

EMERGING BARRIERS TO GIRLS' EDUCATION IN KANO



The Issue:

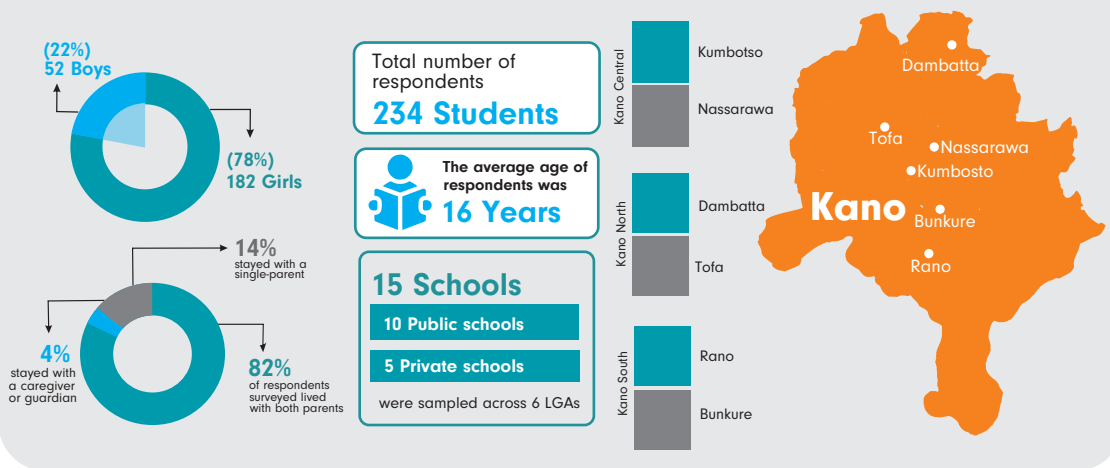
Girls face difficulties with their education in many respects. In the last three years, COVID-19 and insecurity have added to these worries in Kano; these difficulties are barriers to Girls' Education.



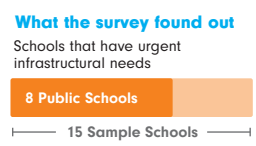
How do we know of the difficulties or barriers?

A survey was conducted in Kano, in November and December 2021, where a total of **234 Students** participated in the exercise, to find out some of the difficulties they face in their education.

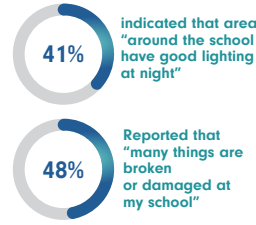
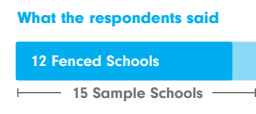
Survey sample and distribution



Perception of Safety and Security



Girls were more likely to indicate a lower level of perceived personal safety in the passage between home and school



What constitutes a barrier for Girls?

Physical Barriers Access to school is frustrated by long distance Risks of harassment and threats Insufficient classroom infrastructure	Health Barriers Poor water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities Lack of access to menstruation kits	Personal Barriers Fear of bullying Corporal punishment Stigmatisation	Economic Barriers Poverty, or parents' inability to pay schooling associated expenses e.g. uniforms, supplies etc. This burden leads to child labour sometimes.	Social Barriers Early marriage over completion of basic and senior school education Forced marriage of girls Exploitation or participation in illicit acts
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Illustration of the Difficulties, Fears/Barriers for Girls: An Example of the COVID-19 Lockdown Period

Dealing with stay-at-home orders What the survey found out Children who lived in Bunkure and Rano, the surveyed areas closest to Kaduna State border, were more likely to be worried about kidnapping threats. What the respondents said 87% They were afraid of falling ill 14% Concerned about kidnapping 16% Fear of some form of sexual assault	Trends related to gender-based violence What the survey found out Drop in the number of cases reported the sexual assault referral centre (SARC) Drop in the number of cases reported or treated at the SARC support centre What the respondents said Fear of some form of sexual assault	Hardest aspect of not being in school What the survey found out Expression of performance anxieties related to their academics Rate of worries about Students families falling on difficult times What the respondents said Experienced difficulties related to academic performance and advancement, such as falling behind studies or failing an exam. Worried about decrease in social interaction with peers ("not being able to see my friends") were the top contenders.	Learning experience during the lockdown What the survey found out Access to lessons transmitted through electronic platforms 64% Kano Central 66% Kano North 41% Kano South What the respondents said Experienced difficulties related to academic performance and advancement, such as falling behind studies or failing an exam. Worried about decrease in social interaction with peers ("not being able to see my friends") were the top contenders.
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Coping mechanisms and preventive tactics deployed during the lockdown



Retention challenges and reasons for discontinuing school

What the survey found out

The fears expressed of growing economic hardship were lived realities for many girls. Out-of-school girls reported deepening household poverty as the trigger for leaving school.

What the respondents said

“

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.

”

Nassarawa, dropped out in JSS 2 during the lockdown

“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

What the survey found out

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 inability to pay for school fees, uniform and books. This was substantiated by parents and teachers:

How do we translate our knowledge to action?

Safe Space for Girls Education Framework

01

School safety requires a broad-based effort by the entire community, including teachers, students, parents, law enforcement agencies, businesses, and faith-based organizations, among others

02

Generally, girls' schools will be required to adopt policies that are reasonably designed to address whatever peculiar problem they face

03

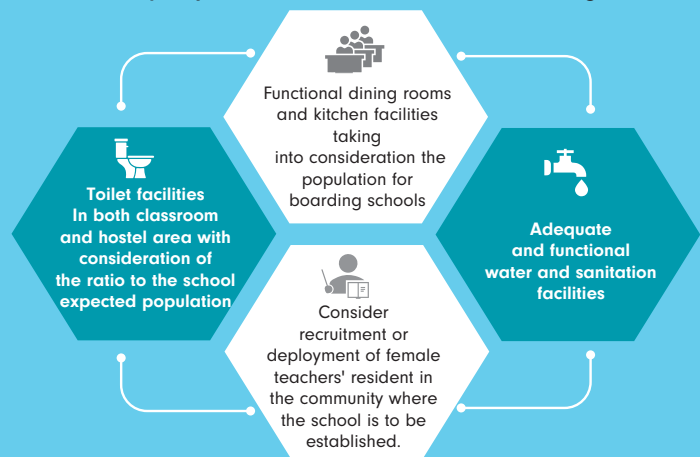
By adopting a comprehensive approach to addressing school safety focusing on prevention, intervention, and response, schools can increase the safety and security

Foster law enforcement partnerships to ensure security of the girls and the school environment.



- Collaborate with security personnel to keep and ensure security in the school.
- Ensure security of the planned site for the school.

Increase access to girls' education and improve the quality and relevance of education and learning.



Involve community-based associations/ committees and organisation to promote girls' education and encourage changes in norms for women and men to set-up prospective schools.



- Advocate and Sensitise Communities on the concept of Safe Space for girls' education.
- Sensitise the community on social norms and religious practices; to emphasize the social and religious backing for girls' education along with the benefits for family and society.

In creating a safe environment for pupils and staff within the school or college setting, the following should be taken into consideration:

- Transportation and proximity of the pupils to the proposed school site.
- Classroom structure and furniture should be girl friendly.
- Adequate bed and beddings for boarding facilities.
- Staff quarters with furnishing and security.
- Designating a quiet corner in the school by creating a recreational room that is removed from classroom activity. Make available self-care activities for pupils to do in this space.
- Designate a room for guidance and counselling staff that is separate from the staff room and classrooