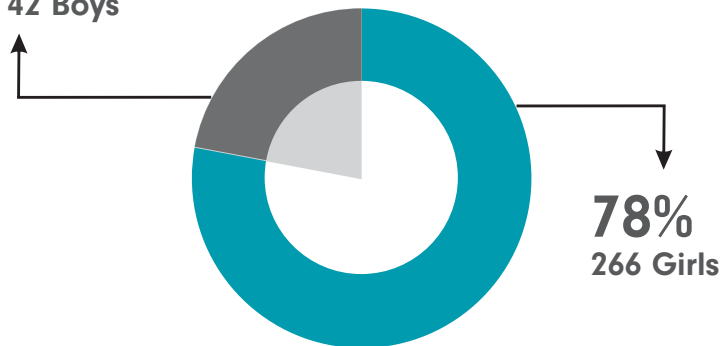>
> — Parent and Caregiver, Dutse

Jigawa State is relatively peaceful. However, the low presence of Government Special Forces (GSF) means criminal elements from neighbouring regions (Yobe, Bauchi, Kano, and Katsina state, and the Niger Republic) have unfettered access to the state and there is a moderate risk of cross-border incursions. Clashes between predominantly Fulani pastoralists and Hasusa/Kanuri farming communities have been a growing concern in the state since 2020, with most incidents reported in Guri and Kirikasamma LGAs. Kidnapping for ransom is infrequent and underreported. More recent trends have shown that high-profile individuals are the targets of kidnapping attempts. Like Kano, Jigawa's schools' closures have been entirely pre-emptive, based on proximity to high-risk states rather than local incidents.

Figure 3.2: Jigawa State — Frequency and Severity of Insecurity Incidents (Jan 2019 — Nov 2021)

Incidents   Victims   Linear (Incidents)   Linear (Victims)

Profile of Schools and Respondents

(22%)
42 Boys

78%
266 Girls

8%
stayed with a single-parent

9%
small minority stayed with a caregiver

83%
of respondents surveyed lived with both parents,

Jigawa North West
Ringim
Gumel

Jigawa South West
Jahun
Dutse

Jigawa North East
Hadejia
Kafin Hausa

Total number of respondents
308 Students

The average age of respondents was
16 Years

27 Schools
23 Public schools
4 Private schools
were sampled across 6 LGAs

Kindly see the Jigawa State Execution Report annexed for more details on the characteristics of samples, students, and schools.

Impact of COVID-19 and Insecurity on Girls and their Learning Experience

Dealing with stay-at-home orders : Girls were more likely to indicate having been anxious as schools shut and interstate travel was banned in March 2020, with 86.5% acknowledging being worried or afraid compared to 76.2% of boys. The highest proportion of girls expressing worry reside in the North East senatorial zone of the state, where 96% of girls indicated stress.

Unsurprisingly given the pandemic, most student respondents were afraid of falling ill or having the health of someone close to them deteriorate. Outside of this, reasons for worrying most frequently cited by young girls were "being forced to have sex" (23.7%) closely followed by "being kidnapped" (22.6%).

Of the six LGAs sampled in Jigawa, the fear of being raped was most prevalent in Gumel, where two out of five girls interviewed referred to this as a concern. In contrast, boys were more likely to report anxieties around "being beaten or bullied" (64.3%) and being compelled to undress by an older person (26.2%).
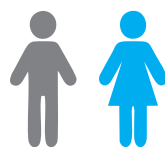
86.5%
Girls worried or afraid

96%
Girls in the North East senatorial zone that indicated feelings of stress

76.2%
Boys worried or afraid

23.7%
Forced to have sex or raped

22.6%
Being kidnapped

Gumel

64.3%
Being beaten or bullied

26.2%
Being compelled to undress by an older person

When asked directly about "the most difficult thing about not being able to attend classes in school", three out of four were worried about the general negative impact on their academic performance, with half of them indicating a specific about being held back if exams were delayed or rescheduled. Girls were more likely to express this as a difficulty. The high proportion of students expressing this worry is likely related to the large number of senior secondary students who took part in the survey. A significant minority (36%) of all students noted a decrease in social activities as the greatest difficulty outside of academics, with both genders similarly inclined towards missing interaction with their peers (36.8% of girls and 33.3% of boys).

> **The issue of sexual assault worried me. Before the lock down, one is assured that the child is safe in school but during the lockdown, there was no peace of mind at all. Even close relatives are a suspect. Many of such cases happened.**
>
> **– Caregiver, Hadejia**

> **[There were] many issues around rape due to lockdown we cannot even count how many around here, even in court right now. Even incest within family. Because most men are at home doing nothing, any small thing provokes them.**
>
> **– Parent, Hadejia**

Prevalence of Gender-based Violence:

Although data from the local Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), a quasi-governmental facility working with abuse and sexual assault survivors in northern Nigeria, shows a slight drop (7%) in the number of rape cases reported annually by young girls and women between 2019 and 2020 (Table 3), anecdotal accounts from parents, caregivers and teachers in the sampled LGAs point to a rise in cases of domestic violence and rape.[33]

Table 3.1: Prevalence of Rape and Sexual Assault Case Reports at SARC centre in Dutse, Jigawa									
Client Gender	**2018**		**2019**		**2020**		**2021**		**Total**
	No. of Cases	YOY % Diff.	No. of Cases	YOY % Diff.	No. of Cases	YOY % Diff.	No. of Cases	YOY % Diff.	
Female	74	–	105	42%	98	-7%	184	88%	461
Male	18	–	31	72%	37	19%	79	114%	165
Total no of Cases Treated	92	–	136	48%	135	-1%	263	95%	626

Year-on-year reported incidents[34] rose by 88% between 2020 and 2021 (Table 3), suggesting that access restrictions to this trauma centre[35] in Jigawa may have been reason for the temporary decline. This hypothesis is substantiated by accounts from SARC staff and other local institutions.

> **"There's increase in number of rape cases, violation of the rights of children across the state because most of the cases are not reported by the vulnerable families. Sometimes, the perpetrators go free because of connection in government. All these play a contributing role in increasing the GBV cases in the state."**
>
> **SARC, Dutse, Jigawa**

> **In Jigawa there are a few local government areas that are well known for cases of gender base violence particularly sexual assault. These local governments include Dutse, Birnin Kudu, Kiyawa and Taura. We have been receiving complaints of suspected criminals that have assaulted victims sexually especially children".**
>
> **NSCDC official, Jigawa**

Coping mechanisms and preventive tactics deployed during the lockdown:

When asked about their coping mechanisms and tactics for preventing GBV, the majority of female students in Jigawa opted to stay indoors (60%) or keep away from people (19.4%). Similar avoidance tactics were deployed by their male counterparts. It should be noted that these tactics were specific to the lockdown period, where stay-at-home orders made this the most suitable behaviour across all residents, including young girls.

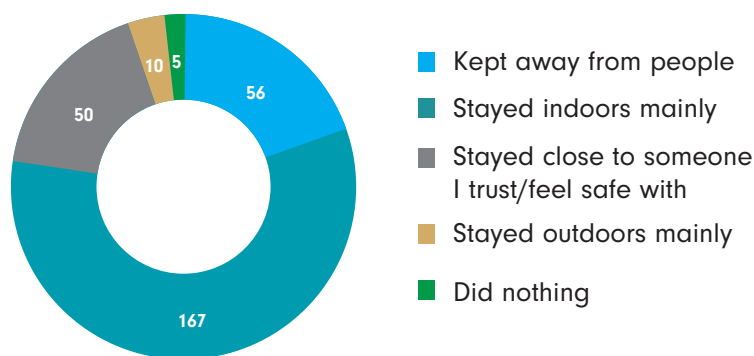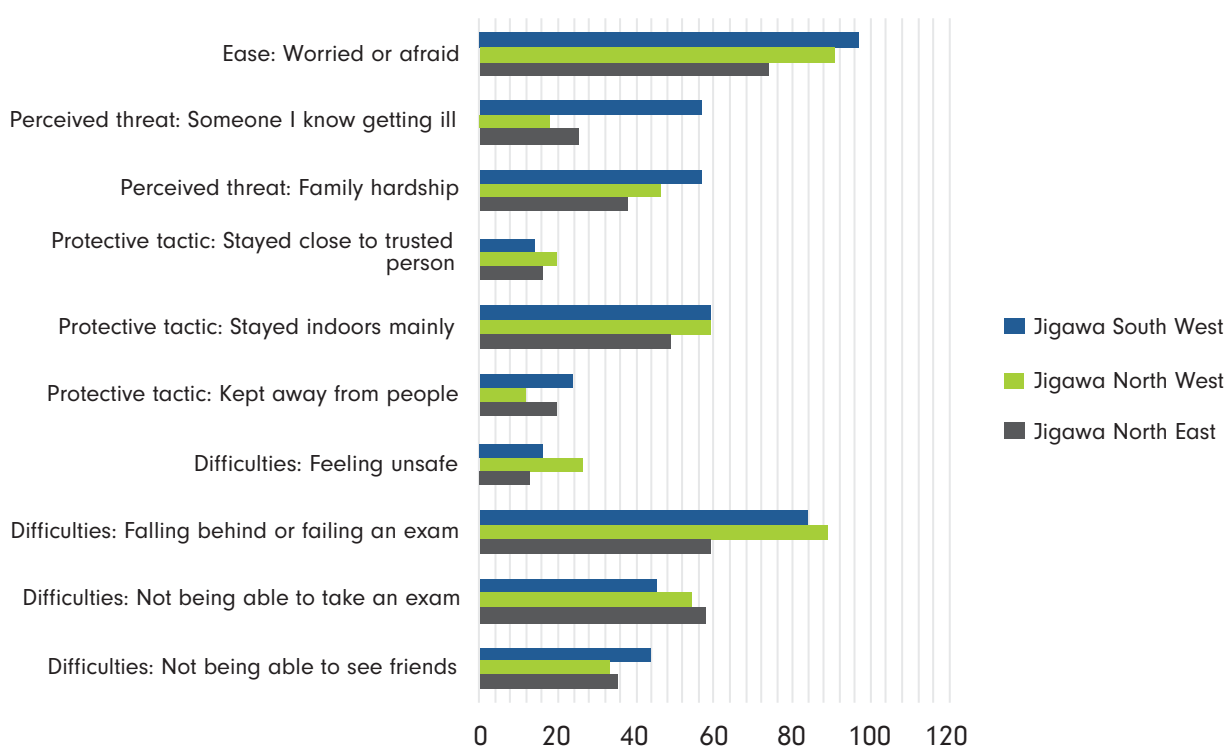Figure 3.3: Protective Tactics Deployed by Secondary Students in Jigawa

- Kept away from people — 56
- Stayed indoors mainly — 167
- Stayed close to someone I trust/feel safe with — 50
- Stayed outdoors mainly — 10
- Did nothing — 5

Figure 3.4: Student' Personal Experience of Lockdown in Jigawa

- Jigawa South West
- Jigawa North West
- Jigawa North East

Hardest aspect of not being in school:

The primary difficulties relating to school absence cited by surveyed students centred on learning challenges, particularly worries relating to exam taking and falling behind on school coursework. When students were asked to share their opinion on the most difficult thing about not being able to attend classes, the prospect of poor academic performance was the most frequently occurring response. Respondents were allowed to indicate more than one option. Girls were more likely to be worried about advancing and doing well in school, as well as missing the social interaction with their peers. As the chief decision makers for minors, the attitudes of parents and caregivers can have profound implications for the enrolment of girls in schools, and their retention each subsequent year.

> "I was worried that delay in her finishing Schools will have implications on marriage because we want her to marry when she finishes school.

– Parent, Dutse

> "She was staying with all the people that don't ordinarily stay in the house. I was worried that someone would take advantage of her.

– Parent, Dutse

> "My greatest fear is that she would lose interest in school, especially if she found something doing which she likes.

– Parent, Dutse

Learning Experience During the Lockdown:

In terms of reach, students in Jigawa's South West senatorial zone appear to have been better serviced with remote learning than their peers in other districts, as 23.4% confirmed having had access to the relevant platforms during the lockdown, compared to just 16.5% in Jigawa North East and 12.4% in Jigawa North West. Direct student reporting indicates that access to distance learning platforms was low in general across the state.

On a more positive note, household practices help supplement the learning experience with 48.1% of respondents indicating that they were tutored by an elder sibling or relative, and 41.2% reporting managing self-taught exercises. This was corroborated by focus group discussants in Dutse and Hadejia, who referred to various community and independent initiatives, such as the recruitment of NCE holders to host tutorial sessions, and the establishment of ad-hoc learning centres in local mosques. While there are obvious limitations to unstructured learning arrangements, the relatively strong prevalence of such practices point to a strong sense of local ownership and positive attitudes towards education as a personal and social good.

Figure 3.5: Where respondents got support with their studies during the COVID-19 lockdown

Self-managed with books

Tutoring by elder sibling or relative

Remote learning platforms (TV, radio, SMS, Internet)

Studying with friends

No access to educational tools or support
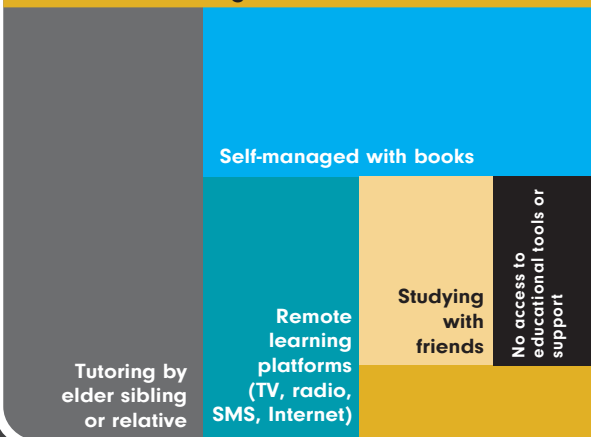
Figure 3.6: Most helpful and easiest platform to understand

- 23% Online Learning Platform
- 17% TV Education Platform
- 7% SMS or Whatsapp
- 53% Radio Platforms
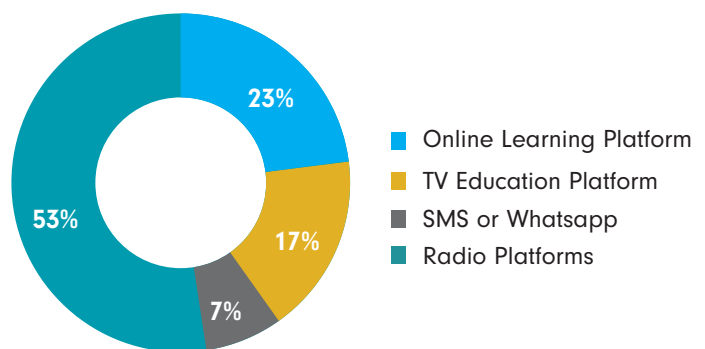
Girls who resided in more developed towns in the South West LGAs of Dutse and Jahun were more likely to feel supported with their school assignments and tutorials, with 40% indicating a lack of support compared to 76.9% in the North West and 59.7% in the North East. Girls in Ringim were the most likely to feel unsupported. Given the widespread use of radio and TV programmes, deployed by the state and non-profit sector, "no support" responses more likely reflect access to fewer options rather than none; it may also reflect the level of student independent learning capability, parental attitude to education, and limited access to electricity – all enablers in remote learning arrangements.

One way to determine the effectiveness of home-based learning initiatives is to assess the receptiveness to learning new topics remotely. Of the 81 girls who indicated learning new topics was "easier" or "much easier", about a third (31%) referred to phone-based platforms (such as SMS, WhatsApp) as the most helpful, out-ranking lessons conducted on radio, TV or websites. Some of the reasons given for this ease include the instant messaging features, which enable interaction with other students and teachers, and search functions which allow for further reading and access to free learning support on the web. One girl in Jigawa explained that:

"It's a group learning and you can ask questions if you don't understand anything."

**— Dutse,
12 years old,
JSS 3**

Percentage of Girls that felt unsupported with their school assignments and tutorials

South West LGAs	North West LGAs	North East LGAs
40%	**76.9%**	**59.7%**

Amina Inusa
Principal
G.G.S.S Hadejia, Jigawa State

However, as instant messaging and social media platforms require smartphones and data subscriptions, poorer households were excluded access from this form of distance learning. Despite the reduced degree of interaction, radio was the most form of distance learning by Jigawa students. Factors contributing to girls' preference for this medium included the suitability of the content and repeated scheduling, as well as personal factors, such as the presenters' skill and effectiveness at adapting delivery to a listening audience.

"It was very easy to learn from radio. Many things I learnt from the radio featured in my exam after resuming school"
- SS2, 15 years old, Jahun

"Radio is easy to understand because both English and Hausa language are used for the lessons"
– SS3, 15 years old, Hadejia

"Radio, it is easy because the teacher takes time to explain the topic repeatedly for better understanding"
– Ringim, 17 years old, SS3

Post Lockdown Implications on Girls' Education

Ta'iba Inusa
Out-of-School Girl
Kafin Hausa, Jigawa State

Adjustment Experience: Returning to School

Only 6.5% of surveyed secondary students currently enrolled did not resume at the same time as their peers, with minimal variation between the genders (9.5% boys and 6% girls). Similarly, most students[36] (89.6%) did not report being discouraged from going back to school. For those who maintained school attendance, a major difficulty cited by parents and caregivers was coping with rotational schedules, the attendant higher transportation cost and increased demand on time and parental oversight. Those unable to afford the additional costs walked the distance to and from school or attended fewer classes as a result, increasing the risk of exposure and absenteeism.

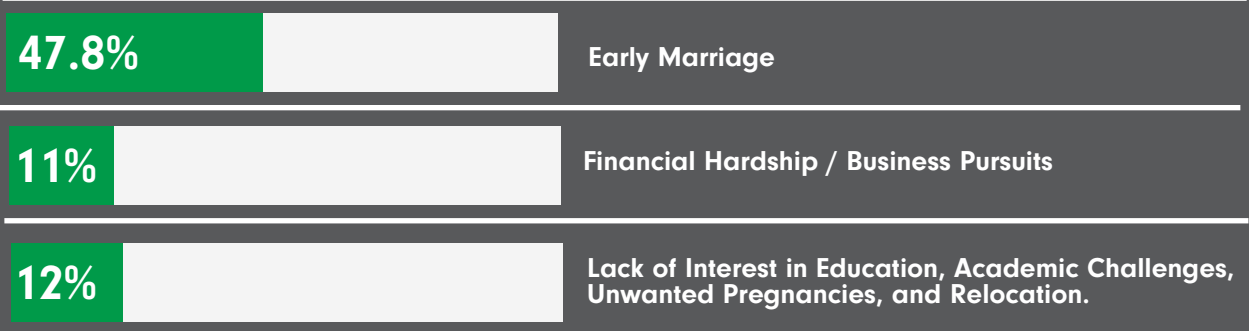## Retention Challenges and Reasons for Discontinuing School:

The most up-to-date official figures[37] from 2019/2020 suggest that prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, girls were already disadvantaged in Jigawa State. Early marriage (47.8%) was the single most frequently cited reason for girls dropping out of school, followed by financial hardship or business pursuits (11%). Other varied reasons (12%) mentioned include a lack of interest in education, academic challenges, unwanted pregnancies, and relocation. Of the 113 (38%) respondents who knew a fellow student who had dropped out of school, almost half explained that the reason for discontinuation was due to marriage during the lockdown or in the immediate period soon after restrictions were relaxed. Respondents reported knowing of several female peers who had been married off within this period, with some indicating up to four of such cases, particularly girls residing in Hadeija and Ringim.

Statements made by parents and caregivers corroborate this finding from the quantitative research and flag it as an emerging trend. They point to the tough decisions parents and legal guardians were pushed to make, as well as the strong cultural link between marriage, long-term personal security, and social acceptance.

Reason for Girls Dropping Out of School

2019/2020

47.8%	**Early Marriage**
11%	**Financial Hardship / Business Pursuits**
12%	**Lack of Interest in Education, Academic Challenges, Unwanted Pregnancies, and Relocation.**

> "Yes, I personally was worried because I have young daughters. I want them to finish schooling before being married off. The lockdown prolonged the process [of secondary school completion]. The suitor insisted that we should go ahead with the marriage and that he will allow her to continue schooling after the wedding if the lockdown is eased off. Very intelligent girl. She used to top her class. She got As in her results, but he kept her at home after the marriage."

– Parent, Dutse

> "There are more dropouts in so many schools. Because of the constant stories being circulated about kidnapping, most parents withdrew their children from school especially those in boarding school. There has also been a shift in prioritization towards boys' education over girls. Insecurity has forced parents to think twice of their girls in school."

- **Representative of NUT, Dutse, Jigawa**

Focus group meetings and one-on-one interviews with out-of-school girls provide more insight into the experiences of female dropouts. All discussants cited financial reasons as the primary driver, specifically the lack of school fees, books and learning tools, but also the lack of parental support and valuing boys' education over that of girls.

"No, my step dad is very supportive. It was just hardship. I was going to school but my step dad is old and cannot take care of everything."

– Dropped out in SSS2, Kafin Hausa, above 16 years

"My uncle was helping before I wrote my JSS exams, but he could not continue to support my education due to hardship and his farm did not yield as much this year. We agree that my brother should go to school while I support the family through hawking."

– Dropped out in JSS2, Kafin Hausa, 14 years

"Yes, to some extent. The economic situation has made some of us to begin to rethink prioritizing who to sponsor. After all the girls will eventually be in someone's house anyway."

– Parent, Dutse

"My grandmother needed my support. Even before they closed schools, sometimes I could not go to classes until I get firewood or water first. We needed to survive first before going to school. Nobody is supporting us."

**– Dropped out in JSS3, 15 years Ringim, lives with grandparents**
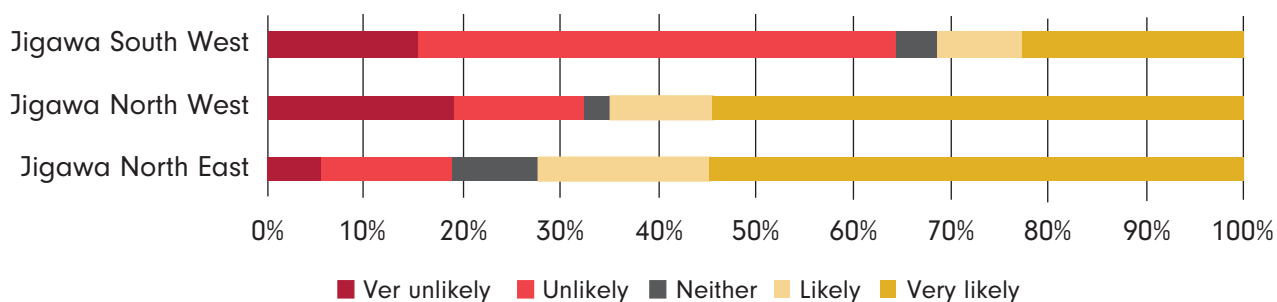
Perception of Safety and Security

The young girls had a modest impression of the safety of all the settings they frequented. This is in line with the better security in Jigawa compared to the regional average (refer to PLSO data). 59.1% of sampled students reported feeling "safe" or "very safe" at school. Hostels, sanitary facilities and open areas within the school premises were the places where girls felt most exposed.

Girls enrolled in Gumel schools (71.4%) were more likely to report feeling "unsafe" or "very unsafe" on their commute to school, with some significant personal exposure also perceived in Hadejia (48.9%) and Ringim (41.1%). It is not immediately clear what may be driving the increased sense of risk reported in Gumel.

Figure 3.7: Students' perception of safety by location in Jigawa

Legend: Very safe | Safe | Neither safe nor unsafe | Unsafe | Very unsafe
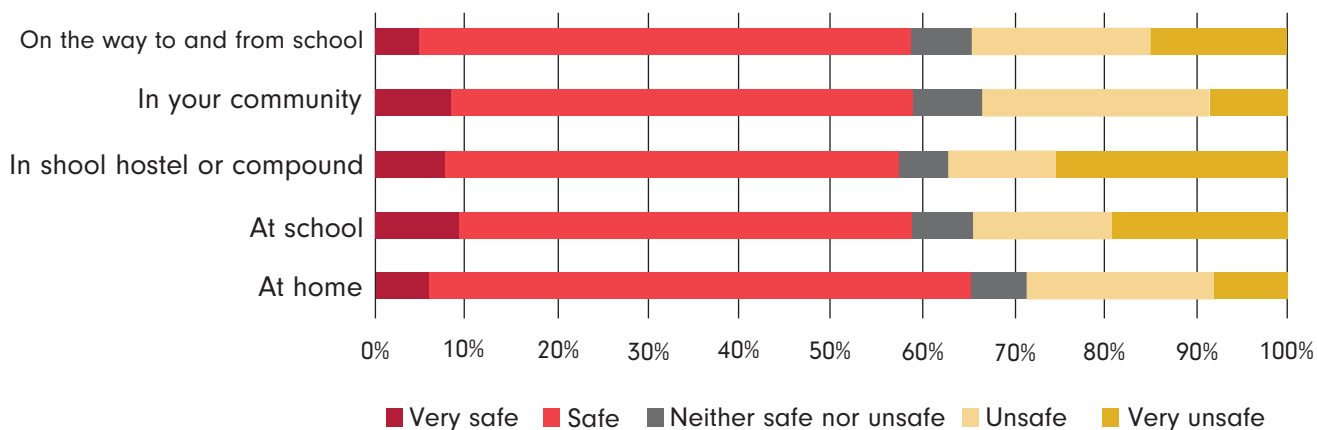
Figure 3.8: Likelihood of a kidnapping or banditry attempt at your school

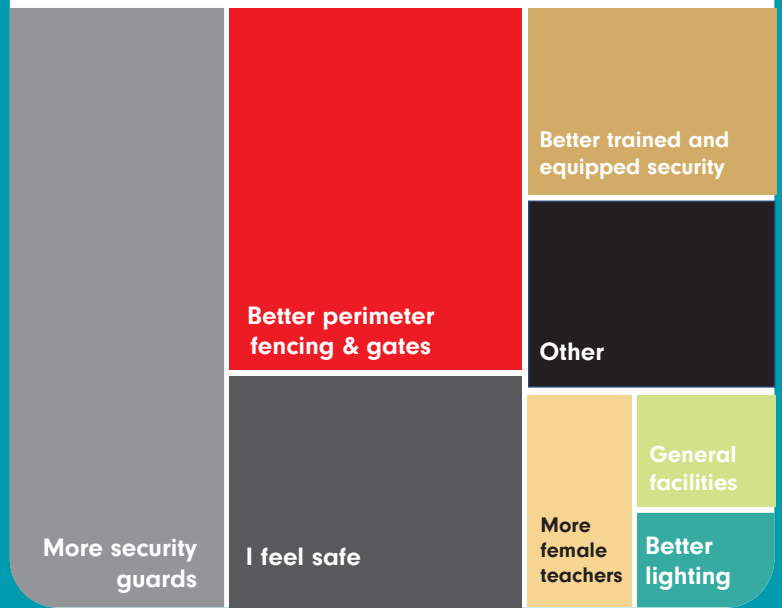Legend: Ver unlikely | Unlikely | Neither | Likely | Very likely

Figure 3.9: Most likely source of protection in the event of an attack on the school
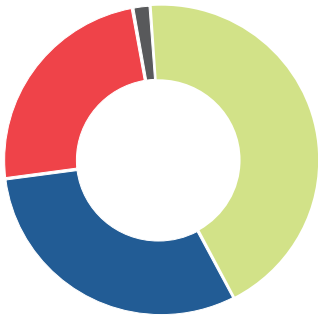
- ■ Police
- ■ Teacher
- ■ Vigilante or neighborhood watch
- ■ Others (I don't know, unprepared)

Figure 3.10: What would make girls in Jigawa feel safer in school?

More security guards

Better perimeter fencing & gates

I feel safe

Better trained and equipped security

Other

More female teachers

General facilities

Better lighting

When asked who they felt was responsible for their protection in the event of an attack, 42.1% of the students responded teachers, but noted the limited ability of teaching staff and school management to ward off violent attacks. Female respondents were twice as likely to indicate uncertainty[38] about the range of response options available to them personally (32%).

"Our teachers are the first to leave school after closing instead of allowing us to go first."

– 17-year-old, male day student, Gumel

"No one here can protect me. The teachers are not armed, the security personnel are not well equipped and usually they don't come on time when there's an attack."

– 19-year-old, female day student, Hadejia

"Nobody is around here. We are out of town."

- 15 year old, female day student, Hadejia

Trust for the responsiveness of government security operatives was higher in the North central, better serviced LGAs of Jahun and Dutse (50%), compared to 15.6% in the North East and 25% in the North West districts.

Trust for the Responsiveness of Government Security Operatives

50%
North Central

15.6%
North East
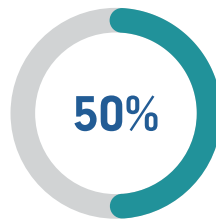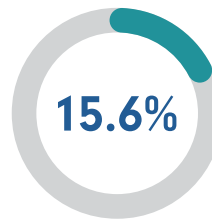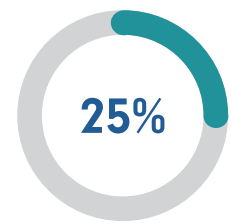
25%
North West

"We need to know more about security and how to know who is a kidnapper."

– Female, Dutse, 12, JS2

"The school is outside of town. Even on our way to school is not safe. They [the government] should employ strong security personnel not elderly ones."

– Hadejia, Female, 15 years old

"Security guards should be here around the hostel and all corners of the school."

- Jahun, Female, 17, SS3

"There is need for more light in the school hostel. As it is now, we don't have lights in our hostel. We only use torch light."

– Jahun, Female, 17 years old, SS3

Khadija Abdullahi
Student
Jigawa State

Improving safety in schools will require multiple investments and initiatives. Many schools are unfenced, poorly lit, and often guarded by solitary, elderly guards. Even where fencing exists, raising the height of existing structures would improve both lived and perceived experiences of safety and privacy.

Case Study 1	Systematic Responses to Rape and Gender-based Violence in Jigawa

According to the UNFPA, sharing close quarters during the COVID-19 lockdown triggered a rise in domestic violence and sexual assault cases worldwide. However, less media attention has been drawn to the sustained high incident rate of offenses even after quarantine orders were lifted.

According to the Office of the Attorney General in Jigawa State, diary entries received from the police evidence a rise in reported rape cases from 95 in 2020 to 122 in 2021.

Similarly, SARC reported increases in the number of post-lockdown incidents. "There were less than 200 rape cases reported in the year 2020. However, more cases have been reported in 2021; so far, there are about 262 reported cases".

Underreporting of 2020 cases was likely more pronounced than in both prior and subsequent years due to movement restrictions under stay-at-home orders. However, the upward trend across three successive years (from 2018) shows that violence against girls and other vulnerable persons did not reverse once lockdown was lifted. It also signals the growing trust and visibility of trauma centres, and growing public awareness of the laws and policies which protect vulnerable persons. This gap in protective and penal measures has also been noted by supply-side actors. As a representative from the Child Protection Network puts it, "The judges don't take necessary actions on the offenders; a harsher and punishable law should be put in place and action to be taken".

Public action has been swift with the introduction of Jigawa State's Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law (VAPP) in February 2021, an effort to domesticate the corresponding National Law – a reform led by the Ministry of Women Affairs. As an all-encompassing rather than targeted measure, it is unclear to what extent this policy offers valuable coverage for your young girls, particularly as its effectiveness relies on the report of the victims – many of whom reside in remote locations and high levels of poverty. Experiences from other countries that have rolled out similar reforms also provided mixed reviews on the efficacy of harsh sentences, such as capital punishment and surgical castration as a deterrent, and their ability to address "the myriad barriers to accessing justice" for girls and other vulnerable groups.
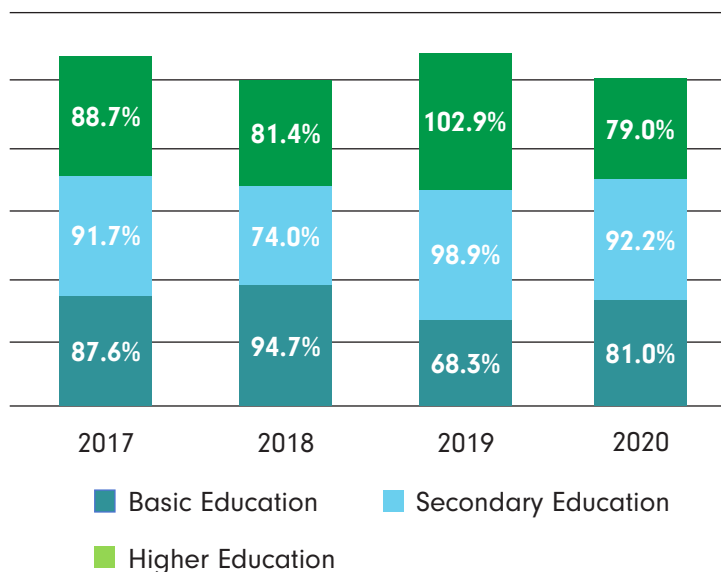
In recognition of these limitations, the Jigawa State Ministry of Justice is rolling out a proactive scheme with measures to address under-reporting. Transportation allowance, police escorts and professional medical attention will be provided to witnesses to encourage their participation in legal proceedings. Within a month of its assent, at least one rape case against a minor was presented which resulted in a conviction. Crucially, Governor Badaru signed into law the Jigawa's Child Protection Act in December 2021, 18 years after the Federal Government of Nigeria enacted the Child Rights Act 2003.

The groundwork for Jigawa's zero-tolerance stance on violence against vulnerable persons prior to the adoption of the aforementioned policy. Social protection in Jigawa was a pre-COVID budgetary priority and has retained significant political will and public interest over the last few years. Jigawa State's Social Protection Council is chaired by the deputy governor. In recent times, the council has presided over the framing and passing of key legislation, including the Child Rights Act (December 2021) and the State Persons with Disability law (2017). This progress made to systematically address vulnerabilities of various social groups has been possible due to strong leadership, sustained resourcing, and receptiveness to donor support by key state officials. Policy champions worth noting include the deputy governor, the Attorney General, Ministry of Women's Affairs, and Abubakar Muhammad (chairperson, the House Committee on Justice and Judiciary) and JISOP.

Implementation of girl protection policies, including the new VAPP law, will strengthen both clinics and guidance and counselling units in schools, better equipping them to recognize signs of abuse and attend to survivors. Preventative measures should also be explored via Jigawa's female teacher development scheme (first-responders) and the extension of UNICEF's safer schools training state-wide. There are also opportunities to address complementary gaps with the draft Girl child policy (a zero draft has been developed and a validation exercise took place in December 2021). These opportunities should be explored with a costed financial framework for the implementation of the girl-child coordination platform.

Institutional Response

Figure 3.11: Jigawa - Education Budget Performance (%) 2017 - 2020

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Higher Education	88.7%	81.4%	102.9%	79.0%
Secondary Education	91.7%	74.0%	98.9%	92.2%
Basic Education	87.6%	94.7%	68.3%	81.0%

Basic Education Secondary Education Higher Education

Figure 3.12: Jigawa State - Prioritisation of Primary & Secondary Education

Share of State Budget Share of State Expenditure Share of Sector Expenditure

structured in a phased manner. For instance, exam-taking SS3 WAEC students were allowed back first, to enable their participation in an accelerating learning and examination preparation program. These interventions were presided over by the Jigawa State COVID-19 Taskforce, headed by the Commissioner of Health, with strong participation from the Secretary to the State Government, the State Head of Service, and other key government officials. Their primary function was to develop and implement interim policy measures on COVID-19 containment, monitoring, humanitarian relief and economic recovery.

A policy trend coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic was the emergence of protection for vulnerable persons as a key priority, often characterised by aggressive prohibitive measures and accompanied by local structures to support reporting and enforcement. This was signalled with the domestication of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law (VAPP) in February 2021 (see Case Study 2) and the signing into law of the Jigawa State Child Protection Bill, eight years after it was initially presented and repealed. While these policies received plaudits from non-profit groups, citizens, and international partners, it is too early to determine how well these laws will protect the young girls they target as part of the array of vulnerable persons identified – and the resulting implications on girls' personal safety and well-being.

More recently, Jigawa has sought to address the lack of a targeted policy on girls' education policy. This was another reform triggered in the wake of national policy debates on the risk posed by the pandemic to the progress made with girls' education. This policy could complement Jigawa's ongoing supply side initiatives, such as the

Jigawa's low COVID-19 infection count – accounting for less than 1% of the national patient load and ranked 27th out of Nigeria's 36 states in severity of spread as of December 2020 – meant that government enforcement efforts and interventions were less intensive than in the rest of the country. Like other states, the main response in the education sector was standardised: the closure of schools, the launch of a state-sponsored radio and TV learning programme and more generally, the distribution of palliatives and hygiene supplies to vulnerable families. The reopening of schools in October, was

government's female teacher development programme — where girls are selected from pilot schools to be trained on how to pursue teaching as a career. In response to the state government's commitment to addressing the education of girls in a more targeted manner, PERL supported the formation of the Girl Child Education Coordination Platform. This platform functions as a coordination body; it brings together stakeholders in the state ministries, local governments, other donor agencies and non-profit organisations to develop a draft girls education policy and establish a sub-committee

to drive the implementation of policy leveraging key institutional participation. The zero draft has been presented and awaits final approval.

There is no designated comprehensive programme for coordinating school safety in Jigawa. This priority reflects given the relatively low exposure to threats to security in the state. Interim measures are placed in response to discrete threats, such as school closures and training of school management boards and SBMCs on

intelligence gathering and reporting, led by the Commissioner of Education as part of interventions outlined by the State Security Council's sub-committee on school security. The State Government has also made provisions for more trained security personnel to be deployed; however, this survey finds that more investment is required to achieve full coverage.

Pathways and Implications for Girls' Education

The insights here are informed mainly by discussions with out-of-school girls, enrolled female students, and parents.

Poverty

Girls' education is often one of the first spending items to be deprioritised when household incomes are strained, particularly due to the loss of a parent or illness. Informal learners and out-of-school girls often reported their mothers as applying pressure to engage in petty trading or support with domestic chores, pointing to a growing lack of parental support in the face of competing (financial) pressures.

Early Marriage

Our findings reflect growing tensions between traditional norms and acceptable practices around daughters' marriage immediately after secondary school completion. One parent in Dutse explained his fears "that delay in completing school will have implications on marriage, because we want her to marry when she finishes school." While this is a push factor driven primarily by discrete, past COVID-19 measures (i.e., school closures), other accounts from primary caregivers show that early marriage may also be considered to overcome financial difficulties which are more gradual and persisting problems. In the words of a parent in Ringim, "Marrying them out seemed a better option."

Devaluation of Girls' Education

Underpinning the drop in parental support when incomes are stretched and the inclination towards early marriage is the admission that educating boys is more of an investment than educating girls.

This shift likely stems from deeper cultural and more historical conditions than those presented by the pandemic. However, COVID's knockoff effects of economic slowdown could mean that this attitude may have gained a stronger foothold, as parents and girls alike consider this too heavy a burden or low in financial returns.

Pathway 1: COVID-19 Prolonged School Closures

- **Financial: Girls engage in income generating activities**
  - Social: Weakened parental support for education
    - Girls are withdrawn from school

- **Social: Fears of daughters losing their suitors or receiving unwanted attention**
  - Cultural: Early marriage to safeguard daughters' future
    - Girls are withdrawn or dropout from school

- **Financial: Reduced household income**
  - Social: Prioritsation of boys' education over girls'
    - Girls are withdrawn from school
  - Financial: Inability or unwillingness to pay for school fees
    - Girls are withdrawn from school

"The economic situation has made some of us to begin to rethink of prioritising who to sponsor. Afterall the girl will eventually be in someone's house anyway."

– Parent, Dutse

"We agreed that my brother should go to school while I support the family through hawking."

–Kafin Hausa, day student (dropped out of school from JSS3 in 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic)

"My daughter has even opted out on her own."

– Parent, Dutse

Pathway 2: Death, divorce or prolonged family illness

- **Cultural: Household and care responsibilities increase**
  - Girls are withdrawn or dropout from school

- **Social: Lack of parental support**
  - Girls are withdrawn from school

- **Financial: Insufficient sponsorship**
  - Girls are withdrawn or dropout from school - after initial absenteeism

Lawan Yunusa Dan Zomo
Honourable Commissioner
Ministry of Education, Jigawa State

Pathway 3:
Insecurity, attacks in schools and nearby communities

Physical:
Location of schools
in the outskirts

Physical:
Inadequate fencing,
security personnel and response

Personal:
Poorer impression of safety
due to attacks in
neighbouring states

Personal:
Poorer impression of
personal and communal safety

Social:
Lack of
parental support

Girls transferred
boarding to day
school; transport
fare increases

Social:
Lack of
parental support

Girls are
withdrawn
from school

Girls are
withdrawn
from school

Girls transfered
from boarding to
day schooling

KADUNA

Section 4: Kaduna State

Context

March

29 March:
Lockdown ordered in FCT, Lagos & Ogun State.
Federal Govt bans interstate movement

Curfew Enforced
20 April: Kaduna State Standing Committee on
COVID-19 temporarily relaxes curfew
to enable residents restock
26 April: Kaduna extends quarantine for another 30 days
27 April: Easing of lockdown measures in three hotspot states.

270 Days

June

Lockdown Relaxed, Schools Remain Shut
9 June: Partial lockdown lifted after 75 days. Curfew imposed.
Businesses, worship centers resume weekly service.
Schools and markets remain shut.
11 June: Private school sanctioned for conducting entrance
exams
15 June: Kaduna becomes first state to lift the ban on inter-state
movement declared by the Federal Government

October

Schools Open State-wide
15 Oct: Kaduna government approves the reopening of schools
on 19 Oct for SS2, JSS2 and Primary 6 students
24 Oct: Curfew imposed after state-owned warehouse and
home of a top-ranking government official are looted
27 Oct: Door-to-door search for looted COVID-19 relief items
20 Nov: N1,000 levy to be paid by every adult in the
state from 2021

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **No. of Days School Closed:** 270 days
- **No. of Students Affected:**
  2.7 million (Kaduna ACS 2020)
- **C19 Infections:** 5296 (at Dec 2020)
- **C19 Severity:** 3rd highest, 9% of national
  cases excluding Lagos

Closure of all Schools
20 March: First state to announce a partial lockdown,
there days before their index case. Schools closed.
Gatherings over 50 people banned.

April

Home Based Learning
6 April: Radio and TV stations begin to broadcast
daily lessons for SS3 students
14 April: Kaduna State Scholarship and Loans Board
promises to continue disbursement.
Plans to spend 342 billion on free primary
and secondary education in 2020

May

Funding reallocations
21 May: 11,000 unionised health workers
threaten strike after State Government decision to deduct 25%
from civil servant salaries to fund palliatives.
26 May: Scholarships awarded to 218 recently
returned almajiri
27 May: Lockdown extended by two weeks

July

COVID-19 Restrictions Eased Nationwide
27 July: Civil servants resume work,
infections triple after lockdown lifted
17 Aug: School resumes for JSS3 students only,
in preparation for qualifying exams (NECO)
21 Aug: Kaduna lifts ban on daily prayers
25 Aug: TRCN reveals Kaduna is the only state yet
to approve qualifying exams for teachers

August

September

November

December

Second Closure of Schools
15 Dec: Kaduna shuts down all schools,
over 30% rise in COVID-19 cases. Primary and secondary
learners advised to continue learning via state TV
and radio programmes. Workers to operate from home.
20 Dec: Kaduna bans large gatherings & Issues stay
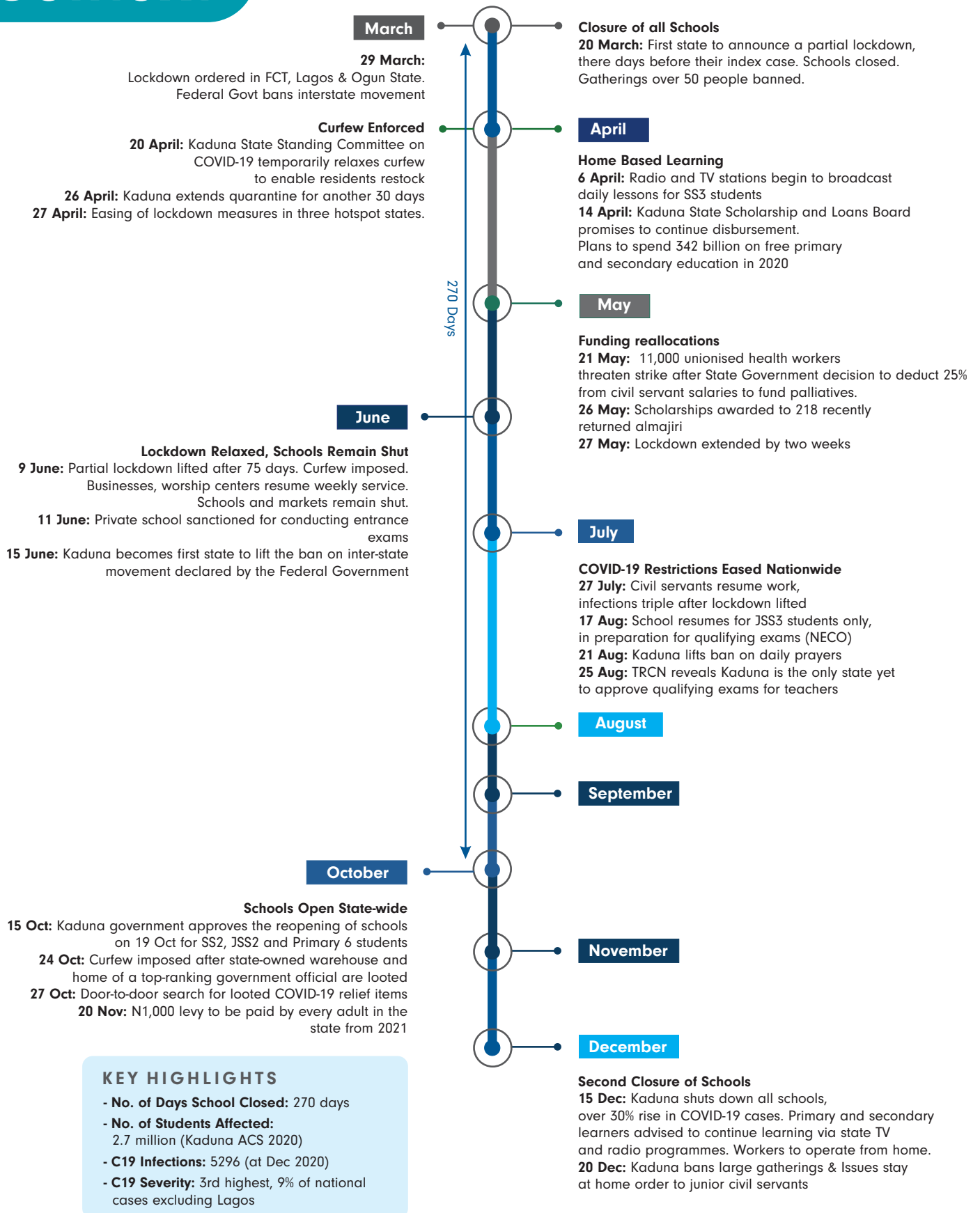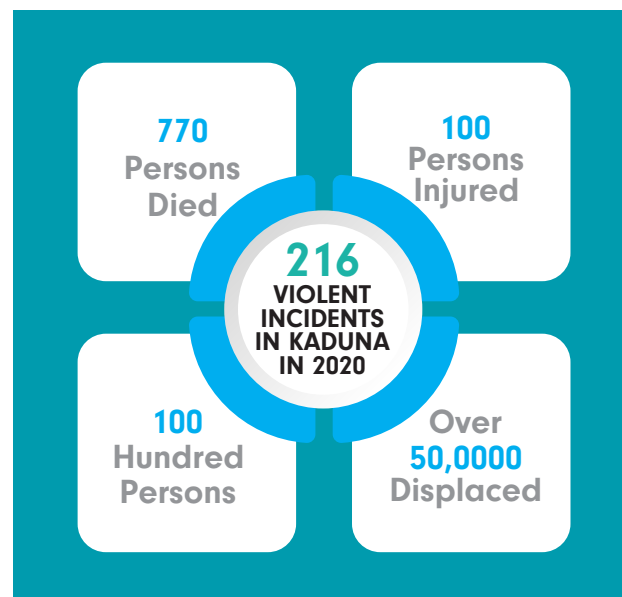at home order to junior civil servants

Figure 4.1: Timeline of state-led actions and related COVID-19 events in Kaduna State

Over the last few years, the character and epicentre of Kaduna State's security crisis has shifted from the ethno-religious communal clashes and reprisal attacks that plagued communities in the south, to a more dispersed spread closer to its Niger, Zamfara and Katsina boundaries. Current destabilising threats are threefold: farmer-herder conflict, criminal gangs, and extremist groups.[39]
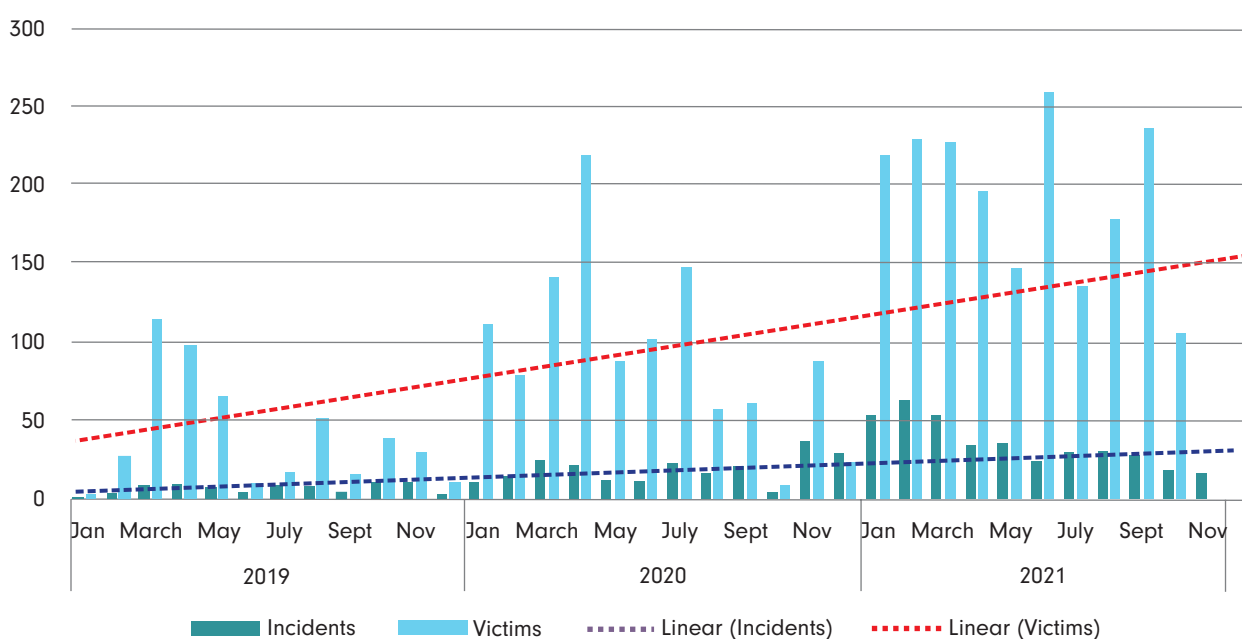
In September 2021, the Kaduna State Government announced the shutting down of telecommunication in certain areas of the state as part of its efforts to reduce armed banditry[40] and insecurity. Prior to this, citizens of Kaduna State had witnessed a steady rise in kidnapping incidents, GSF-led clashes, and armed banditry.

In 2020, Kaduna State experienced a near tripling of violent incidents involving armed groups, with 216 violent events costing 770 lives and leaving more than 100 persons injured.[41] Some sources estimate that over 400 persons were abducted for ransom in the same period, bringing the number of fatalities closer to 1000. The pervasive violence has severely affected many communities and led to the displacement of over 50,000 people.[42]

In the wake of insecurity challenges, 2020 ushered new pressures in the form of COVID-19 and its attendant economic challenges. Kaduna was the first Northern state to announce an index case, and by the end of the year, only Lagos and Abuja had higher infection rates. This put enormous strain on its public health systems and finances. The institutional summary (Section 4.6) explains how strong leadership and swift action enabled Kaduna State to navigate the worst of these challenges.
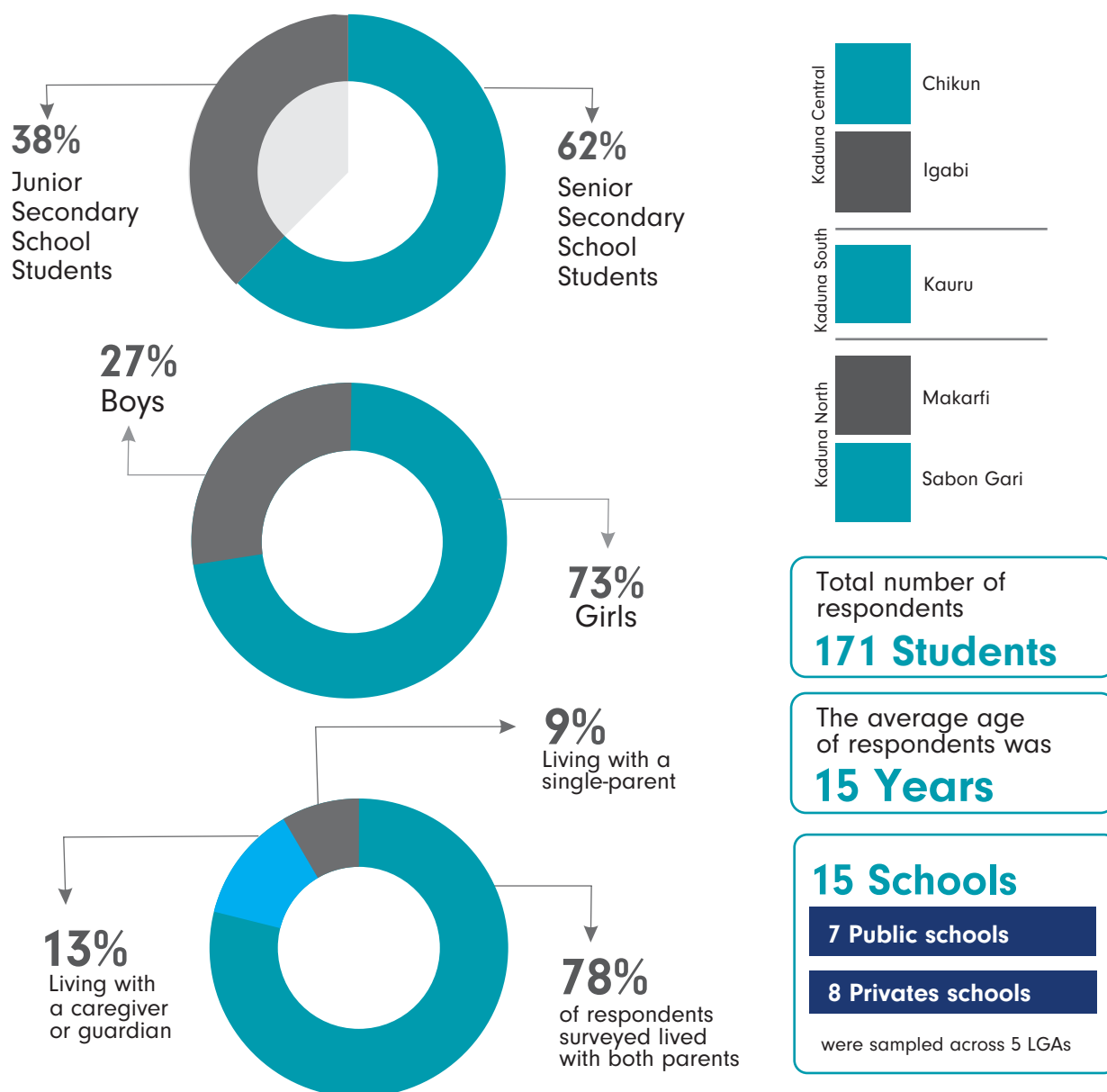

770 Persons Died	100 Persons Injured
216 VIOLENT INCIDENTS IN KADUNA IN 2020	
100 Hundred Persons	Over 50,0000 Displaced

Figure 4.2: Kaduna State — Frequency and Severity of Insecurity Incidents (1 Jan 2019 — 30 Nov 2021)

Profile of Schools and Respondents

In total, 171 secondary school students participated in the survey exercise in Kaduna, with 125 girls (73%) and 46 boys (27%). These students were enrolled in 15 schools (7 public, 8 private) sampled across 5 LGAs, namely Chikun and Igabi in Kaduna Central, Kauru in Kaduna South, and Makarfi and Sabon Gari in Kaduna North. To balance out the sample size at the senatorial district level, a higher number of students were targeted in Kauru, the only participating[43] LGA in that district. The average age of respondents was 15 years, across junior secondary (38%) and senior secondary (62%) school students. Most respondents were from dual parent homes (78%), with 9% living with a single parent and 13% living with a caregiver or guardian.

38% Junior Secondary School Students

62% Senior Secondary School Students

27% Boys

73% Girls

9% Living with a single-parent

13% Living with a caregiver or guardian

78% of respondents surveyed lived with both parents

Kaduna Central
- Chikun
- Igabi

Kaduna South
- Kauru

Kaduna North
- Makarfi
- Sabon Gari

Total number of respondents
171 Students

The average age of respondents was
15 Years

15 Schools
7 Public schools
8 Privates schools
were sampled across 5 LGAs

All participating schools in the study were classified as mixed gender. More diversity was achieved in the accommodation of different school types and the selection of settlement type across the participating institutions. Students were sampled across five junior secondary schools, three senior secondary schools and seven schools accommodating both class groups. The schools were located in 7 urban districts and 8 rural communities.

Kindly see the Kaduna State Execution Report annexed for more details on the characteristics of samples students and schools.

Impact of COVID-19 and Insecurity on Girls and their Learning Experience

Dealing with stay-at-home orders:
75% of girls reported being worried or afraid of being on the receiving end of misfortune during lockdown — slightly higher than 71.7% of boys.

Follow-up questions aimed to distinguish between fears related to incidents directly experienced by the individual and those related to their family and community, both with consequences for their well-being. Girls' top anxieties[44] in the first category were falling ill (61.6%), being kidnapped (48%), being beaten or bullied (39.2%) and being touched inappropriately by someone older (27%).

While boys and girls were similarly conscious of the kidnapping risk (47.8% for boys), more than half of the girls residing in Chikun (68%) and Igabi (56%) identified this as a concern. Female respondents in Sabon Gari (33%) were the least likely to cite being the target for kidnapping as a worry.

When it came to wider perception of community threats, 27% indicated their "community being attacked" as their top concern, while 12% were primarily worried about their "families not being able to cope with the hardship".

75% Girls worried or afraid

71.7% Boys worried or afraid

61.6% Falling ill

48% Being kidnapped

39.2% Being beaten or bullied

27% Being touched inappropriately

47.8% Being kidnapped

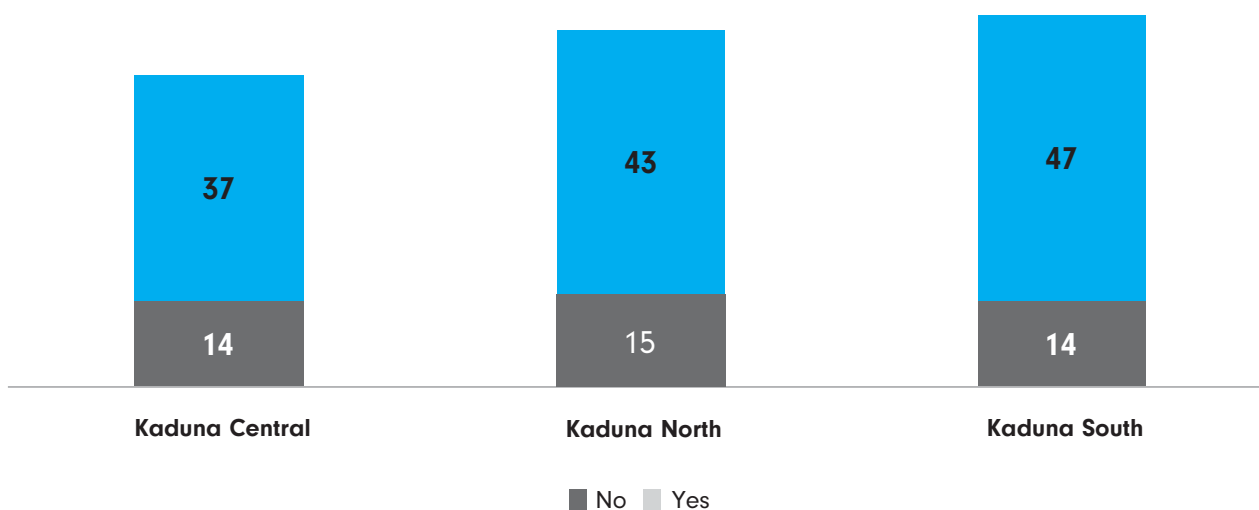**68%** Girls concious of kidnapping risk at Chikun

56% Girls concious of kidnapping risk at Igabi

33% Girls concious of kidnapping risk at Sabon Gari

Figure 4.3: Breakdown of girls worried or afraid something bad would happen to them and their friends

Kaduna Central	Kaduna North	Kaduna South
37	43	47
14	15	14

■ No ■ Yes

Trends Related to Gender-Based Violence:

In Kaduna, six times more girls reported that they worried about being touched by an adult when alone than boys. At least a third of the girls[45] living in Makarfi and Sabon Gari (Kaduna North) were wary of inappropriate adult attention during the lockdown. When a range of different acts of gender-based violence were reviewed cumulatively, responses in this category were also more frequent within Kaduna North than in any other district.

Media stories during the lockdown and case reports from local trauma centres provide a sense of wider trends, and allude to the context from which these fears emerged. The table below is from the SARC centre in Jema'a,[46] the southern edge of Kaduna. It shows that assault cases shot up drastically during the lockdown year, increasing more than three-fold, and kept climbing in the subsequent year, although at a slower rate. On average, 19.5% of reported cases in Kaduna involved minors.

	2019		2020		2021		
Table 4.1: Prevalence of Rape and Sexual Assault Case Reports at SARC centre in Kafanchan, Kaduna							
Client Gender	**No. of Cases**	**YOY % Diff.**	**No. of Cases**	**YOY % Diff.**	**No. of Cases**	**YOY % Diff.**	**Total No. Of Cases (%)**
Female	190	–	485	115%	803	66%	1478 (85%)
Male	29	–	97	234%	135	39%	261 (15%)
Total no of Cases Treated	219	–	582	166%	938	61%	1739 (100%)

Worryingly, these traumatic events may be more widespread than these numbers imply. Interviews with students and school staff point towards the need to tighten GBV mitigation measures within secondary schools, with learning institutions in rural locations to be prioritised. At least two accounts of alleged child molestation were reported in Kauru. Two students relay their experiences below. Both cases have been treated with utmost discretion and are presently being followed up by the non-profit Hope for Communities and Children and responsible local authorities.[47]

"He called me to the principal's office when the principal was not around. He advanced towards me, and he held my breast and started forcing himself on me. While that was happening, the visitors arrived then I seized the opportunity to run out of the principal's office".

"He [said] will give me another [uniform], but not in the school, that he will tell me the venue to meet. When I arrived at the school, he sent me to the principal's office. I noticed he was following me behind. When I got to the office, I stopped at the door, I didn't want to enter, he entered and asked me to come in. I hesitated and I still told him that I was given a uniform already, yet he insisted, I noticed he wanted to take advantage of me. I just ran away."

While these may be isolated and infrequent events, structures in place within Kaduna to address risks of sexual assault and other gender-based violence risks should be evaluated and backed by legislation. In September 2020, Kaduna State amended its penal code to prescribe the death penalty and surgical castration for convicted rapists. This came shortly after the rape and murder of two young girls in June 2020. School-centric policies and programmes are required to build on this strong stance against sexual exploitation and violence – one that incorporates anonymous reporting channels and spot-checks in schools along with safeguarding training for students and staffers.

Figure 4.4: Students' Personal Experience of Lockdown in Kaduna

Legend: Kaduna Central, Kaduna North, Kaduna South
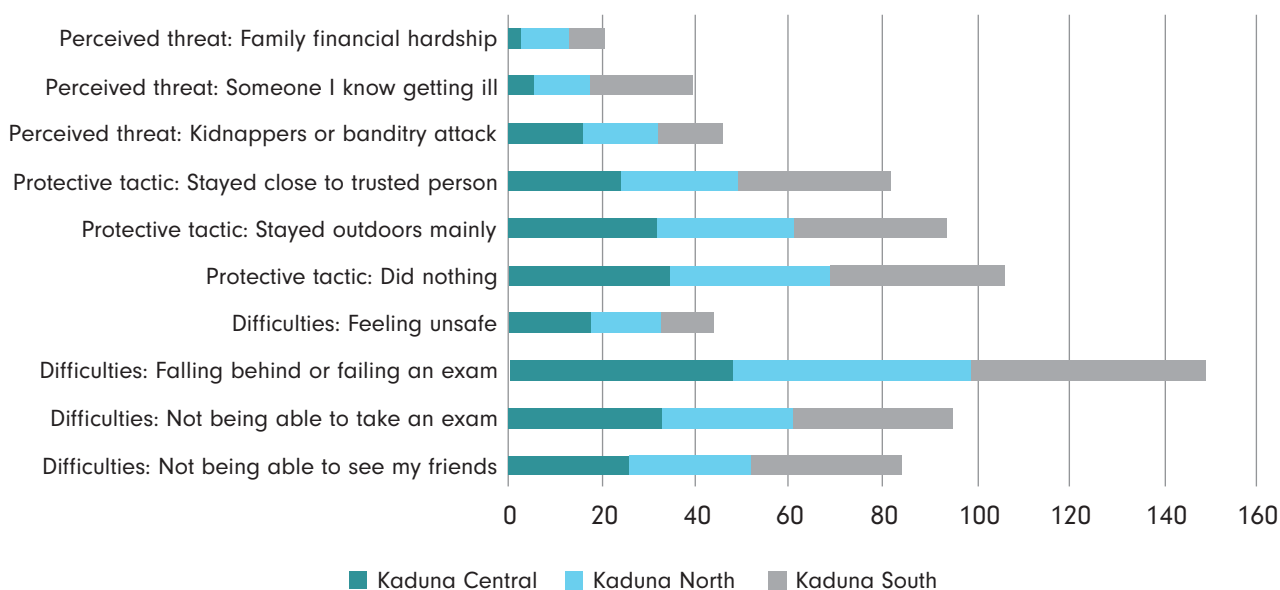
Hardest Aspect of not being in School:

Majority of the respondents were more concerned about the implications of the school closures on their academic experience, in contrast to concerns on personal safety, physical health, and socialising. When asked about "the most difficult thing about not being able to attend classes in school", 87.1% indicated negative impact on education performance "falling behind in my studies or failing an exam", and 55.6% were concerned about their timely advancement in the education system - not being able to take an exam. About half of the respondents (49.1%) referred to socialising as major challenge, with boys twice as likely to cite this as a challenge.

81.7% Indicated negative impact on education performance "falling behind in my studies or failing an exam".

55.6% Were concerned about their timely advancement in the education system - not being able to take an exam.

49.1% About half of the respondents referred to socialising as major challenge, with boys twice as likely to cite this as a challenge.

Maryam Abdulkadril
Student
Kaduna State

Learning Experience During the Lockdown:

When asked what activity took up most of their time during the lockdown, about a third of sampled students in Kaduna (31%) cited "studying". However, girls in Kaduna were twice as likely to spend their time performing household chores[48] and five times more likely to dedicate time to taking care of younger siblings than boys. On the other hand, boys were twice as likely to dedicate their lockdown hours to working on the family farm or business (63%). On the whole, girls were more likely to take on multiple roles in the household and beyond the home, implying higher competition for the attention granted to their educational pursuits.[49]

Boys and girls had similar access to electronic or social media learning platforms - 47% confirmed using or being exposed to these remote learning platforms during the lockdown. Overall student access was highest in Chikun and Igabi (Kaduna Central) (63%) and lowest in Kauru (26%).
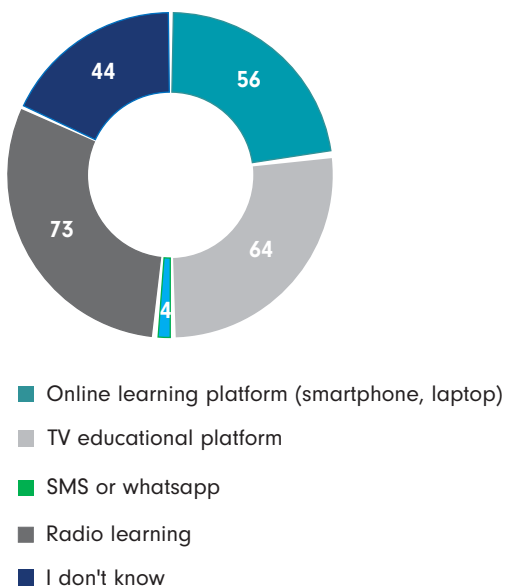
Figure 4.5: Most Helpful and Easiest Platform

- Online learning platform (smartphone, laptop)
- TV educational platform
- SMS or whatsapp
- Radio learning
- I don't know

Figure 4.6: Support with schoolwork during lockdown by frequency of mention

Self-managed with books

Studying with friends

Tutoring by elder sibling or relative

Remote access to educational tools or support

Visits with nearby teacher or lesson teacher

No support

Phone call

Of the different channels available for distance learning during the lockdown, radio programmes had the most reach — cited by 43%, followed by TV educational programs (37%), and online learning platforms accessible by smartphone and laptops (33%).

The low-cost and wide accessibility of radio is good news – particularly as this medium was also regarded to be the easiest platform to learn from. Radio reach was also higher in Kaduna than other surveyed states, with parents and caregivers applauding the government's effort.

However, it is worth noting the limitations of radio — and those of non-interactive, non-visual forms of remote learning in general. 71% of respondents indicated that they struggled with learning new topics at home with 46% stating that learning new topics was much harder at home than in school (25% responded that this was merely "harder")

Radio Programmes
43%

TV Educational Programmes
37%

Online Learning Platforms Accessible by Smartphone and Laptops
33%

Post Lockdown Implications on Girls' Education

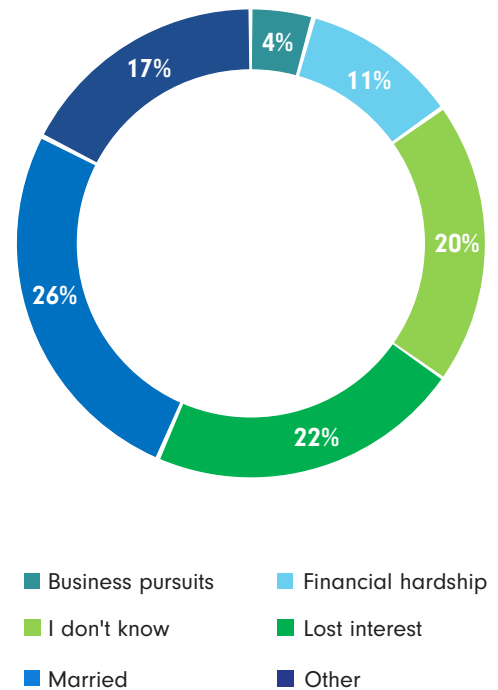**Adjustment Experience: Returning to School**

89% of sampled students resumed classroom-based learning at the state-sanctioned time,[50] three times more boys (46%) than girls (15%) failed to return to school following re-opening. This is likely related to financial pressures and general pessimism about employment prospects post-graduation, as most observations around student peers losing interest were made by male respondent to a 17-year-old boy in Makarfi commented, "Instead of wasting my time (in school), I would rather go back to farm".

Of those who did resume, most found the transition back to school comfortable. More than half of the students expressed opinions ranging from no difficulties to excitement at the prospect of returning to school. Two key challenges were faced on re-entry — adhering to social distancing and wearing face masks for extended periods, and the accelerated coverage of new topics and other revisions to the syllabus. Approximately two times more girls than boys referred to challenges with learning (13% of girls compared to 7% of boys). However, these figures are still low across board. When asked to assess against their results prior to school closures, 55.6% of the students regarded their post-lockdown academic performance as "better than expected" or "the same"

Figure 4.7: The most difficult thing about coming back to school

- No difficulties
- New topics and fast-tracked syllabus
- Adhering to C-19 protocols
- Other
- Anxiety about school safety
- Poorer academic performance
- Fear of C-19 infection
- Walking to school
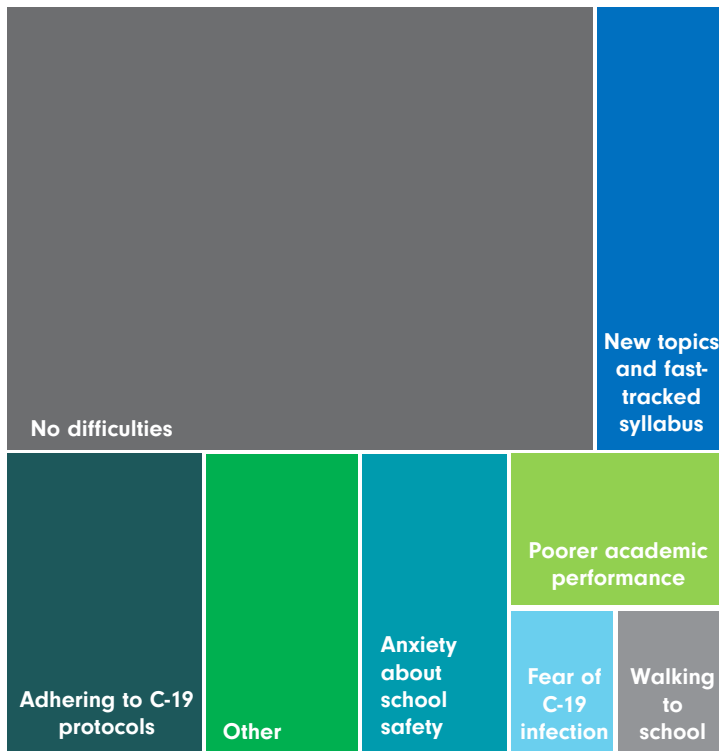
Figure 4.8: Perceived reasons for peers dropping out

4%
11%
17%
26%
22%
20%

- Business pursuits
- Financial hardship
- I don't know
- Lost interest
- Married
- Other

Retention Challenges and Reasons for Discontinuing School:

28.1% of respondents (46) in Kaduna admitted knowing someone who had dropped out of school during or due to the COVID-19 lockdown. The top two reasons cited for their peers not returning to school were them getting married (26%) or losing interest after an extended period away from a structured learning environment (22%).

Only 15% mentioned financial hardship or perceived business pursuits to be the main trigger for school discontinuation. Early marriage was the most dominant factor cited in Kaduna North (36.8%) and Kaduna South (31.3%). However, given the relatively low number of affirmative responses to this question (46), dropouts due to marriage is not considered to be a dominant trend in Kaduna.

Reasons for Discontinuing School

26% Getting Married

22% Losing Interest

15% Financial Hardship

Early Marriage Dominance

36.8% Kaduna North

31.3% Kaduna South
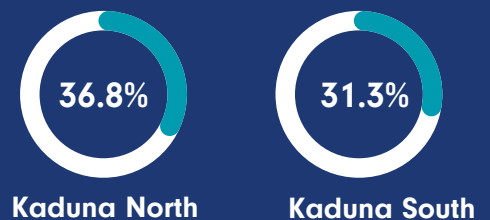
Other reasons shared for discontinuation ranged from lack of parental backing and interest (including preference for private schooling over free public education) to concerns about safety, and the inability to pay for school materials. Several girls interviewed dropped out of school before the onset of the pandemic, indicating that the impact of insecurity and economic pressures were already evident prior to the lockdown.

"Honestly our parents want us to get married and also be educated but they don't have the resources to support us to that extent. So [it] is better we just get married".

-Dropped out in SS3, Sabon Gari

"Most times, they don't even get to the JSS 3. Because most in my set within JSS 1and 2, they get married. Some even in JSS3".

- Dropped out in SS3, Sabon Gari

"'My parents didn't want me to go to school because they want me to be hawking for them".

-15 years old, dropped out in JSS1, before lockdown, Kauru

"Truth be told I used to go private school and my parents cannot afford to pay school fees. My parents [have] no interest [in] government school that is why I am also not interested".

– 15 years old, dropped out in SS2, approximately two years ago, Kauru
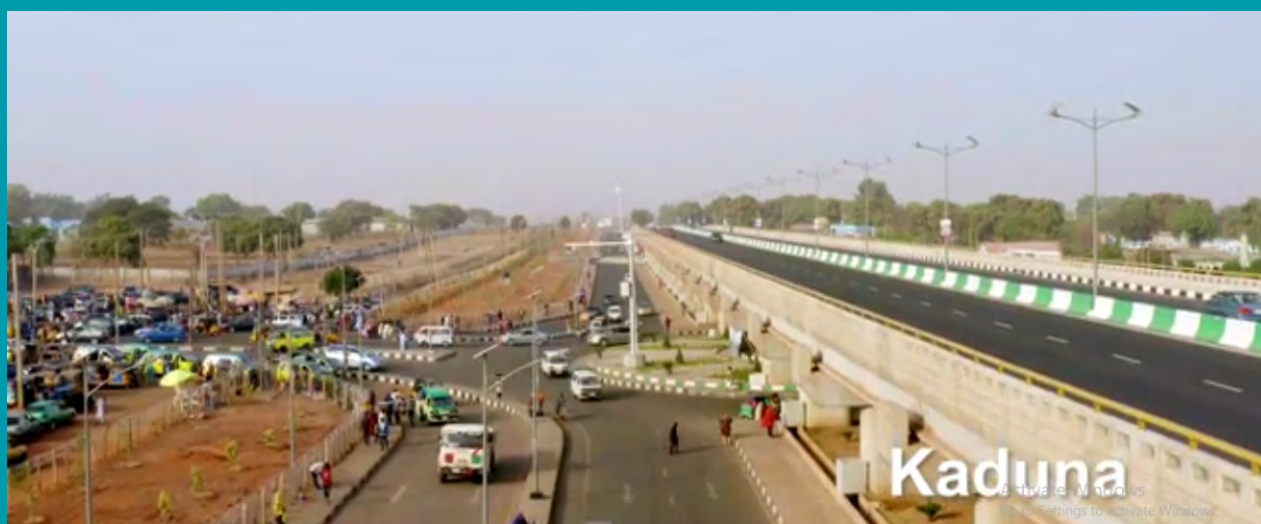
"My parent said because of the kidnapping in Ungwan Gimbiya, I should not go for now. [The kidnapping risk is] Not in school but from the community. We hear that they pick anybody not until you are still in school".

- 17 years old, dropped out mid-way through SS3 prior to the lockdown, Chikun

"Education is the key to success. But some girls also believe that education is a scam. Because they use to say that they have brothers and sisters that have studied up to university and served [in the National Youth Service Corps] yet have no jobs. They live in the street like us. They said that they rather keep hustling that one day it will pay".

- 16 years old, dropped out in JSS3 before lockdown, Chikun

"Most of the girls think after secondary school they will just get married so they will not buckle up in reading. This issue of early marriage is a reason that is affecting most of our school in rural areas. [It] is only in schools in urban area that this is a less problem".

– Education provider, Makarfi

The Kaduna State Government already provides free primary and secondary school education to all students in public schools and runs a free uniform school program[51] intended to "improve school enrollment by removing hindrances to obtaining education." Moreover, its latest Annual School Census (2019/2020) shows that in the period leading to the pandemic, gender parity had nearly been achieved in junior secondary enrolment in both public and private school systems. Transition wins were also recorded, with more girls (52.9%) than boys (47.1%) securing their place in public secondary schools. However, there is evidence from this study that strains on household incomes and unemployment reinforced by the pandemic is contributing to lessening confidence in the turnover potential of education investment for secondary school aged girls and parents alike.

Attitudes towards continuing secondary school education: Although most out-of-school girls and young women participating in group discussions relayed an interest in continuing their education, they did not necessarily equate this to returning to their previous schools or the same format of learning. This target group recommended financial support, income-oriented skills development and alternative arrangements sensitive to the constraints associated with teen pregnancy and early motherhood.

Musa Shehu
Teacher
Kaduna Capital School

"I know there are people that are privileged and have the resources [to care for] their baby. They keep [their baby] with a nanny and still study. I am very ready if I will be supported. I am ready to go back to school. When I do, I can even teach my baby and will benefit from the knowledge I gained".

- P1, dropped after Primary 6, Sabon Gari

The findings align with Kaduna State's policy approach on Inclusive Education, where girls and other disadvantaged learners are afforded access to learning programmes via the state's Second Chance Education programme, coordinated by the State's Planning and Budget Commission with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

However, widespread information on the programme's goals, eligibility criteria and means of onboarding is unclear — especially for girls and young women who live beyond urban centres. More generally, young girls and women could also benefit from more neutral messages[52] on teenage pregnancy.

As with other surveyed states, girls expressed concerns with the prospect of stigmatisation from peers on return to school after long periods of absence. The implication of being placed in junior classes to their friends was an added dimension to this personal factor.

This matter could be addressed with more school local transfer options, advocacy on counter messages and alternative non-classroom based learning options.

"If you go back to school, a lot of things have passed you, you have to go back to a lower class, because you are left behind, that's my challenge".

- P2, Dropped out in SS3 , Sabon Gari

"Yes, because is not easy to see your mate going to school and you are at home".

- 16 years old, dropped out in JSS3 before lockdown, Chikun

"I have boys, I have girls ok. Let me allow the boys to go first then girl hold on a bit. It's more important to educate a boy child than to educate a girl".

— Parent, Igabi

"When school resumed [after the lockdown], some viewed this third term was not complete so they felt it's a waste of money to pay this amount of money. Why will a child resume for this few month".

— Parent, Igabi

Shifts in local attitudes towards girls' secondary school education
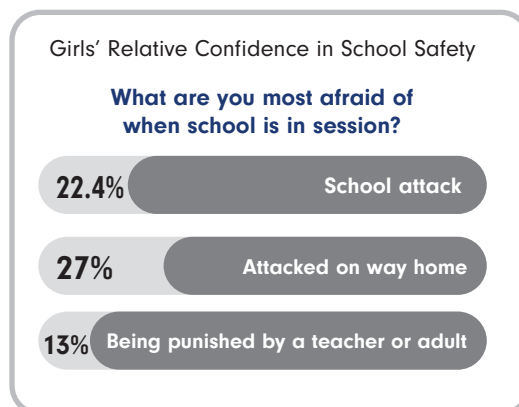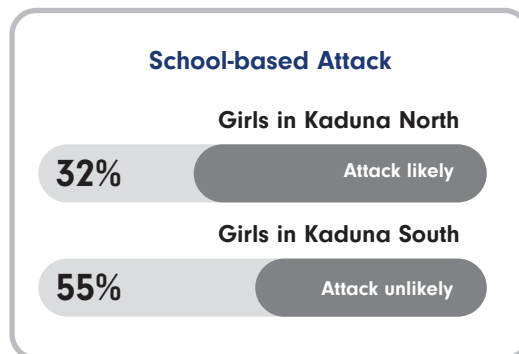
Reactions from parents, community leaders and other local stakeholders in Kaduna represent a diverse scope of attitudes. On one end of the spectrum were parents who valued education but considered it to be a higher priority for boys given the economic downturn caused by COVID-19 and insecurity.

However, some respondents made strong positive associations between educated wives and their ability to soar above the challenges presented during the lockdown period, including in the tutoring of children at home.

Perception of Safety and Security

Risk exposure levels were moderate in Kaduna. Only 30% of girls thought that an attempted kidnapping or banditry attack at school was "likely" or "very likely", compared to 63% rating this possible scenario as "very unlikely" or "unlikely". Boys made near identical assessments when the same question was posed to them. When assessed by location, girls in Kaduna North (32%) were the most likely of the three districts to indicate a high chance of a school-based attack occurring. In contrast, 55% of girls in Kaduna South rated this possibility as "very unlikely" or "unlikely".

The relative confidence in school safety reported corresponds with other data points engaged during this research. When asked "what they were most afraid of when they were in school", just 22.4% of girls selected a school attack. Overall, 27% of Kaduna's survey participants indicated that they were not afraid of being at school. 15% indicated a fear of being attacked on the way home from school, and 13% were afraid of being punished by a teacher or adult.

School-based Attack

Girls in Kaduna North

32% — Attack likely

Girls in Kaduna South

55% — Attack unlikely

Girls' Relative Confidence in School Safety

What are you most afraid of when school is in session?

22.4% — School attack

27% — Attacked on way home

13% — Being punished by a teacher or adult

Figure 4.9: How likely is a kidnapping or banditry attempt to occur in your school?

Legend: ■ Very Unlikely ■ Unlikely ■ Neither ■ Likely ■ Very Likely
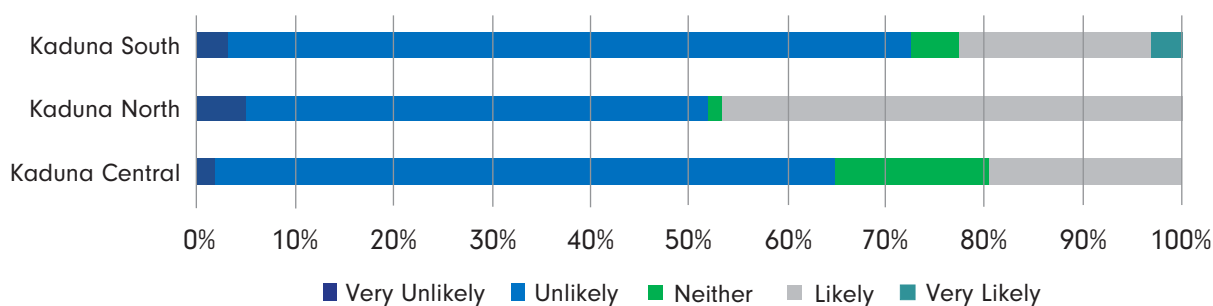
"One problem is the lack of enough security [guards] in school. Let's say you have 500 or 1000 [students], and you have only two security [guards] during the day. You don't know when these [bandits] are striking. They will just time [the attack] and come in. You don't have any other means just but to surrender".
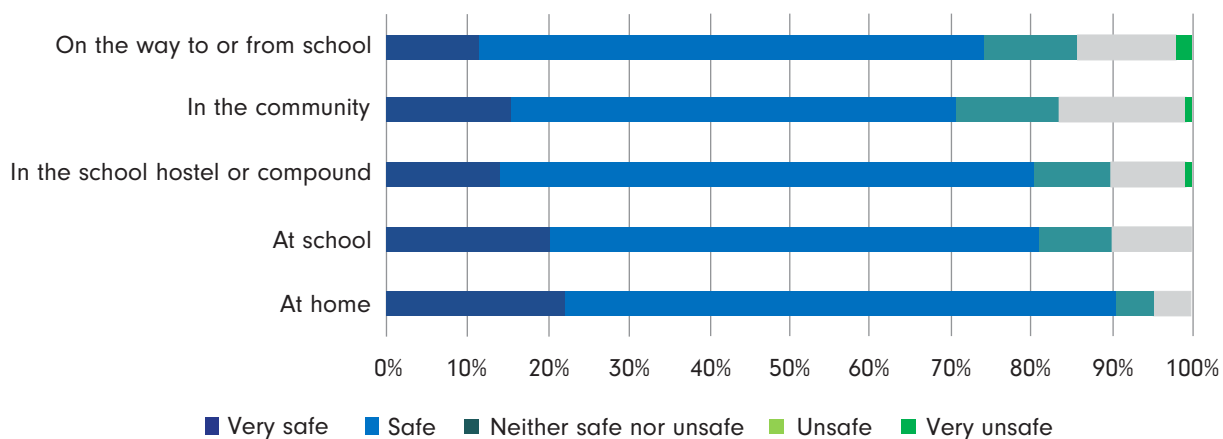
— Makarfi

"The school received [a] threatening letter from [an] unknown source that there would be an attack. So that's one of the reasons she has to withdraw them and take them to another private school".
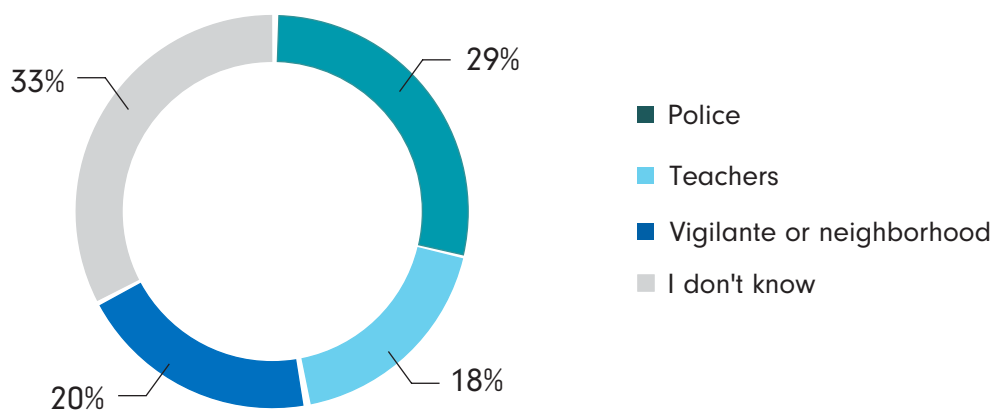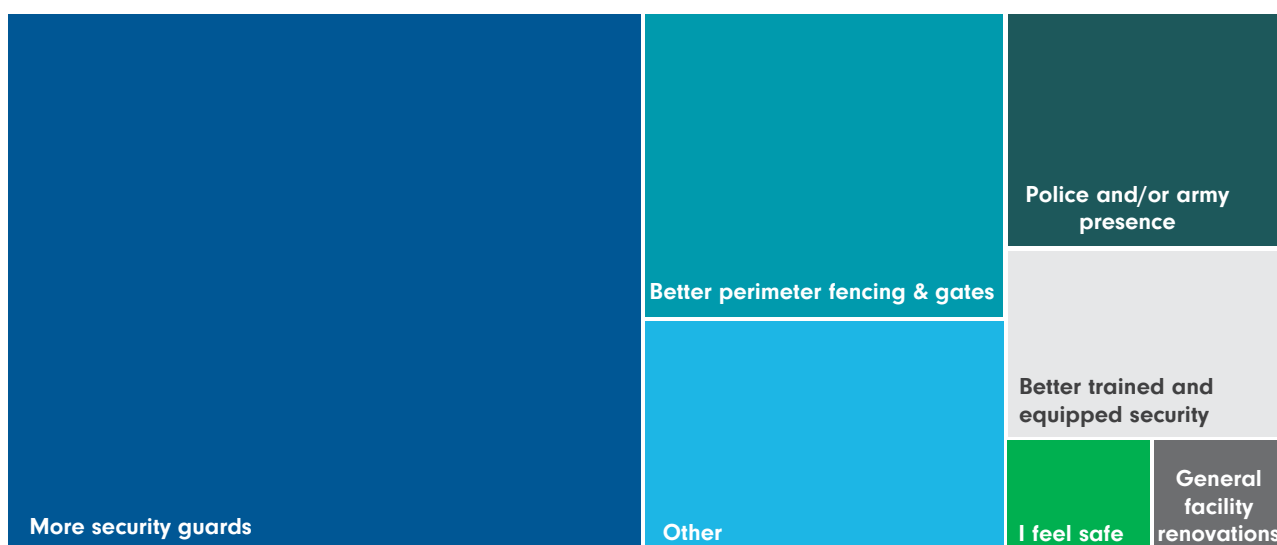
— Igabi

Figure 4.10: Perception of safety by location

Legend: Very safe · Safe · Neither safe nor unsafe · Unsafe · Very unsafe

Figure 4.11: Most likely source of protection in the event of an attack on the school

- 29%
- 18%
- 20%
- 33%

Legend:
- Police
- Teachers
- Vigilante or neighborhood
- I don't know

Figure 4.12 : What would make girls in Kaduna feel safer in school?

- More security guards
- Better perimeter fencing & gates
- Other
- Police and/or army presence
- Better trained and equipped security
- I feel safe
- General facility renovations

Responses from Kaduna focus groups reveal a strong sense of shared responsibility in security management – ranging from planning, intelligence gathering.

"So many things need to be done at different level: [at] the societal level, at government level, even [at] the school and the teacher level. We have to come and put heads together. We cannot just rely on government or at your own level as a school. Government cannot provide 100% security for us. We have to police ourselves too. We have to liaise with the community leader, with vigilante, and then seek the help of the government".

— Principal, Junior Government School

"To make sure schools are free from violence and are safe, the school authority is first responsible in the secondary school. The principal is responsible to see that things go well in the school. We have to put head together you know the time people are coming in and out so it's the responsibility of all".

— Principal, Senior Government School

Recommendations include improve emergency communication and rapid response mechanisms. Some practical interventions were pitched:

"The school [does] not have access to call security personnel that will come to their aid [at night]. The government [should] make provision for either a phone or maybe they will just buy phone that will be attach with this anti-robbery or anti-kidnapping, so that when they see the stress call they will come".

— Principal,
Junior Government School

"School buses be provided to ensure the safe arrival of the girl student to their school hours to ensure there safe travel back to their various houses".

— Female Teacher,
Junior Secondary Government School

Amina Abdulkadir
Parent
Kaduna State

Institutional Response

Kaduna was one of the most proactive states in responding to the coronavirus pandemic, with the government taking matters into its own hands. This was done by activating emergency decision making structures, reprioritising public spending, and putting measures in place against the spread of the coronavirus. By the time the Governor Nasir El-Rufai tested positive on March 28, 2020, lockdown protocols were already in place, making Kaduna the first state to initiate stay-at-home orders – ahead of the Federal Government. A key factor to this success was the presence of the deputy governor and public health expert, Dr. Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe at the helm of affairs.

Maintaining schooling was one of three major priorities of the state government's response, along with ensuring that small and micro business owners could still sustain themselves, and that the poor and most vulnerable received food welfare packages. This is mirrored in the sector's share of the budget expenditure.

In July 2020, when the budget was reviewed downward to reflect declining crude prices and conservative revenue projections, the education sector allocation was ringfenced (25.07%, N64.6 billion in Q1).

The Kaduna State Governor and his team have a high-level commitment to education reforms, with a specific inclusive education policy. While not all reforms have been popular, particularly those involving salary cuts and staff dismissal, the government has demonstrated focus on teacher quality, student enrolment and learning outcomes in Kaduna. Education has received one of the highest budgetary allocations since 2017 and continues to secure financial backing from development partners.

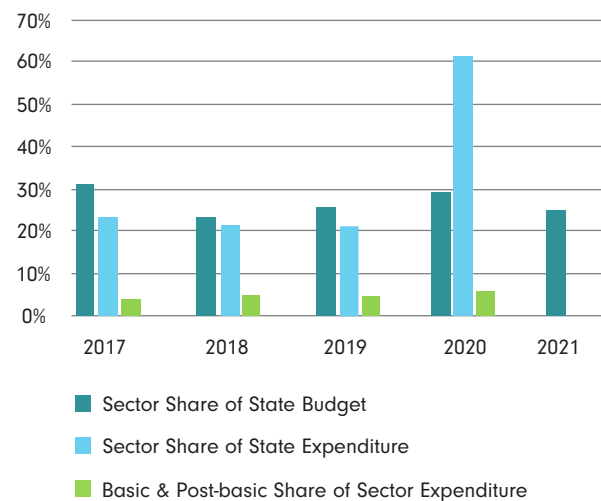In the approved 2020, this included a N300 million grant via the Global Partnership on Education (GPE) and the Kaduna chapter of the Nigerian Partnership for Education Project (NIPEP), and N1.83 billion from the World Bank-supported Better Education Service Delivery for All (BESDA) to curb school dropouts.[53]

Kaduna — Budget Performance (%) 2017 — 2020

Year	Higher Education	Secondary Education	Basic Education
2017	19.0%	54.5%	10.3%
2018	59.6%	99.2%	4.2%
2019	65.0%	106.4%	11.3%
2020	34.7%	70.5%	1.5%

Basic Education — Secondary Education — Higher Education
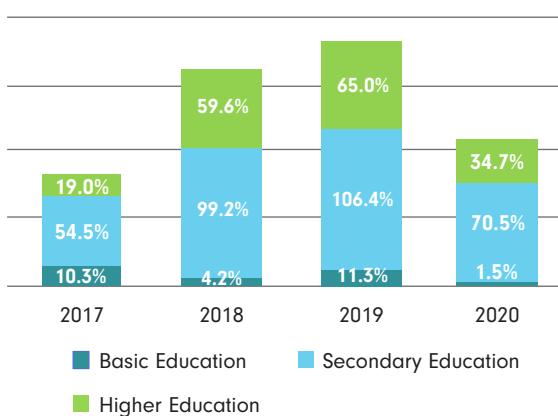
Kaduna State Education Budget Share & Performance

Sector Share of State Budget — Sector Share of State Expenditure — Basic & Post-basic Share of Sector Expenditure

(2017 – 2021)

Prior to the coronavirus outbreak, Kaduna State had a range of policies in place contributing to outcomes in girl child education: the free and compulsory basic education policy, free school uniforms, a student scholarship scheme (for post-secondary education), school feeding, and Edu Marshals (monitoring absenteeism in schools). There were also programmes more explicitly targeted at girls: the Second Chance Education programme, which offers skills development, literacy and numeracy training to women and young girls, and the NIPEP/GPE program, which pays particular attention to girls' education.

From the onset of the pandemic, the key strategies below were deployed to maintain traction gained in previous years, and address distinct pandemic-related constraints on rendering education services:

01 Lessons for students due to sit final year WAEC and NECO exams for university admission were broadcast daily. Radio programmes were later extended to cover primary and secondary school distant learning programmes, with support from UNICEF.

02 Kaduna State Scholarship and Loans Board promises to continue disbursement. Plans to spend N42 billion on free primary and secondary school education in 2020.

03 Scholarships were awarded to 218 recently returned almajiri children.

04 School was opened for JSS3 students only, to allow them to sit for qualifying exams (NECO).

Kaduna issued strict, clearly-defined protocols in reopening schools. Lesson timetables were organised in morning and afternoon shifts, with 20 students per class and overseen by COVID-19 compliance monitoring teams.[54] Public and private schools were expected to report readiness to the State Schools' Quality Assurance Authority (SQAA) to obtain clearance. Teachers were encouraged to adopt a "blended learning system" and continue the e-learning programmes until normalcy was established.

At the state-level, Operation Accord was launched in June 2020 as a joint task force (JTF) integrating military and state security agencies. Its ground and air offensives, typically based on intelligence received from local communities, have experienced some notable success despite some operational challenges. At the community level, the Kaduna

State Vigilante Service (KADVIS) and Edu Marshals[55] were the local security outfits deployed in schools. KADVIS operated mostly in schools within Kaduna metropolis. Their job was to ensure the safety of students, and enforce COVID-19 protocols in schools. Edu Marshals operated in all schools across the state.

However, students in Kaduna experienced a more disruptive schedule stretching well into the 2021 school calendar. From the onset of the pandemic to the first half of 2021, the Kaduna State government sought to portray an image of control over the scourge of school kidnappings, publicly maintaining a non-negotiable position against the payment of ransom, and indicating that school closures in December of 2020 were related to COVID-19.[56] A slew of banditry attacks – notably the high-profile Bethel Baptist Academy abduction of 165 pupils[57] in Chikun — eventually led to 13 schools[58] being

shut down in July 2021. Closures were later extended more widely, and eventually affected over 5000 schools and their learners. Schedules to reopen on August 9, 2021 were postponed until further notice in light of security challenges.

In summary, due to the robust and responsive systems in place, Kaduna State was able to navigate COVID-19's compounding challenges. However, its more pronounced and multi-dimensional insecurity challenges are a greater and more stubborn threat. Parallel initiatives will be critical to ensure that local and regional insecurity threats do not undermine the significant gains made in education reforms under the current administration.

Pathways for Girls' School Dropout

In Kaduna, the greatest factors leading to higher number of out-of-school girls are

01 Insecurity

02 The deprioritisation of girls' education (in favour of boys)
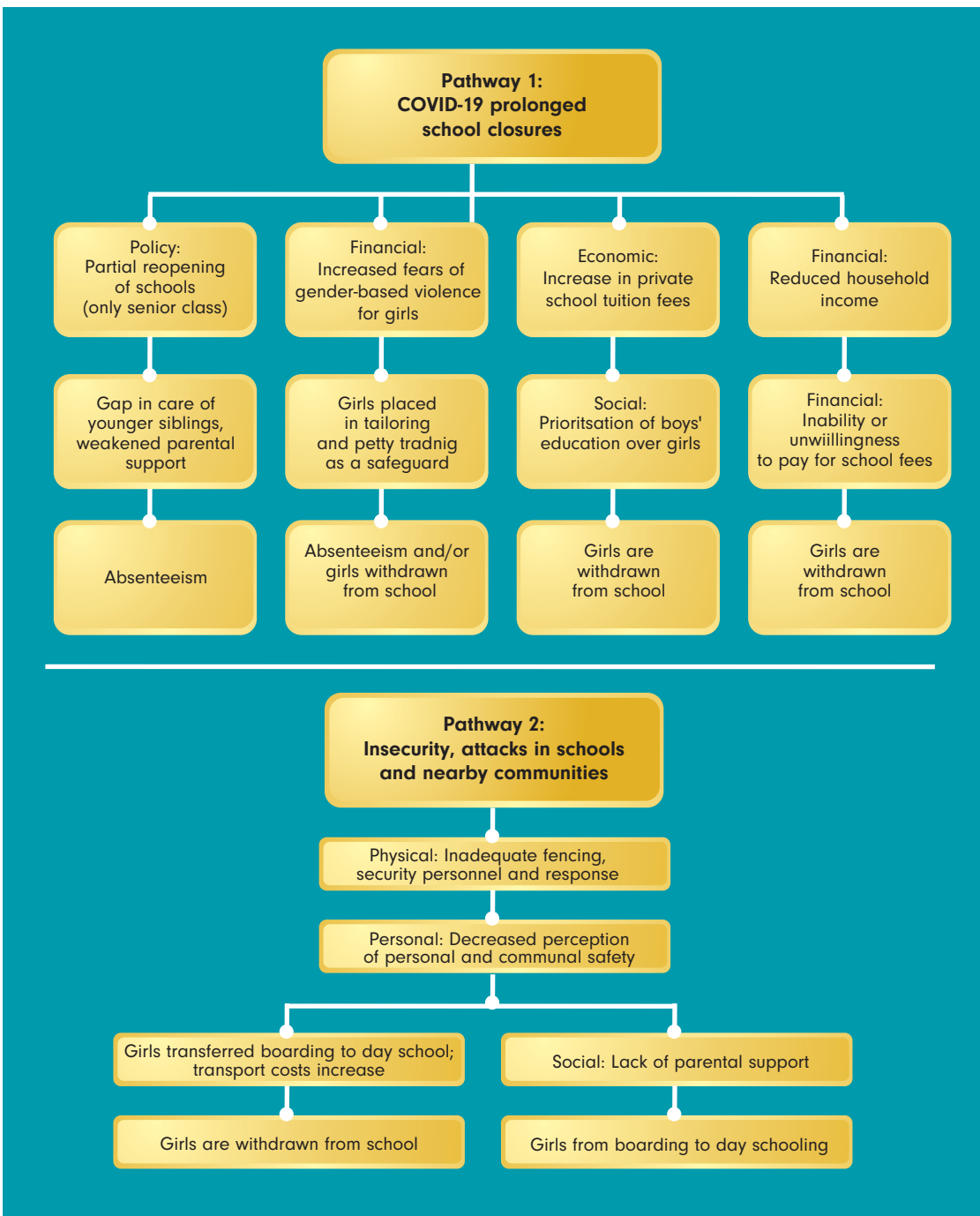
03 Girls personal loss of Interest

During the lockdown, parents arranged for girls to engage in petty trading, tailoring and other business activities, in order to supervise their activities in response to perceived GBV threats. However, the survey did not generate sufficient evidence to indicate this short-term absenteeism resulted in more permanent truancy.

Another trend noted in Kaduna was the disinclination towards public schooling. Out-of-school girl participants who were formerly enrolled in private schools indicated that they dropped out due to their parents' unwillingness to transfer them to public schools when they were no longer able to afford private school fees — despite free public secondary education in Kaduna. When schools were reopened, some parents were disinclined to pay full fees given the shorter-term. Several private schools also increased their tuition fees after the lockdown. This may have had more bearing in Kaduna than in other surveyed states, which hosts a larger middle class adult population in formal employment. As salaries were slashed and jobs made redundant in private companies, parents used to a certain standard and status were forced to make tough decisions.

While the prevalence of early marriage as a direct result of the lockdown was less pronounced in Kaduna, some educators in Makarfi believed that the prospect of marrying immediately after secondary school completion was a demotivating factor for girls, with attending implications on their performance and retention. Even where girls were motivated to pursue gainful employment, the link between education and future income-generating potential is weakening. For example, girls in Chikun made strong statements indicating that the dearth of women in their communities who were better off after completing their education — particularly those with jobs and successful businesses — was making them reassess the longer terms benefits of staying in school.

Prioritisation of boys' education over girls' appears to be driven by economic imperatives, wherein dropping out of school is regarded to disfavour boys – the future breadwinners of the home — more critically. Deepening cultural views and societal arrangements for gender roles could set Kaduna's inclusive education policy initiatives back, particularly as youth unemployment rates worsen nationally.

KADUNA

**Pathway 1:
COVID-19 prolonged
school closures**

| Policy:
Partial reopening
of schools
(only senior class) | Financial:
Increased fears of
gender-based violence
for girls | Economic:
Increase in private
school tuition fees | Financial:
Reduced household
income |

| Gap in care of
younger siblings,
weakened parental
support | Girls placed
in tailoring
and petty tradnig
as a safeguard | Social:
Prioritsation of boys'
education over girls | Financial:
Inability or
unwiillingness
to pay for school fees |

| Absenteeism | Absenteeism and/or
girls withdrawn
from school | Girls are
withdrawn
from school | Girls are
withdrawn
from school |

**Pathway 2:
Insecurity, attacks in schools
and nearby communities**

Physical: Inadequate fencing,
security personnel and response

Personal: Decreased perception
of personal and communal safety

| Girls transferred boarding to day school;
transport costs increase | Social: Lack of parental support |

| Girls are withdrawn from school | Girls from boarding to day schooling |

KANO

Section 5: Kano State

Context

March

Closure of all schools
23 March:
State Ministry of Education, mandatory closure of private and public schools

April

2 April: Dangote donates 600-bed isolation centre to Kano State

9 April: Fed. Min, of Humanitarian Affairs issue cash transfers to 42,558 households

Home Based Learning
1 April: Timetable for radio learning Program
State-owned and 4 private radio stations begin to air daily less for SS3 students

16 April: State Government orders total lockdown

21 April: Partial lifting of lockdown

May

June

School Sactions
23 June: State Government to sanction schools holding online Examinations despite closures

Almajiri 'returned'
7 June: Arrangements made to enrol 1,800 Almajiri into Islamiyya schools. 19 children returned to their parents.

12 June: 2 new testing centres, total now 5

July

COVID restrictions eased nationwide
2 July: Inter-states permitted, airports scheduled to resume domestic flights. Curfew placed from 10PM-4AM

203 Days

August

September

October

Re-opening of Schools
7-10 Oct: Fumigation and decontamination of schools; Distribution of sanitary, masks and other health items. Training for teachers, CSOs, traditional rulers.
11 Oct: Partial re-opening of schools

November

December

KEY HIGHLIGHTS
- **No. of Days School Closed:** 203 days
- **No. of Students Affected:** 2.3 million (Kano ACS 2019/2020)
- **C19 Infections:** 2269 (at Dec. 2020)
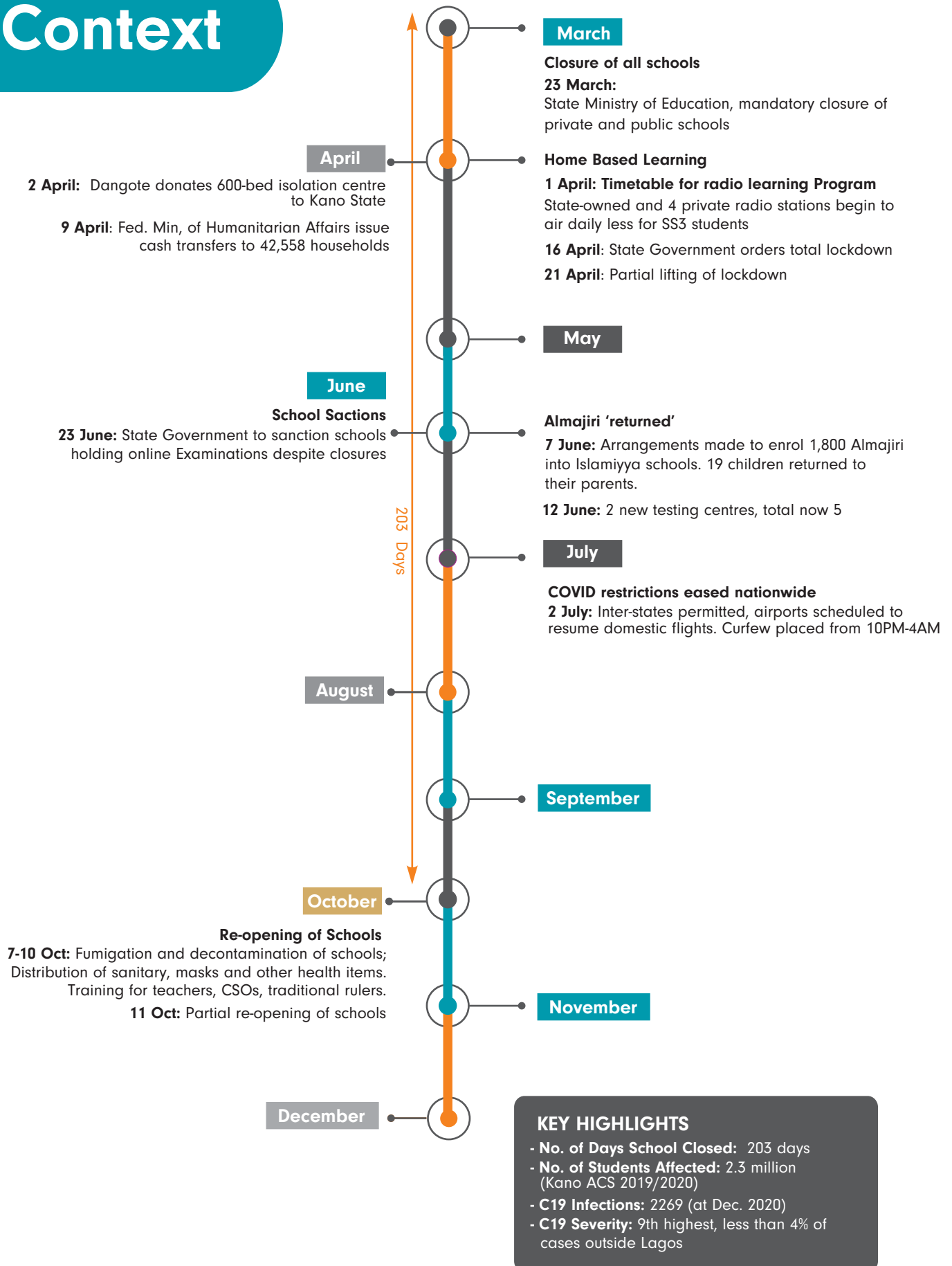- **C19 Severity:** 9th highest, less than 4% of cases outside Lagos

Figure 5.1 : Timeline of state-led actions and related COVID-19 events in Kano State

With Kano's large population at risk, the COVID-19 outbreak required swift, close and consistent action to ward off a public health crisis, especially the city of Kano's densely packed metropolitan areas. Reports suspiciously large numbers of unexplained deaths from gravedigger associations in May 2020 led to concerns of secret burials and underreporting, which were investigated and later dismissed by state officials. The economic centrality of the city of Kano to the region meant uncontrolled contamination posed significant risks to the rest of Nigeria and neighbouring West and Central African countries.

In contrast, Kano State was less central to debates on regional strategic security management as it is not within the stronghold territory of Boko Haram nor its successor jihadists groups.[59] However, its residents and leadership bodies remain on alert due to its sub-regional significance and historic resistance to insurgents.[60,61] While the state has experienced an increase in the rate of kidnapping and banditry attacks, symptomatic of the regional rise in insecurity, Kano has been spared the horror of kidnapping incidents at schools. Abductions and raids are concentrated in local governments that border Katsina (Doguwa, Bichi, Tsanyawa) and Kaduna states (Tudun Wada and Bagwai).

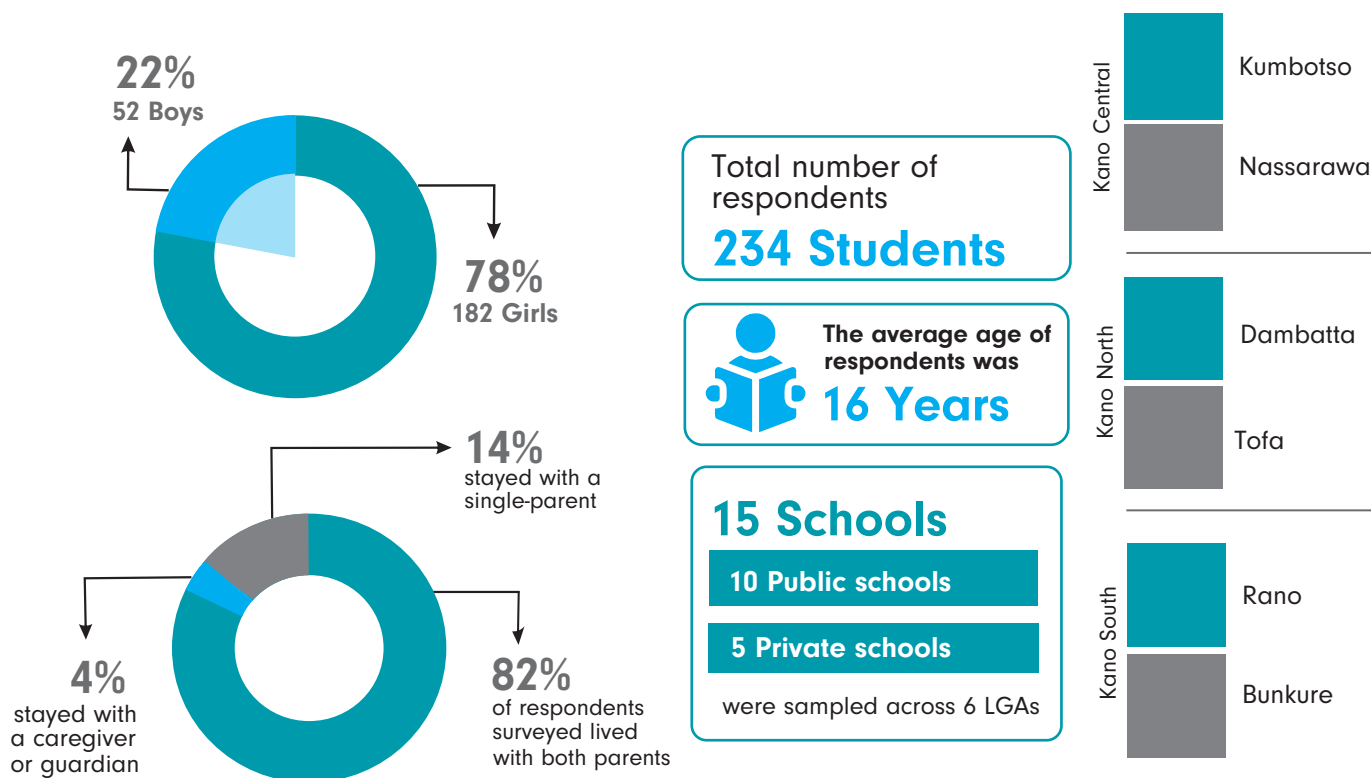Nevertheless, the Ganduje-led government has been proactive in executing mitigation measures, overseen by the state's Security Council. This included the closure of select secondary boarding facilities and tertiary schools early 2021.[62] Kano's security response has evolved over the last decade into a multi-layered form of community policing, involving vigilante associations and Hisbah (a form of social provisioning with a religious and moral slant). Kano State's Conflict Management Alliance[63] plays a dominate role in bringing together state and federal government security operatives into intelligence gathering and sensitization forums with religious and community leaders, including SBMC zonal representatives. This coordination effort – along with a well-funded security architecture supplemented by legislators' constituency budgets – has contributed to stability, and reinforced political settlements in Kano State.

Figure 5.2: Kano State - Frequency and Severity of Insecurity Incidents
(1 Jan 2019 - 30 Nov 2021)
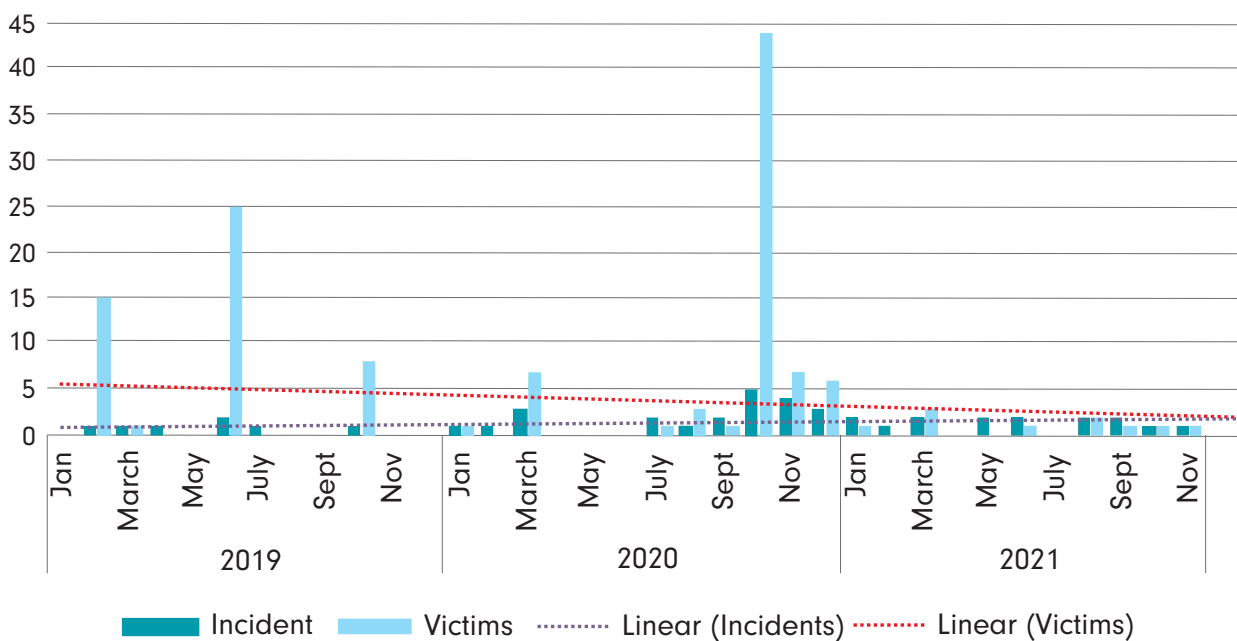
In total, 234 students participated in the survey exercise in Kano State, with 182 girls (78%) and 52 boys (22%). The average age of respondents was 16 years, with more senior secondary school students represented (75%). 15 schools (10 public, 5 private) were sampled across 6 LGAs, namely Kumbotso and Nassarawa in Kano Central, Dambatta and Tofa in Kano North and Rano and Bunkure in Kano South. 35% of respondents surveyed live in single-parent households during the lockdown period.

Profile of Schools and Respondents

22%
52 Boys

78%
182 Girls

14%
stayed with a single-parent

4%
stayed with a caregiver or guardian

82%
of respondents surveyed lived with both parents

Total number of respondents
234 Students

The average age of respondents was
16 Years

15 Schools

10 Public schools

5 Private schools

were sampled across 6 LGAs

Kano Central
Kumbotso
Nassarawa

Kano North
Dambatta
Tofa

Kano South
Rano
Bunkure

Overall, Kano has a lower proportion of mixed gender schools. 10 of the 15 schools selected were girl-only schools to reflect this localised trend and enable better targeting of female respondents.
A more blended approach was achieved in the selection of settlement type across Kano's rural (7), semi-urban (3), and urban (5) communities.

Kindly see the Kano State Execution Report annexed for more details on the characteristics of samples students and schools.

Impact of Covid-19 and Insecurity on Girls and their Learning Experience

Dealing with stay-at-home orders:

As schools shut across Kano, new worries and fears surfaced amongst secondary school students about their welfare, with 75% reporting increased concern. 81% of students with increased anxieties were girls, suggesting a greater degree of exposure at home and in their communities.

As only 18% of Kano respondents had boarding arrangements, the lockdown order issued by the Federal Government and enforced by state authorities did not change the living arrangements of most students. This suggests fears were compelled by other factors, including public health warnings and situations at home and in their communities.
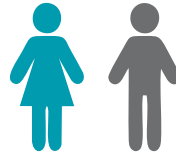
75%
Reporting to be more concerned

81%
Girls worried and afraid

When asked directly what they were worried or afraid of, the single most frequently occurring concern was falling ill (87%), followed by being kidnapped (14%). A noteworthy portion of respondents (16%) referred to fear of some form of sexual assault.[64]

Children who lived in Bunkure and Rano, the surveyed areas closest to Kaduna's border, were more likely to be worried about kidnapping threat, showing a correlation between increased insecurity incident reports and anxieties.
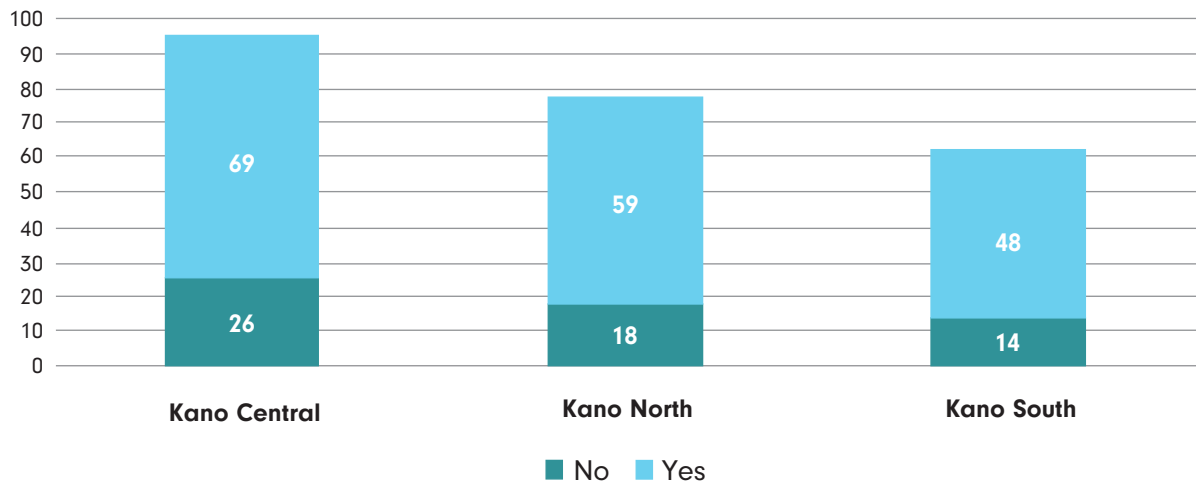
87%
Falling ill

14%
Kidnapped

16%
Fear of some form of sexual assault

Figure 5.3: Were you worried or afraid something would bad happen to you and your friends?

	Kano Central	Kano North	Kano South
Yes	69	59	48
No	26	18	14

■ No ■ Yes

Trends related to gender-based violence:

Overall, data in Kano on gender-based violence (GBV) is mixed. Data from crisis response centre SARC reflects a drop in the number of cases reported involving females in 2020 (236) and 2021 (161) compared to 615 cases in 2019.

This translates to a year-on-year decline in reporting of violence against women and girls of 24% and 4% respectively.

DROP IN THE NUMBER OF CASES

2019 (615)   2020 (236)   2021 (161)
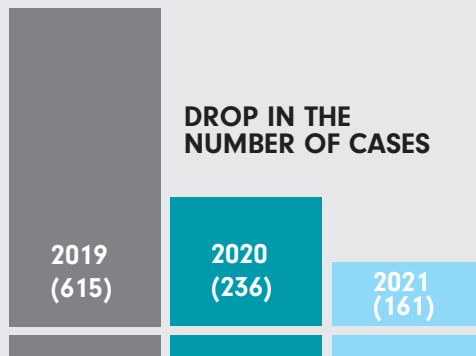
With just one SARC centre in a central urban area[65] and few other well-resourced options, an explanation for the decline in cases is that lockdown movement restrictions prevented access to reporting mechanisms, and case submissions have subsequently been slow to pick up. Discussions with teachers, parents and member of the community corroborate this view. While there was a rise in cases of domestic violence and sexual assault, the greatest threats to girls completing their education are financial hardship and early marriage.

Coping mechanisms and preventive tactics deployed during the lockdown:

When asked about their coping mechanisms and tactics for avoiding assault, survey participants in Kano responded that they stayed at home (46%), kept away from people (31%), or stayed close to a trusted person (19%). Girls were more likely to rely on avoidance tactics than boys; 1.5 times more girls than boys opted to stay at home and 10 times more girls than boys stayed close to a trusted person.

Understanding girls' coping mechanisms could assist in creating safe spaces within communities and schools. While the survey did not capture levels of students' trust for male and female teachers, prior studies conducted present mixed views on their effectiveness as first responders.[66]
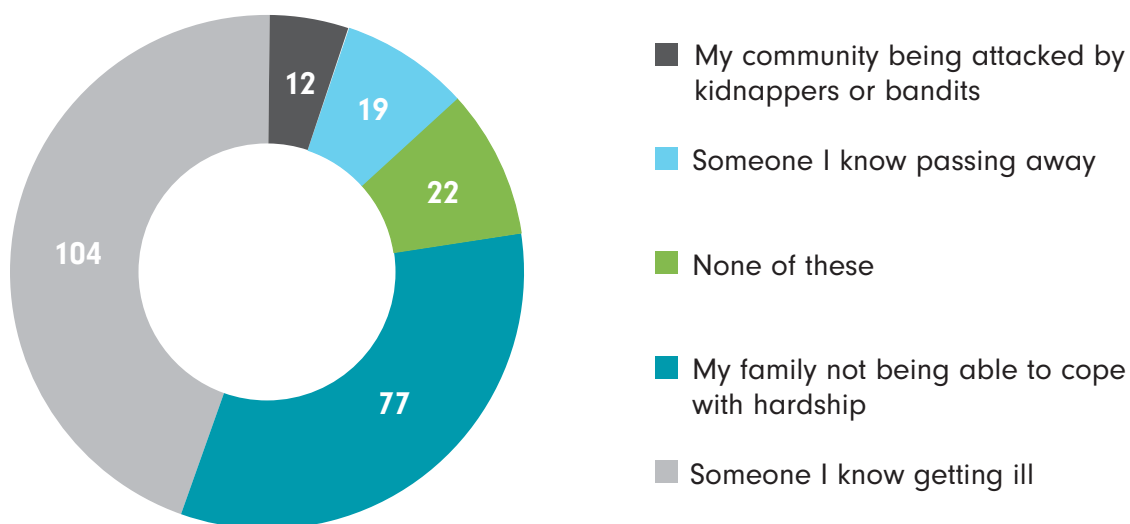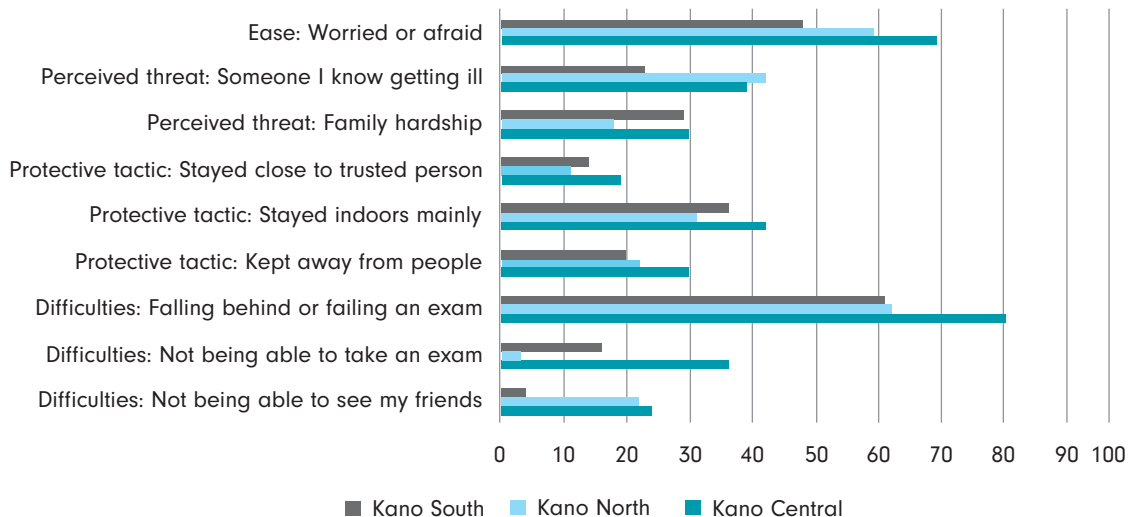
46%
Respondents stayed at home

31%
Kept away from people

19%
Stayed close to a trusted person

Figure 5.4: Students' perception of threats to their family and community

- My community being attacked by kidnappers or bandits — 12
- Someone I know passing away — 19
- None of these — 22
- My family not being able to cope with hardship — 77
- Someone I know getting ill — 104

Figure 5.5: Students' Personal Experience of Lockdown

- Ease: Worried or afraid
- Perceived threat: Someone I know getting ill
- Perceived threat: Family hardship
- Protective tactic: Stayed close to trusted person
- Protective tactic: Stayed indoors mainly
- Protective tactic: Kept away from people
- Difficulties: Falling behind or failing an exam
- Difficulties: Not being able to take an exam
- Difficulties: Not being able to see my friends

■ Kano South ■ Kano North ■ Kano Central

Hardest aspect of not being in school:
Difficulties related to academic performance and advancement, such as falling behind studies or failing an exam, and a decrease in social interaction with peers ("not being able to see my friends") were the most frequently expressed opinions about the most difficult aspect of not being in school. Respondents' primary concern about not being able to attend classes was doing poorly once schools reopened as a result of the disruption to their learning. Girls were more likely to express performance anxieties related to their academics (94% compared to 60% with boys). Girls were also more worried about their families falling on difficult times (38% of girls cited this opinion, compared to 15%).

Munzali Mustapha,
Director Planning,
Research and Statistics,
Ministry of Education, Kano State

Learning experience during the lockdown:
Teaching and learning were disrupted during and post lockdown. Although some schools provided an online learning platform, not every parent could afford data for access. Based on sampled students, access to lessons transmitted through electronic platforms was higher in Kano Central (64%) and Kano North (66%), compared to communities in the southern senatorial zone (41%). Despite the good coverage of remote-learning platforms 19% of students perceived and they performed worse when they returned to school. More boys than girls reported this phenomenon.
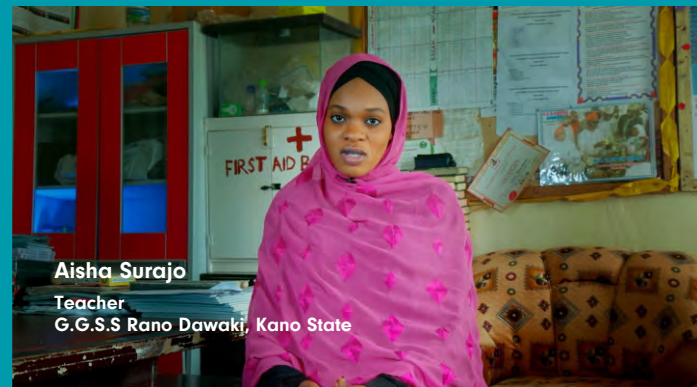
Aisha Surajo
Teacher
G.G.S.S Rano Dawaki, Kano State

About half of the students (56%) found it harder or much harder to learn new topics during the lockdown, with girls and boys sharing and similar experiences. Support was most frequently accessed in the form of tutoring elder siblings or relatives and remote learning platforms such as radio and TV. 47% girls sampled in Kano did not have access to any online learning platforms (i.e. smartphone-based, laptop or social media).

Radio-based learning had the highest reach across the board of all the remote-learning options, and was also considered to be the easiest platform to engage with. When students were asked about views on the effectiveness of these tools, 36.4% expressed a preference for radio, as it is easier and affordable and 28% indicated that online learning platforms are easy to understand, give room for varieties of topics.

Figure 5.6: Sources of support for school work at home

Tutoring by elder sibling or relative

Remote access to educational tools or support

Self-managed with books

Visit to/from a nearby teacher or lesson teacher

No access to education.

Studying with friends

Post Lockdown Implications on Girls' Education

Adjustment experience: returning to school

Most students currently enrolled in school returned at the same time as their classmates, and with strong parental support.
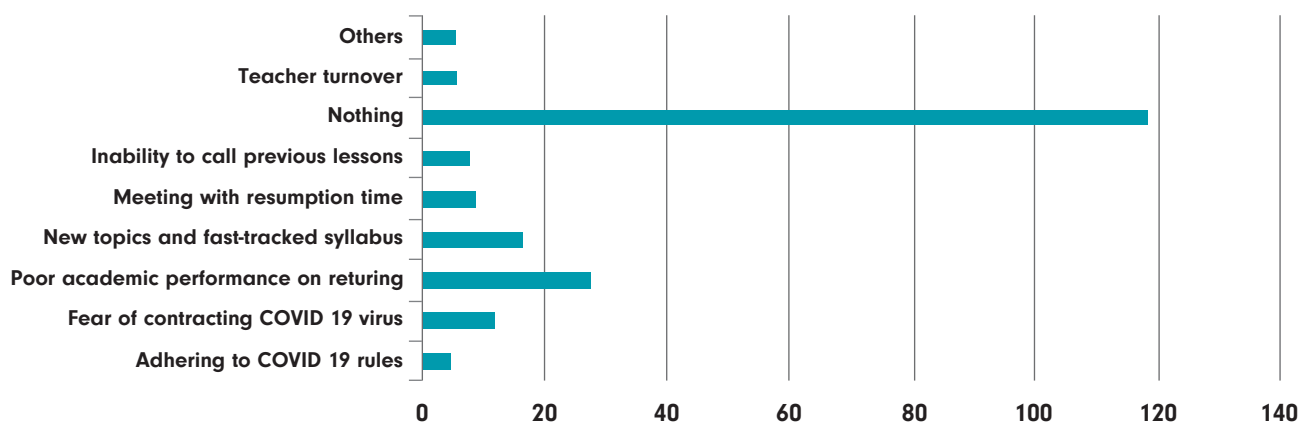One in three sampled students knew a peer who had dropped out as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown. Reasons cited by enrolled students included early marriage (28%), entry into small-scale business (21%), and inability to pay for fees, uniforms and/or learning materials (22%).

Overall, those who did return to school regarded themselves to be well equipped for resumption at the time of the survey. Nearly two out of three students reported no issues in their adjustment back to classroom-based learning. New fast-track syllabuses and revision sessions, particularly for students in exam-taking years, likely meant the weaker and even mid-skilled learners faced no new challenges in comprehension.

Figure 5.7: Most difficult thing about coming back to school

Category	Value
Others	~6
Teacher turnover	~6
Nothing	~118
Inability to call previous lessons	~8
Meeting with resumption time	~9
New topics and fast-tracked syllabus	~17
Poor academic performance on returing	~28
Fear of contracting COVID 19 virus	~12
Adhering to COVID 19 rules	~5

(x-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100, 120, 140)

Retention challenges and reasons for discontinuing school: The fears expressed of growing economic hardship were lived reality for many girls. Out-of-school girls reported deepening household poverty as the trigger to leaving school.

> ❝
> **I stopped schooling when my mother died and as I didn't have uniform. I now take care of my sick brother.**
> ❞
>
> **- 16 years, Ajumawa (Dambatta), dropped out at SSS 2**

> ❝
> **At first,my father could not pay the WAEC exam fees after the lockdown in 2020 so I stopped**
> ❞
>
> **- 17 years, Nassarawa, dropped out in Nov 2020 at SSS 3**

> ❝
> **My dad died during the lockdown. When we are instructed to take or pay for some things at school, my mom cannot afford it. She sells groundnut.**
> ❞
>
> **Nasarawa, dropped out in JSS 2 during the lockdown**

Several families were forced to pull their daughters out of school due to financial reasons, triggered by the death of a caregiver or the effects of prolonged strains on earning activities.

Girls cited an inability to pay for school fees, uniforms, and books as their reasons for discontinuing with school. This finding should be considered in light of Kano State's Free and Compulsory Basic and Post Basic Education which came into effect in September 2019 to address such affordability issues.

To make sense of this, the study also analysed comments from parents and community actors. Whereas families rarely reported that they were unsupportive of girls' education, several indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic sparked a heightened sense of urgency to marry their daughters.

The interplay between new household financial strains, the unpredictable length of school closures, and cultural preference against delaying marriage beyond a certain time or age likely contributed to a phenomena where girls dropped out of school during COVID-19 in order to get married.

"I married off five of my girls due to my father's influence and some economic reasons, but I wish they could further their education because I want them to be self-reliant."
- Parent, driver, Bunkure

"Transition [back to school] suffered because many parents married off their daughters during the lockdown. Most of them were already betrothed or engaged."
– Principal, Bunkure

"Many parents believed initially that the lockdown would not linger. However, when it prolonged, they had to marry off their children since they were no longer in school."
– Community leader, Bunkure

One girl's marriage date was fixed so that she would complete her secondary education first. But the lockdown prevented her from completing it, as her parents married her out because they felt they couldn't wait.
– Dambatta, spokesperson from a mothers' association

"Most of the reasons are financial. The lockdown has caused economic hardship to lots of families and made their children drop-out from school. Some girls are withdrawn from school for marriage."
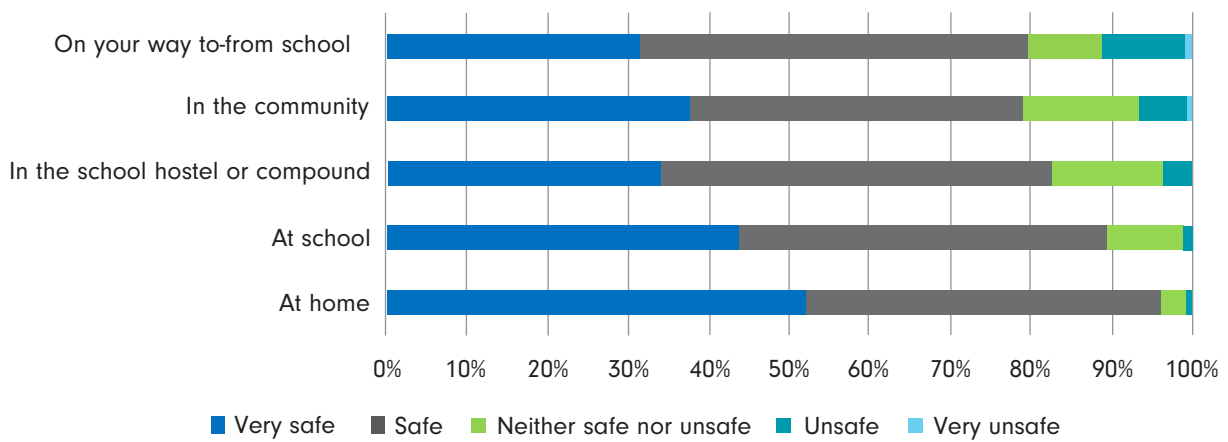**– Father of 4, civil servant, Bunkure**

Perception of Safety and Security

Most schools surveyed have urgent infrastructural needs, with 8 of the 15 sample schools presenting poor or no girl-only washrooms. Although a majority of these schools were fenced (12), teachers and students indicated more could be done to upgrade the security facilities, including the deployment of more security personnel, noting of those employed at present are solitary guards nearing retirement age. Only 40% indicated that areas "around the school have good lighting at night" and 48% reported that "many things are broken or damage at my school".

Girls were more likely to express a poorer impression of the personal safety in the

Figure 5.8: Perceived level of personal safety by location

Legend: Very safe | Safe | Neither safe nor unsafe | Unsafe | Very unsafe

Figure 5.9: How likely is a kidnapping or banditry attack to occur in your school?

	Neither	Likely	Unlikely	Very Likely	Very Unlikely
Kano South	10	9		30	13
Kano North	4	2		37 + 1	33
Kano Central	6	6		55	27

Legend: Likely | Neither | Unlikely | Very Likelly | Very Unlikely
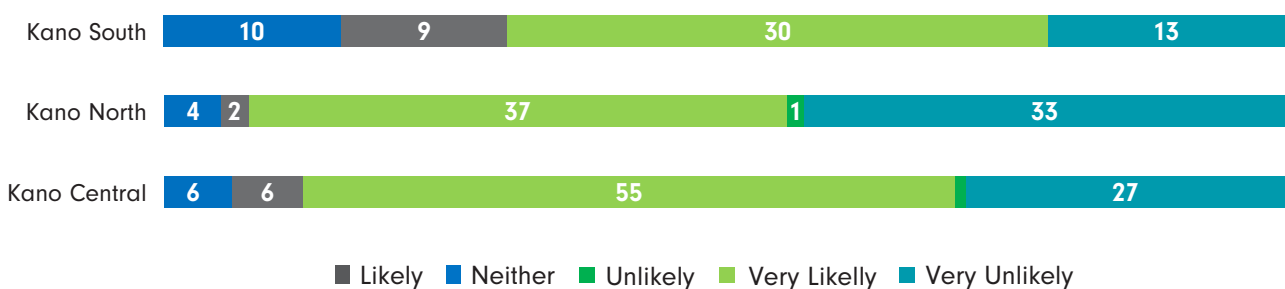
Figure 5.10: What would most likely happen if there were an attack in your school?

- I don't know — 81
- Other — 11
- Police — 66
- Teachers — 130
- Vigilante or neighborhood watch — 17
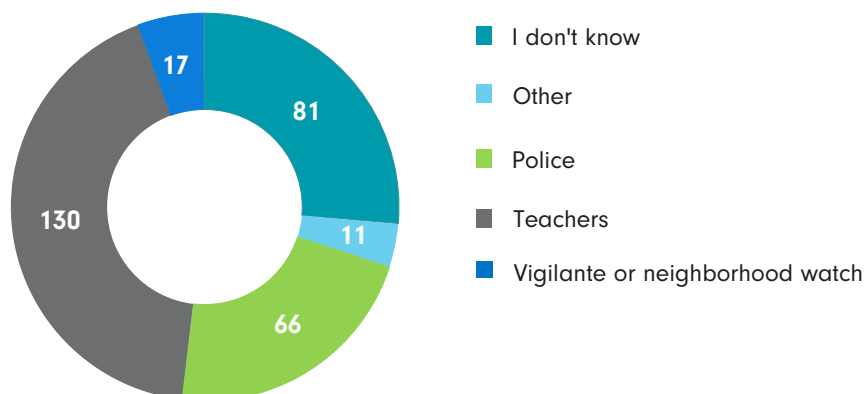
The insecurity challenges in the North West region, particularly the widespread and largely opportunistic criminal activities of banditry and kidnapping, is having a significant impact on how students in general regard their personal safety within and beyond their schools. 65% of respondents knew at least one school that had been attacked, including a small minority within their own community.
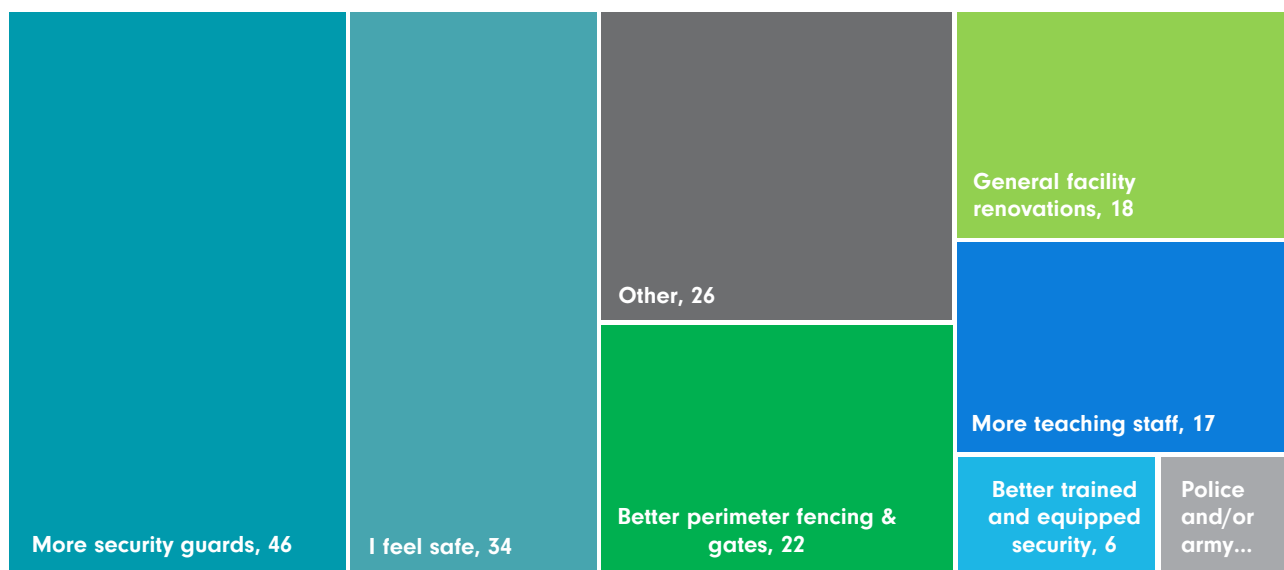
Teachers also highlighted the degree to which long walking distances were taking a toll on girls, who are often more vulnerable in unsupervised transfers. Focus group discussions revealed that parents with girls in boarding schools were more likely to consider insecurity to be an issue.

Along with the low degree of exposure felt by students, there is evidence to suggest moderate levels of confidence in school managements' provisions for security risk mitigation on the part of students within the sampled institutions. 2 out of 3 of students indicated that some form of arrangement had been to prevent school from been attacked. Nevertheless, students indicated that their sense of safety[67] would be improved with more security guards, physically securing of the school compound, and improvements to the school facilities and infrastructure (see Fig. 5.11).

Figure 5.11: What would make girls in Kano feel safer in school

Category	Value
More security guards	46
I feel safe	34
Other	26
Better perimeter fencing & gates	22
General facility renovations	18
More teaching staff	17
Better trained and equipped security	6
Police and/or army...	

Institutional Response

With significant economic pressures to contend with, the state's taskforce in charge of coordinating COVID-19 response managed a tough balancing act between enforcing NCDC compliance guidelines and enabling local markets and the economy to run. Some observers[68] found the state-centric public health response at risk of being politicised and overwhelmed due to "limited public health facilities and personnel". With high stakes presented, philanthropists and other non-government groups provided critical support by making available and distibuting palliatives.

Lessons were aired on public and private radio stations. Timetabled sessions were grouped by classes, and subject matter, with dedicated classes for exam takers in secondary schools. In total, 160 episodes were recorded and disseminated,[69] with strong backing from the State Government, and support from UNICEF's Reading and Numeracy Activity (RANA) programme. Monitoring exercises included feedback sessions with parents, and door-to-door community mapping led by Kano Literacy and Mathematics Accelerator (KALMA) facilitators.

This feedback loop with students and parents enabled assessment of the effectiveness of literacy and numeracy distance learning programs.[70] The main strategy deployed in post-lockdown school security management was the conversion of boarding to day schools. Some remote schools were shut down and merged with other institutions. When school reopening processes began in October 2020, Kano State aligned with the Federal Government's phased approach, limiting the number of days per week[71] and hours per day in classrooms to avoid crowding.

Other public actions with implications for in-school learning were driven by the state efforts to mitigate insecurity risks. This included the closure of select boarding schools in at least five LGAs just less than six months of returning after the partial lockdown.   The case study below provides shares girls' experience of this considered action.

Case Study 2	School Closures Increase Risk of Absenteeism and Higher Dropout Rates in Bunkure and Rano, Kano State

Bunkure and Rano are two of several districts whose student population has been affected by the school closures enacted by the Kano State Ministry of Education in an attempt to mitigate against potential attacks to schools in vulnerable communities. Other affected locations in Kano include Dambatta, Gwarzo and Tsanyawa LGAs. School closures are a direct policy response to spillover tensions from the Boko Haram insurgency in the North East, and the banditry and kidnapping attacks in Niger, Kaduna and Katsina in more recent years. School closures were announced in late February 2021, day after the abduction of 317 boarding students of Government Girls Secondary School in Jangebe, Zamfara State, and a week after 42 students and staff were abducted from Kagara in Niger State.

In total, 28 secondary schools (15 exclusively for girls) and at least 4 tertiary health training institutions were affected by the mandated closures. According to officials from the State Ministry of Education, the criteria for closure considered the proximity of schools to major highways, and the presence of boarding facilities.

The policy was effective to the extent that alternatives existed for absorbing students from affected schools. However, local stakeholders report that many girls were unable to transit smoothly into their replacement schools due to long distances and a lack of financial capability. Girls were more likely to feel threatened on their way to school, with fears around being raped, molested or verbally harassed enroute. Most were from depressed communities which have been slow to recover from a lockdown that left many households unable to tend to their farms and trading activities; income generation remains skeletal till this day. Provisions for catering for the increased number of students within active schools are also stretched. Teachers in Dambatta note that classrooms, hostels and toilets are more congested, instructional materials is in short supply, and teacher-to-student ratio has decreased.

Personal stories gathered during this exercise also highlight the pronounced vulnerability of girls with disabilities and the proliferation of informal arrangements for addressing these. In Bunkure, a teenage girl was compelled to drop out of school due to a painful limb and her parents' inability to sustain the high cost of care at the metropolitan orthopedic hospital within six months. A parent reported making a special request to the head teacher for his three daughters to be allowed to attend classes two times in a week to save on transportation costs.

Although swift and sweeping, boarding school closures were not a knee-jerk reaction or isolated policy. Prior to this, public resources had been spent reinforcing security in exposed schools in Kano's outskirts, with additional fencing and guards deployed. Following the lead of insurgency-riddled Katsina, six other states enacted school closures in the period from December 2020 to March 2021 in locations deemed volatile - at times covering whole local government areas. This represents a large body of affected children in the Northern region across Yobe, Zamfara, Niger, Katsina, Kano, Jigawa and Sokoto. At the time of drafting this report, discussions were being held to reopen some of Kano's public schools as day facilities to moderate the accessibility challenges for secondary girls – and boys – in hard-hit communities over 10 months on.

Community institutions also played an important role in both education support and security management. Kano North parents highlighted the role of Islamiyya schools as de-facto tutorial centres; they were easier to reach even with restricted movement. This was more evident prior to the roll out of formal distance learning programs, and in remote places. However, it is not clear how inclusive this process, or what the quality of tutoring given its largely undocumented status and the limited access to instructional materials. Prior to schools reopening, education providers were trained on COVID-19 protocols[73] while PTAs, SBMCs, and local philanthropists supplemented government purchases with contributions of hygiene supplies in response to shortfalls.

Similarly, community structures play a larger security management role in rural and semi-urban communities. Group discussions reveal frequent consultations and emergency response from vigilante associations. There are also a few reports of school-based security awareness building for teachers and students.

"We report security issues to the nearest police station and we engage with the community vigilante and Hisbah[72] because of unwanted entrants especially in the night, after closing hours. Students have also been educated to report security threats on the way to school to their school authorities. Schools should conduct periodic meetings with security operatives on vigilance around the school to prevent security issues."

— Teacher, boarding school in Nasarawa

Figure 5.12: Kano State - Budget Performance (2017 - 2020)

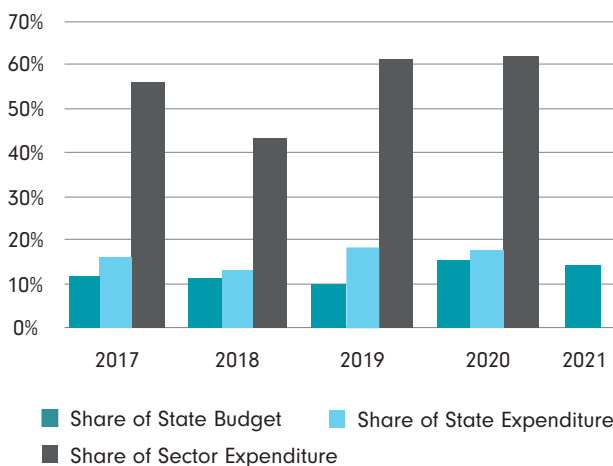Legend: Basic Education, Secondary Education, Higher Education
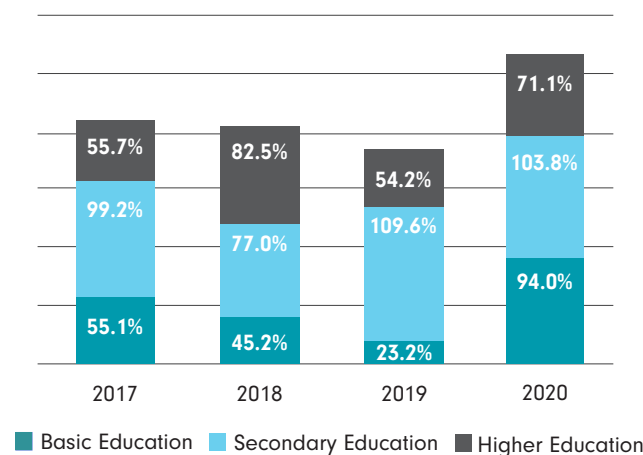
Kano's strategy with education aligns with the pre-pandemic policy trends. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS 2020), Kano State has the highest[74] number of out-of-school children in Nigeria, with its near 1 million unenrolled figure (989,234) easily dwarfing the runner up, Awka Ibom's 581,800.

Kano— 989,234 unenrolled students (1st place)

Akwa Ibom— 581,800 unenrolled students (runner up)

Figure 5.13: Kano State - Prioritisation of Basic & Secondary Education in Budget

Legend: Share of State Budget, Share of State Expenditure, Share of Sector Expenditure

The state government's current priority is to provide increase school enrolment through its Free and Compulsory Basic and Post-basic Education (FCBPE) programme to children of school age up to secondary school level, with specific plans for girl-child education and persons with disabilities. Since its launch in September 2019, Kano State has procured school buses, employed female teachers, and distributed school uniforms and learning materials to entry-level students. Political commitment has also been demonstrated in improved education sector funding.

Figures 5.13 and 5.14 show that budget allocation and performance have increased for three consecutive years.

Looking ahead, Kano State has taken laudable steps towards fulfilling these commitments with the new PFM reform introducing girl education coding included in the 2022 state budget through the programme segment of the Chart of Accounts. This effectively means that all expenditure in the budget will be mapped and tallied to specific policy, programmes, and projects in line with medium-term sector strategic plans, thus making it easier to track government investment to specific health and education programs, and to disaggregate spending on women and girls for the first time. Other developments supported by PERL include Kano's draft Girl-Child Education Policy and plans to set up a gender education directorate[75] with gender desk officers across state education agencies.

Pathways and Implications for Girls' Education

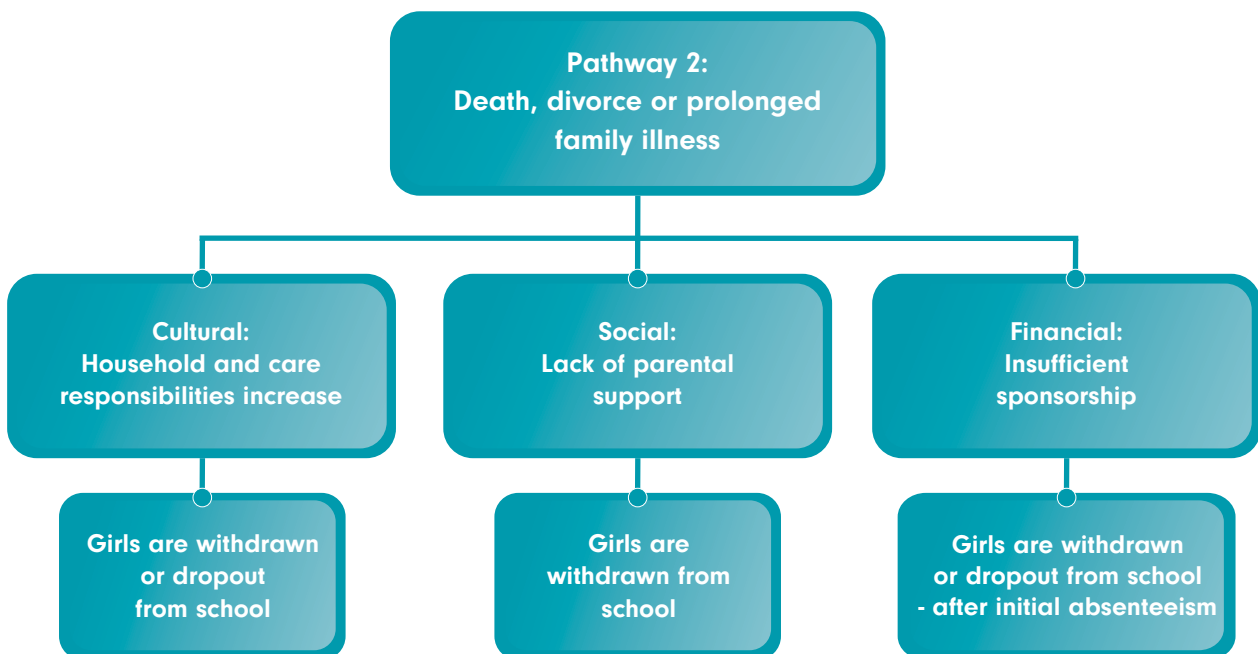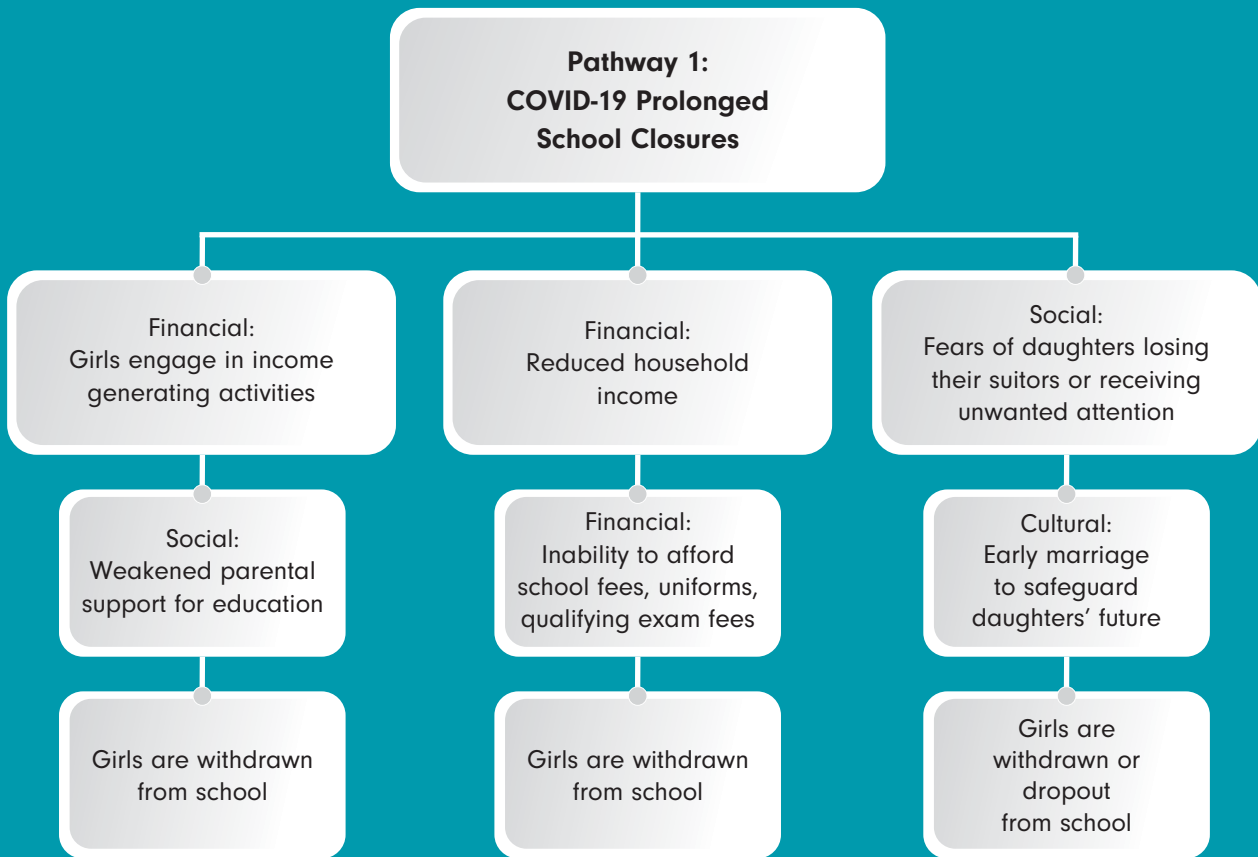In Kano, three main triggers preceding discontinuation of education were observed:

Prolonged school closures, changes in family and/or home life, and insecurity. Increased difficulty in accessing schools ranged from longer walking times[76] and higher transport costs, to limited placement alternatives (especially where boarding facilities were preferred). Previous experience suggested that the combination of a public health crisis and growing insecurity would somehow impact Kano's education performance. This study has found that the most significant implication of these occurrences is the depression of the number of girls completing and transiting from secondary school.
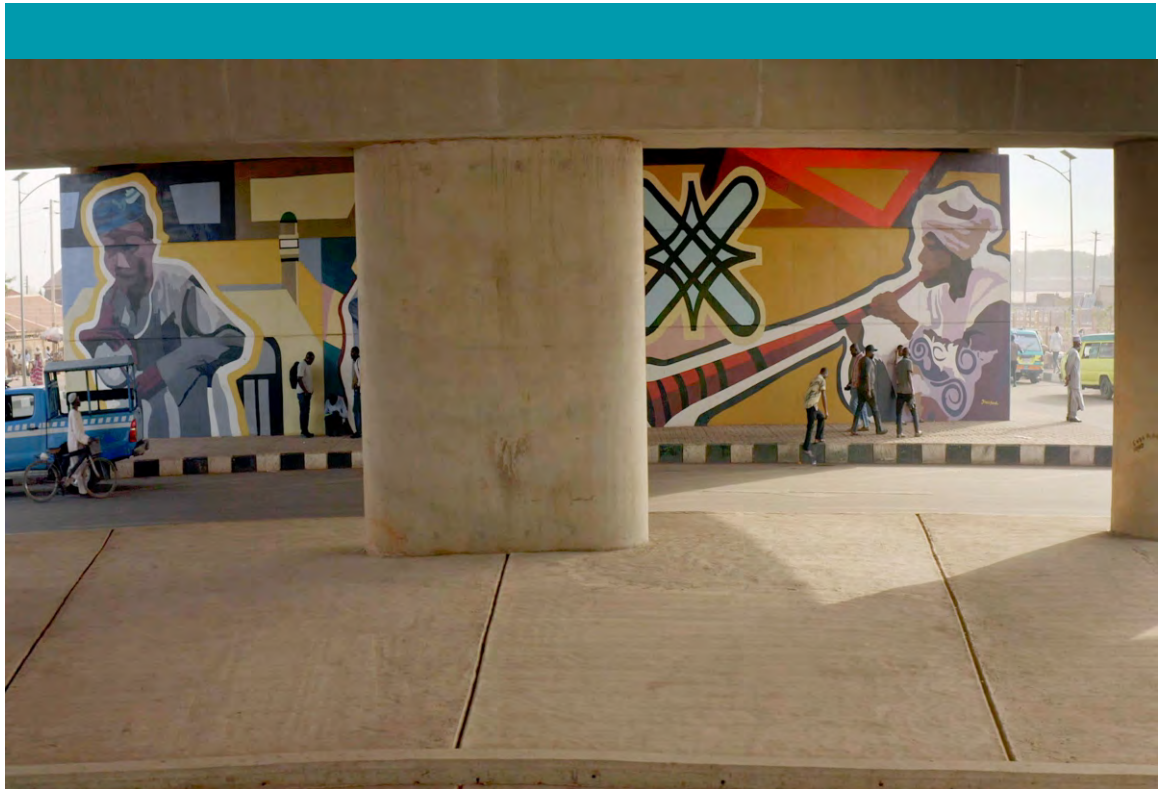
The overall outcome of being ushered into early marriages (sometimes with consent), compelled to stay at home, or engage in informal economic activity, is an increased number of out-of-school girls.

However, it may be too early to affirm whether the increased occurrence of early marriage and preference for girls to engage in domestic chores and income generation amount to a reinforcement of cultural norms to the long term detriment of their education – or a temporary reaction brought about by discrete events. Lockdown conditions were drastic – young girls (and boys) remaining at home caused household earnings and savings to dwindle rapidly – but somewhat temporary. What is clear is that if the longer insecurity and economic strains persist, these pathways will become more deeply entrenched unless proactive mitigation is put in place.

Pathway 1: COVID-19 Prolonged School Closures

Financial: Girls engage in income generating activities
→ **Social:** Weakened parental support for education
→ Girls are withdrawn from school

Financial: Reduced household income
→ **Financial:** Inability to afford school fees, uniforms, qualifying exam fees
→ Girls are withdrawn from school

Social: Fears of daughters losing their suitors or receiving unwanted attention
→ **Cultural:** Early marriage to safeguard daughters' future
→ Girls are withdrawn or dropout from school

Pathway 2: Death, divorce or prolonged family illness

Cultural: Household and care responsibilities increase
→ Girls are withdrawn or dropout from school

Social: Lack of parental support
→ Girls are withdrawn from school

Financial: Insufficient sponsorship
→ Girls are withdrawn or dropout from school - after initial absenteeism

Pathway 3:
Insecurity, attacks in girls' schools and nearby communities

Physical:
Inadequate fencing, security personnel and response

Policy:
Closure or conversion of boarding schools to day schools

Policy:
Delayed reopening of schools

Personal:
Decreased perception of personal and communal safety

Physical:
Increased difficulty accessing schools

Financial:
Girls more engaged in household and petty jobs

Social:
Lack of parental support

Social:
Lack of parental support or insufficient sponsorship

Personal:
Loss of interest

Girls are withdrawn or dropout from school

Girls are withdrawn or dropout from school

Girls dropout from school

KANO

CONCLUSION

Section 6: Conclusion

Summary

Three biggest barriers affecting girls and their education:

Poverty   **Early Marriage**   **Safety in School**

The inability and unwillingness of caregivers to pay for school fees, uniforms, and learning materials makes the prospect of returning to school uncertain for many girls. In Kano and Jigawa states, early marriage was cited as a key reason for girls enrolled in 2020 being withdrawn or opting out of school. Parental consent was more common in cases of girls who were betrothed prior to the pandemic. Even where value of girls' education was expressed, it faced stiff competition from gender-biased cultural norms and views on marrying late. These views were buttressed on societal definitions of female (sexual) maturity, fears related to the loss of engagement and unwanted male attention.

In Kaduna State, the frequent post-lockdown closures and alarming rate of kidnappings and banditry attempts in communities and at schools has reduced parental confidence in schooling and is having a negative effect on the interest levels of secondary school-aged girls. Moreover, even when girls' education is valued, the parents are making financial bets on which gender would fare better with secondary education. This is expressed in the prioritisation of boys' education over girls', more notably in Kaduna, but also evident in Kano and Jigawa.

In Jigawa and Kaduna states, physical barriers have become more pronounced, resulting in longer walking distances and in unsupervised accommodation of underaged girls. These arrangements are often made by parents facing the hard decision of whether to prioritise their daughter's education or their safety, and put minors at risk at a time when evidence suggests incident rates of GBV have not retuned to pre-pandemic levels.

These physical barriers, including a lack of perimeter fencing, inadequate security personnel, and poor infrastructure within school premises, increase girls' and parental fears of risks to their safety. Unfortunately, these fears are not misplaced in the context of targeted kidnapping attempts and widespread insecurity. All of this points to a widening of educational inequalities in Nigeria.

Understanding of drivers of early marriage is key to addressing this trend which re-emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic:

Discussions with community stakeholders, parents and educators point to both economic factors and girls themselves demonstrate a clear trade-off between education and marriage - with marriage often winning. Low autonomy in decision making and reduced interest in schooling were the main personal factors determining early marriage. The presence of an appointed suitor, prolonged school closures and the lack of parental support to continue education in the face of other cultural and socio-economic pressures were key contextual factors related with this trend. Evidence from this study in Nigeria and other countries show that girls are more likely to drop out of school during the preparatory time before her marriage – or shortly after.[77]
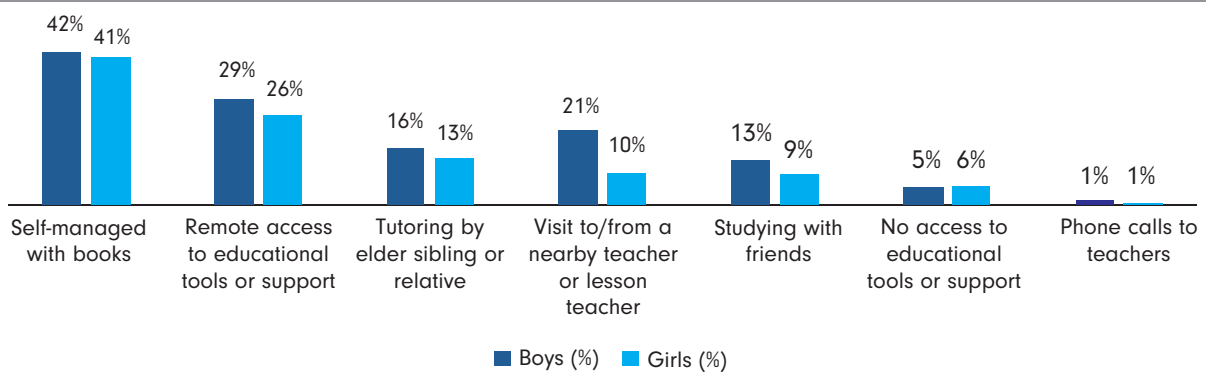
Girls' education during the pandemic was not targeted in the design and deployment of distance learning initiatives, and thus did not fully take into account their preferences and in some cases reinforced their barriers to learning. Distance learning platforms did not fully factor in preferences for more (social) interactive forms of learning - likely due to supply side constraints - and the need for supportive messages on balancing household responsibilities, such as household chores and care of family members with schooling. Messaging more directly on the importance of girls' education and practical guidance on prioritisation and time management techniques may have enabled more studying and learning time for girls. Table 6.1 shows that male access to and use of distance learning options outperformed those of girls in all surveyed categories.

There were significant gender disparities in interpersonal support for learning during the lockdown, with only 10% reporting visits with teachers compared to 21% of boys, and 13% tutored by an elder sibling or relative compared to 16% of boys.

Security management approaches which included deboarding schools enmasse did not account for increased exposure of girls enroute to day school, parents' ability to afford added transport costs, and need to invest in infrastructural upgrades and safeguards in facilities used by girls.

Table 6.1: Where did you get support with your school work while you were at home? (Kano, Kaduna & Jigawa)

	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Self-managed with books	42%	41%
Remote access to educational tools or support	29%	26%
Tutoring by elder sibling or relative	16%	13%
Visit to/from a nearby teacher or lesson teacher	21%	10%
Studying with friends	13%	9%
No access to educational tools or support	5%	6%
Phone calls to teachers	1%	1%

However, state education administrators are becoming increasingly aware of some of these discrepancies and the joint threat pandemic and insecurity conditions pose on the recent gains made in girls' education in their states. For example, faced with the inadequacy of the existing school stock to absorb the deboarded students and the growing numbers of out-of-school girls, Kano and Kaduna are increasing numbers of school buildings and expansion programs.

Lessons

Opportunities for remote-learning, and limits to the available platforms: Though broad in their reach, there are limitations to relying on radio and TV alone. Remote learning approaches work better with other interactive tools which allow for assignment setting, feedback, and grading of exercises. For some, this gap was bridged by an elder sibling or telephone calls with teachers, with a significant degree of informality.

Key-in to girls' own coping mechanisms and preventative tactics as a first step to address their vulnerabilities: Almost all out-of-school girls interviewed showed a willingness to go back to school. Many girls' recommendations centred around actions they felt would enable the resumption of their education and improve the conditions in which structured learning takes place.

Horizontal linkages proved to be proactive and efficient in orienting service delivery in the face of a looming threat: Within weeks and even days from their index cases, every surveyed state had set up an inter-ministerial taskforce and charged running sub-committees with addressing specific intervention areas. This enabled better coordination and improved resource sharing efficiency.

There is ample space to adjust to a broader definition of school safety: Beyond the binary assessment of the presence of perimeter fencing, the quality and height of the walls matter for securing the school. Similarly, girls require a range of upgrades and systems in place to feel safe. These range from investments in infrastructure, including sanitary facilities, improved lighting, and access to water within the premises – to people resources, such as better trained and equipped school guards, teacher security training, and more female adult presence in schools. To prioritise finite public resources, exercises such as the annual school census and other on-demand assessments could aid in the understanding of key needs, and inform a phased approach at school-level.

Special needs require special consideration: Although this study did not focus on the intersectionality of gender and disability, on the whole focus groups with parents indicated that girls with disabilities were less likely to receive attention. Although girls who were already facing access challenges prior to the coronavirus epidemic to benefit from distance learning programs. The potential longer-term benefits of these programs for differently-abled girls — and boys — were significantly constrained by the abrupt reversal to formal practices as this was lifted. Rather than development of these sub-sectors, their accompanying platforms and learning resources – with missed opportunities to address inequities for other access-disadvantaged groups.

Recommendations For Development Partner Education Support

Proposed short-term and immediate interventions:

Adopt blended learning systems to address diverse access barriers and navigate unplanned interruptions in future:

Kaduna's experience shows the benefit of on-going deployment of distance-learning to supplement classroom-based learning – both in learning outcomes, and enabling prompt pivots in a highly unpredictable environment. The government's decision to continue supplementing classroom-based learning with other formats during normal school terms contributed to the resilience of their school system.

Ramp up educational and vocational training programmes:

Training programmes will be required to mop up the increased number of out-of-school children. As a demand-driven policy initiative, it responds to the overwhelming support for girls to return to school. Efforts should target recently-married young girls/women and early mothers, as well as petty traders and homebound caretakers, with a focus on providing welfare support, business skills, basic literacy and numeracy skills over formal education.

Integrate day-care and early motherhood support into learning institutions:

Beyond just rolling out more vocational training options, it will also be important to provide day care and nursing stations at these facilities. Offering aspects of the course material in these programmes as part-time, self-paced and/or distance learning options could be an added bonus that contributes to their uptake. At the community level, these initiatives should be supported with advocacy messaging that demonstrates female success stories and addresses the stigmatisation of dropping out and early motherhood.

Dedicate resources to low hanging behaviour change management opportunities:

These could include exam fee waivers for recent dropouts, cross-subsidizing school uniforms, textbooks, and transport stipends or service improvements.

Strengthen GBV early warning systems and enforcement for offenders:

This should include diversified reporting channels, including those within secondary schools. Invest in training guidance counsellors and SBMCs to recognize the signs of GBV.

The most powerful element of Jigawa's VAPP law is its localised mechanism for redress and survivor support. Provide protections for whistle-blowers and enable anonymous reporting channels to increase reporting without fear of reprisals or backlash.

Quality assurance agencies should link the enforcement of school safety programmes to the renewal of school certification (permits).

There is also a need to integrate counselling services that respond to these diverse needs, particularly in communities hard hit by armed attacks, and with sizeable numbers of displaced children.

Integrate rapid response systems at school and community level:

As the occurrence of new infectious diseases (e.g., COVID-19, Ebola) and insecurity persists building resilient school systems will become a top priority. The same mechanisms which bolstered coordination and resource efficiencies at state level need to be applied across vertical linkages.
This applies specifically to trusted local institutions such as SBMCs, PTAs and CBOs (including vigilante associations) as well as within local government directorates. Mixed responses were reported in the adequacy of distributed material and technical support. Some examples of state specific opportunities include:

In Jigawa	Leveraging the networks of members of emerging platforms, such as Girl Child Education Platform and established ones, such as JISOP.
In Kaduna	Ongoing support for KADVIS and Edu Marshals to enable better monitoring, intelligence gathering and emergency response in confluence with security outfits.
In Kano	Building direct reporting mechanisms with Kano State's gender focal persons unit as this is instituted as a directorate.

**Strengthen both infrastructural and
legal protections for girls within schools:**

Go beyond basic perimeter fencing in rolling out school infrastructural and security service upgrades. Quality assurance agencies should mainstream school safety programmes, and link their enforcement to directly to the renewal of school certification (permits).

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PERL**

Improve tracking of disbursement and spending on girls' education:

The effectiveness and policy implications of Kano State's recent girls' education code are yet to be assessed, given its recent adoption in the 2022 budget. However, the logic of a tracking mechanism on priority service delivery areas to improve targeting and visibility into actual spending patterns is sound – particularly if assessed against specific policy objectives.

Kano State's exercise was informed by government-led mapping, input collation and analysis of budget line items for girls' education. Leadership in Kano and other states should keep a close eye out for lessons this pilot year, and the potential to enable value-oriented adjustments that result in improved outcomes for girls' education.

CONCLUSION

ANNEXES

1.1 Jigawa State Survey Execution Report

Summary Of Respondents In Jigawa State – School-based Student Survey							
Characteristics	**Jigawa North West**		**Jigawa South West**		**Jigawa North East**		**Total**
	Ringim	**Gumel**	**Jahun**	**Dutse**	**Hadejia**	**Kafin Hausa**	
Female	56(18%)	35(11%)	48(16%)	55(18%)	47(15%)	25(8%)	266(86%)
Male	4(1%)	10(3%)	12(4%)	9(3%)	0(0%)	7(2%)	42(14%)
Single-parent household	5(2%)	2(1%)	7(2%)	7(2%)	3(1%)	3(1%)	27(9%)
Dual-parent household	51(17%)	39(13%)	43(14%)	53(17%)	43(14%)	28(9%)	250(83%)
Caregiver household	4(1%)	3(1%)	9(3%)	5(2%)	2(1%)	1(1%)	24(8%)
Boarding	1(0%)	0(0%)	12(4%)	12(4%)	1(0%)	0(0%)	26(8%)
Day	59(19%)	45(15%)	48(16%)	52(17%)	46(15%)	32(10%)	282 (92%)
JSS 1- 3	7(2%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	13(4%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	20(6%)
SSS 1-3	53(17%)	45(15%)	60(19%)	51(17%)	47(15%)	32(10%)	282(94%)
11-13 years	2(1%)	0(0%)	1(0%)	9(3%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	12(4%)
14-16 years	28(9%)	15(5%)	41(13%)	37(12%)	13(4%)	12(4%)	146(47%)
17+ years	30(10%)	30(10%)	18(6%)	18(6%)	34(11%)	20(6%)	150(49%)
Age – Mean (SD)	16 (1.6)	16 (1.5)	17 (1.4)	16 (1.51)	16 (1.5)	16 (1.5)	16 (1.5)

Profile of Schools in Jigawa State – School-based Student Survey				
	Jigawa North West	**Jigawa South West**	**Jigawa North East**	**Overall**
Girls only school	2	6	1	**9**
Mixed gender school	7	5	6	**18**
Junior only	0	1	0	**1**
Senior only	0	1	4	**5**
Junior & Senior	9	9	3	**21**
Public	8	9	6	**23**
Private	1	2	1	**4**
Semi-urban	4	0	0	**4**
Urban	5	10	4	**19**
Rural		1	3	**4**
Day only	8	9	7	**24**
Boarding only	0	2	0	**2**
Mixed (day & boarding)	1	0	0	**1**
Poor or no female sanitary facilities	4	0	2	**6**
Adequate sanitary	5	11	5	**21**
Inadequate or no fencing	7	5	7	**19**
Fenced	2	6	0	**8**

1.2.Kaduna State Survey Execution Report

Summary of Respondents in Kaduna State — School-based Student Survey						
Characteristics	**Kaduna Central**		**Kaduna South**	**Kaduna North**		**Total**
	Chikun	**Igabi**	**Kauru**	**Makarfi**	**Sabon Gari**	
Female	22(13%)	16(9%)	44(26%)	25(15%)	18(11%)	125(73%)
Male	8(5%)	8(5%)	15(9%)	9(5%)	6(4%)	46(27%)
Single-parent household	3(2%)	2(1%)	4(2%)	6(4%)	1(1%)	16(9%)
Dual-parent household	16(9%)	20(12%)	51(30%)	25(15%)	21(12%)	133(78%)
Caregiver household	11(6%)	2(1%)	4(2%)	3(2%)	2(1%)	22(13%)
Boarding	3(2%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	12(7%)	15(9%)
Day	27(16%)	24(14%)	59(35%)	34(20%)	12(7%)	156(91%)
JSS 1- 3	7(4%)	7(4%)	23(13%)	12(7%)	16(9%)	65(38%)
SSS 1-3	23(13%)	17(19%)	36(21%)	22(13%)	8(5%)	106(62%)
11-13 years	2(1%)	5(3%)	17(10%)	9(5%)	5(3%)	38(22%)
14-16 years	21(12%)	14(8%)	24(14%)	8(5%)	14(8%)	81(47%)
17+ years	7(4%)	5(3%)	18(11%)	17(10%)	5(3%)	52(30%)
Age – Mean (SD)	16 (1.6)	15 (2.39)	15 (2.38)	16 (2.27)	15 (1.61)	15 (2.07)

Profile of Schools in Kaduna State – School-based Student Survey				
	Kaduna Central	**Kaduna North**	**Kaduna South**	**Overall**
Mixed gender	5	5	5	**15**
Junior only	2	1	2	**5**
Senior only	1	1	1	**3**
Junior & Senior	2	3	2	**7**
Public	3	2	3	**8**
Private	2	3	2	**7**
Semi-urban	0	0	0	**0**
Urban	5	2	0	**7**
Rural	0	3	5	**8**
Day only	5	4	5	**12**
Boarding only	0	1	0	**1**
Poor or no female sanitary facilities	0	0	0	**0**
Adequate sanitary facilities	5	3	2	**10**
Unknown	0	2	3	**5**

1.3 Kano State Survey Execution Report

Summary of Respondents in Kano State— School-based Student Survey							
Characteristics	Kano North		Kano Central		Kano South		Total
	Dambatta	Tofa	Kumbotso	Nassarawa	Bunkure	Rano	
Female	38 (16%)	25 (11%)	24(10%)	40 (17%)	23(10%)	32 (14%)	182(78%)
Male	5(2%)	9 (4%)	15(6%)	15(6%)	0(0%)	8 (3%)	52(22%)
Single-parent household	4(2%)	12(5%)	5(2%)	8(3%)	2(1%)	4(2%)	35(14%)
Dual-parent household	37(16%)	21(9%)	31 (13%)	46(20%)	19 (9%)	36(15%)	190(82%)
Caregiver household	2(1%)	0(0%)	3(1%)	1(0.4%)	2(1%)	1(0.4%)	9(4%)
Boarding	13 (6%)	0(0%)	27 (12%)	0 (%)	0 (%)	0(0%)	40(18%)
Day	30 (13%)	34 (15%)	12 (5%)	55 (24%)	23(10%)	40 (17%)	194(82%)
JSS 1- 3	12(5%)	6(3%)	18(8%)	11(5%)	5 (2%)	7(3%)	59(25%)
SSS 1-3	31(13%)	28(12%)	21(9%)	44(19%)	18 (8%)	33(14%)	175(75%)
11-13 years	5(2%)	4 (2%)	4 (2%)	5(2%)	0(0%)	2(1%)	20(9%)
14-16 years	31 (13%)	23 (10%)	25 (11%)	34 (15%)	4 (2%)	26(11%)	143(61%)
17+ years	7(3%)	7(3%)	10(4%)	16(7%)	19(8%)	12(5%)	71(30%)
Age – Mean (SD)	15 (14.19)	17 (11.60)	16 (9.82)	16 (19.59)	17 (9.77)	16 (15.79)	16 (15.8)

Profile of Schools in Kano State – School-based Student Survey				
	Kano Central	**Kano North**	**Kano South**	**Overall**
Boys only	0	0	0	**0**
Girls only	3	3	4	**10**
Mixed gender	2	2	1	**5**
Junior only	1	0	0	**1**
Senior only	0	5	0	**5**
Mixed	4	0	5	**9**
Public	3	3	4	**10**
Private	2	2	1	**5**
Semi-urban	0	3	0	**3**
Urban	5	0	0	**5**
Rural	0	2	5	**7**
Poor or no female sanitary facilities	2	2	4	**8**
Inadequate or no fencing	0	2	1	**3**
Fenced	5	3	4	**12**
Inadequate or no fencing	1	1	5	**7**
Fenced	4	4	0	**8**

	Name of Scheme	Stated Objectives & Focus of Scheme	Target Beneficiaries & Eligibility Requirement	Scheme Benefits & Provisions	Resource Partners	Period & Status quo	Gaps Identified
KD1	**Educating Nigerian Girls in New Enterprises (ENGINE)**	**Access, equity** Improved learning outcomes; successful transition to the next phase of work or education; sustainable initiatives for continued education and empowerment	**Marginalised young women and girls in Kaduna, Kano & Lagos** Includes girls who were married, pregnant, or divorced by or before 18, as well as those forced to drop out of school, have disabilities and come from single-parent households	**Senior secondary and vocational training** - Established 170 learning spaces - Provided business training and employment preparation for out-of-school women - Assisted in building institutional capacity for financing and education delivery - Secured the adoption of child and vulnerable adult (CVAP) protection policies	**Lead:** Mercy Corps Nigeria **Key partners:** Society for Women Development and Empowerment of Nigeria (SWODEN) in Kano, Action Health Incorporated (AHI) in Lagos, Kindling Hope Across Nations Initiative (KHAN) in Kaduna and Tabitha Cumi Foundation (TCF) in the FT.	**Completed implementation** (April 2017 – October 2020) 18,050 marginalised young women and girls benefitted	Student-centred approaches, such as learning centres, create an environment where girls can make mistakes without fear of punishment or embarrassment. Focus on improved learning outcomes, increased confidence in learning and life skills Awareness of child protection policies is not yet universal across school- and community-level actors.
KD2	The National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme (NHGSFP)	**Access** To improve enrolment in primary schools and increase nutritional status of pupils.	Pupils in public primary schools (1 – 3)	730,000 Pupils in Primary one to three benefited from the feeding programme (a meal per day)	**Lead:** Federal Government **Partners:** Action Aid and Gates Foundation	Commenced 6 October 2021	Only pupils in Primary one to three benefit from the programme. Excluded Pupils in Class 4 to 6 and Secondary Schools
KD3	World Bank through Kaduna State Government spent N3 bn on girl-child education, schools upgrade	**Access** To support the state in strengthening the quality of basic education and increase access to education by the girl-child and those in Almajiri schools.	Scholarship to 15, 000 primary one to three girls from poor and backward communities in the state.	N45,000 scholarship paid to 25,000 primary girls from poor families	**Lead:** World Bank **Implementer:** Global Partnership on Education (GPE) Project	Completed (2016 to 2019)	The scholarship was limited to Primary School Students
KD4	Reaching the Girld Child/Adolescent Girl with Quality Basic Education	**Affordability and quality** -Improve the learning outcomes of 200 out-of-school girls (OSGs). - Provide scholarships to marginalised girls to enable them return to school or successfully pass their school leaving examinations - WAEC and NECO in Kaduna and Lagos states.	Children between age 5 and 15 years old, 30% of boys were included as project beneficiaries	50 marginalised girls in school	Freeheart Africa Reach Out Foundation	Completed	

No.	Name of Scheme	Stated Objectives & Focus of scheme	Target Beneficiaries & Eligibility Requirement	Scheme Benefits & Provisions	Resource Partners	Period & Status quo	Gaps Identified
KD5	Edu Marshals	**Access** -To increase Students' participation in schools -To address or reduce number of out of school children -Enlighten Public on value of education	Students in both primary and secondary schools (both boys and girls)	Volunteers were recruited and deployed to ensure students remained in schools, and return truants to schools	**Lead:** Edumarshal **Partner:** Kaduna State Government (Ministry of Education)	Commenced June 2018	The programme is not concerned with learning outcomes and addressing barriers to students' education
KD6	Second Chance Education	**Access** To empower marginalised in and out of school girls	Girls whose schooling had been interrupted	4,750 girls benefitted from ENGINE2 Programme	**Lead:** Kaduna State Government **Partner:** Mercy Corps and Kindling Hope Across Nations (KHAN) Initiative (ENGINE 2 Programme)	Completed implementation	Focus on addressing issues that made these girls drop out from school initially

	Name of Scheme	Stated Objectives & Focus of Scheme	Target Beneficiaries & Eligibility Requirement	Scheme Benefits & Provisions	Resource Partners	Period & Status quo	Gaps Identified
JG1	Better Education Service Delivery for All (BESDA)	**Access, equity** To increase equitable access for out-of-school children and improve literacy in focus states, and strengthen accountability for results, in basic education in Nigeria.	Primary Education Secondary Education Public Administration-Education Early Childhood Education	Data development and capacity building Data production, accessibility and use Human capital development and gender	**Lead:** World bank **Key partners:** Jigawa State Ministry of Education Science and Technology, SUBEB, Teacher Training Institutions.	On going. (Jan 22 2018 – October 31 2022)	
JG2	Girls for Health	To promote, empower and improve female human resource in the health sector	Enabling poor rural girls preparing to sit their WAEC exams to meet up with the basic requirements for admission to higher institutions	Teacher training on student centered teaching and learning Mentoring of young girls on science subjects to fit into health-related institutions Collaboration with higher education institutions	**Lead:** Bill and Melinda Gates Foundations **Key partners:** Ministry of Health; Ministry of Education; Tertiary Institutions		

No.	Name of Scheme	Stated Objectives & Focus of scheme	Target beneficiaries & eligibility requirement	Scheme benefits & provisions	Resource partners	Period & status quo
KN	Educating Nigerian Girls in New Enterprises (ENGINE)	**Access, equity** Improved learning outcomes; successful transition to the next phase of work or education; sustainable initiatives for continued education and empowerment	Marginalised young women and girls in Kaduna, Kano & Lagos. Includes girls who were married, pregnant, or divorced by or before 18, as well as those forced to drop out of school, have disabilities and come from single-parent households	Senior secondary and vocational training Established 170 learning spaces used for training and academic support Provided business training and employment preparation for out-of-school women Assisted in building institutional capacity for financing and education delivery Secured the adoption of child and vulnerable adult (CVAP) protection policies	**Lead:** Mercy Corps Nigeria **Key partners:** Society for Women Development and Empowerment of Nigeria (SWODEN) in Kano, Action Health Incorporated (AHI) in Lagos, Kindling Hope Across Nations Initiative (KHAN) in Kaduna and Tabitha Cumi Foundation (TCF) in the FT.	Completed implementation (April 2017 – October 2020) 18,050 marginalised young women and girls benefitted
KN	The National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme (NHGSFP)	Improved enrolment, retention, completion and transition	Public primary four, five, and six pupils	The program assisted in improving socio-economic well-being of the communities where the school is located About 1.2 million pupils are currently been fed. Increased enrolment and retention	Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs	Currently ongoing
KN	Kano Literacy and Mathematics Accelerator (KaLMA)	To build foundational Hausa and English literacy and numeracy skills before they leave primary school	51,711 public primary four, five, and six pupils equipping them with foundational literacy and numeracy	Improved the skills of pupils in primary 4,5 and 6 through equipping them with foundational literacy and numeracy	KaLMA (British Council)	On-going to be completed by December 2021

Endnotes

1   Universal Basic Education Commission, Digest of Basic Education Statistics, 2018

2   Creative Associates International, 2018

3   The surveyed categories were self- managed with books, remote access to educational tools, tutoring by elder sibling or relative, visit to/from a nearby teacher or lesson teacher, and studying with a peer.

4   However, teenage pregnancy was rarely mentioned as a reason why girls had stopped attending classes across the three states.

5   UNICEF 2022, "UNICEF warns of Nigerian education crisis as world celebrates International Day of Education amid COVID-19 concerns".

6   UNICEF 2020, Country Office Annual Report, Nigeria places pre-COVID era figure at 10.2 million. This figure was based on the 2018 Digest of Basic Education Data published by the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and pertains to school-aged children between 6-11 years of age. Statistics for secondary level are not readily available at the time of this report.

7   "Understanding the Barriers to Girls' School Return: Girls' Voices from the Frontline of the COVID-19 Pandemic in East Africa", Amplify Girls, May 2021 report

8   "Girl-driven change meeting the needs of Adolescent Girls during COVID-19 and Beyond." CARE, 2020 report

9   States where the significant discrepancies were observed in female and male enrolment were Abia, Edo, Kogi and Sokoto States. NBS 2018

10   Creative Associates International, 2018

11   Okunola, Akindare. June 2020. "All Nigerian States Declare State of Emergency Over Rape and Gender-Based Violence." Global Citizen.org

12   Elumoye, Deji. "UN: Nigeria Recorded 3,600 Rape Cases during Lockdown". November 18, 2020.

13   Malala Fund, November 2020. Summary Report on "Girls' Education and COVID-19 in Nigeria."

14   Ibid. UNICEF 2022.

15   These include the Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria initiative (EDOREN), Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN), and the Teacher Development Programme (TDP)

16   These players were categorised as a) parents and caregivers, b) school teaching and non-teaching staff, including specifically female classroom-based teachers, c) community stakeholders

17   This was comprised of two broad categories – those involved in education services and policy making, and those involved in other policy issues with implications for girls wellbeing and experience, such as security management and gender-based violence monitoring and response.

18   Education for All, EFA, 2000-2015: achievement and challenges' and 'World Education Forum 2015 final report'.

19   ESSPIN, June 2016, "Barriers to Pursuing Secondary Education: Lessons from ESSPIN IQTE 2014 Cohort." Report 340.

20   British Council, 2012 "Gender in Nigeria Report 2012: Improving the Lives of Girls and Women in Nigeria". 2nd Edition.

21   Pinnok, H. (June 2016), "Inclusive Education Review" ESSPIN

22 Humphreys, S. and Crawfurd, L. (2015), "Issues of Issues of educational access, quality, equity and impact in Nigeria: The EDOREN review of literature on Basic Education." EDOREN

23 17 out of the 33 children (52% - all of who were girls) cited that they "got married" or were "going to be married" when asked by ESSPIN researchers why they dropped out of secondary school following transition into formal education.

24 The International Crisis Group report (May 2020) entitled " Violence in Nigeria's North West: Rolling Back the Mayhem." Africa Report No. 288

25 Ojewale, O. (February 2021). "Rising insecurity in northwest Nigeria: Terrorism thinly disguised as banditry."

26 Mwangi, N. (August 2020), "Nigeria arrests three foreign nationals in arms smuggling crackdown."

27 Note: Forest coverage was not referred to in the Brookings Report. Refer to International Crisis report (May 2020).

28 Oyero, K. (December 2020) Boko Haram escapees operating as bandits in North-West, kidnappers in South-West –NGF. Punch Newspapers.

29 This assessment is based on fatality rates of conflict incidents reported between 22 December 2020 and 21 December 2021. Note that the fatality count includes deaths counted on both the attacker and defending actors, including government security forces.

30 Philip Obaji Jr. "Boko Haram Won't Stop Targeting Schools in Nigeria". Foreign Policy online. March 23, 2021 Accessed here

31 "Kidnappers collude with Boko Haram to attack schools, says El-Rufai", The Guardian, 5 October 2019.

32 USAID 2018. "The Effects of School Safety on Academic Achievement: Evidence from Rwanda, Tanzania and Zambia". https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TGVG.pdf

33 SARC is a legacy of the Justice for All programme, a UK's Department for International Development initiative 2010-2017, which was successfully transitioned into a state government vehicle for trauma response. In Jigawa State, it is jointly resourced by the Ministries of Justice, Women Affairs and Health.

34 SARC incident reports in Dutse centre serves neighbouring LGAs, and as such is representative of prevalence beyond Dutse. Cases are typically generated through self-reporting or are referred from hospitals within the Jigawa, where SARC focal persons are assigned. Reports retrieved from the program managers did not segregate data by age, although this is a reporting method in place.

35 SARC has only one trauma response centre in Jigawa, where it offers legal, medical and counselling support to survivors of human rights abuses. Other active institutions include the Baba Azumi Foundation, which offers legal aid to GBV survivors, and the Child Protection Network, stationed within the State Ministry of Women's Affairs.

36 It is worth noting that these respondents were the least likely to have faced barriers to resumption compared to other school-aged children in Jigawa state, as only enrolled students participated in the quantitative research.

37 Basic and post-basic education statistics in Jigawa does not account for the period following the 2020 pandemic and its implications Student enrolment data from the National Bureau of Statistics in August 2021 is based on data from 2016-2018. The most recent Annual school census report in Jigawa was published in January 2021, covering the 2019/2020 academic session.

38 This was determined on the basis on their responses being "I don't know" or "other" to the question, "Which of these describes what would most likely happen if there were an attack in your school?"

39 Ayandele, Olajumoke (2021) "Confronting Nigeria's Kaduna Crisis", Africa Centre for Strategic Studies, February 2, 2021.

40 Intelligence reports indicate this is in part due to spill over criminal enterprises in Zamfara, some with known links to militant Islamist networks, but also includes more localised gang recruiting internally. This includes the reemergence of extremist Islamist group, Ansaru as it attempts to expand from Kaduna into neighbouring states,

41 USAID-PLSO National Incident Tracker, 2018-2021. Requested in December 2021 by PERL-ARC Senior GESI Advisor.

42 Data from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, cited in Ayandele, Olajumoke (2021).

43 The PERL Research team limited field activities to Kauru LGA due to security advisory received at the time of the research design.

44 Respondents were able to select more than one option and to specific "nothing" or "other".

45 Figures were slightly lower in Kaduna Central (21%) and Kaduna South (27%).

46 SARC has three different centres in Kaduna, located in Kafanchan (Jema'a), Zaria and Tundun Wada (metropolitan areas in Kaduna Central), and Zaria (Kaduna North). At the time of reporting, 2019 and 2020 data for the other centres were pending release. However, it is possible to extrapolate from the comparisons from 2021, during which 66% of overall number of incidents reported to SARC were lodged in its Kafanchan branch.

47 The NGO will be working through the GESI Champions, Local Government Education Authority (LGEA), KADSUBEB and the MOE to follow up on the issue and ensure disciplinary action is taken on the teacher. GESI Champions are community-based responders, grown out of the Christian Aid's Evidence for Collaborative and Inclusive Development (ECID) programme.

48 Household chores were the greatest time sink for girls (58%) referring to this activity as significant during the lockdown.

49 This aligns with some but not all findings in similar studies carried out in Kaduna. For example, the Malala Fund 2020 report disclosed that girls surveyed in Kaduna experienced less access to distance learning platforms, increased domestic burdens and lack of academic support from their families.

50 It is worth noting that this figure is likely skewed in favour of returning students as all student interviews were with children currently enrolled in secondary school.

51 Kaduna State Social Protection Policy 2020

52 Underaged motherhood and teen pregnancy were also considered as legitimate reasons for girls to withdraw from school while others referred to newly married husbands holding the first right of refusal over their teen wife's education.

53 Kaduna State 2020 Approved Budget, Kaduna State Planning Commission. Note: Kaduna State executed a mid-year review of the budget in response to adjust revenue generation projections and spending on COVID-19 mitigation and welfare support.

54 These were comprised of (parents and teachers associations), community representative, students and teachers representatives.

55 Edu Marshals are a voluntary security outfit. Their mandate is to ensure promote school attendance and monitor visitor traffic in the school and its environs.

56 "Kaduna shut school over COVID-19: Boko Haram Nigeria palaver force states schools to shut" BBC Pidgin, 16 December 2020, Accessed here.

57 "Attackers kidnap 140 Pupils from Nigerian boarding school" The Guardian UK. 5 July 2021. Accessed here.

58 Sabui, M. August 15, 2021. "Education in Disarray: More than 10,000 schools in the North Closed, 400,000 students affected." Nigerian Tribune. Accessed here.

59 This refers to the Islamic State in West Africa province (ISWAP) and its splinter group, Jamatu Ahli AlSunna lil Da'wa Wal Jihad (JAS).

60 In the past, its residents were subjected to widespread terrorist attacks and religious clashes, notably suicide bombing of Kano's Central Mosque in 2014 which led to over 200 deaths, and slew of spatial targeting in Sabon Gari, Munícpal and Garun Mallam LGAs, where Shia communities dominate, between 2012 and 2015. Coordinating GSF and community efforts in Kano and with Federal Government led troops in the North East have resulting in less frequent encounters of this kind in recent years.

61 PLSO Risk Report: Kano State. Available on request from PLSO program administrators.

62 Adewale, M. "Ganduje orders closure of more schools", The Guardian, February 2021. https://guardian.ng/news/ganduje-orders-closure-of-more-schools/

63   This initiative was facilitated by the concluded British Council-led Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation program (NSRP),

64 These ranged from being raped or forced to have sex, being forced by an older person to remove their clothes and being touch inappropriately by an older person when alone.

65 SARC is just one provider for post-trauma support on sexual assault cases in Nigeria. See here for directory of presence across Nigeria.

66 USAID's Communication of Change (C-Change) studies in the Democratic Republic of Congo showed evidence that handpicked female teachers were not as effective when it came to boys reporting experiences of violence. Other studies also highlight that female 'teachers', especially those who are younger and less experienced, may themselves be the target of gender-based violence. https://www.unicef.org/media/66506/file/Global-Guidance-SRGBV.pdf

67 "General facility renovation" includes gating and upgrading of hostels, better lighting in shared spaces and improvements to the quality of classrooms and other school facilities. "Other" refers to a range of actions, including training teachers and students on security risk awareness, preventing bullying, and installing CCTV cameras.

68 Plan International, 3 May 2020. "Kano and the COVID-19 challenge" Memo to Governor Ganduje". https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/kano-and-covid-19-challenge-memo-governor-ganduje . Other critics include the former Kano State Governor, Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, who stated his concerns in an open letter to the President.

69 UNICEF later rolled these out in Sokoto, Katsina, Jigawa.

70 Information provided from key informant interviews with Kano State's Director of Planning, Research and Statistics in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

71 Kano's phased reopening, initiated 11 October 2020, required Primary 1-3 to attend classes on Mondays and Tuesdays, while Primary 4-6 attended classes on Wednesdays, Thursday, and Fridays. Only JSS 2, JSS3 and SS2 students resumed in-school classes at that time.

72 Community watch groups with a strong slant on morality based on Islamic principles and beliefs

73 Teachers were instructed to identify an isolation room in the school in case of any COVID-19 case.

74 Proportionally, this translates to 22 percent of the school-aged population (comparable to Jigawa's 26% and Kaduna's 22%), suggesting that Kano State's large population and deficit of teachers and schools are factors contributing to this phenomenon.

75 This will replace current arrangements where the gender unit is subsumed under the Department of Education Support Services.

76 Studies show that longer walking times can have the unwanted consequence of increasing the exposure level and risk to girls while moving to and from school.

77 Malhotra, A., and Elnakib, S., 2021, "Evolution in the evidence base on child marriage: 2000-2019", UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage.

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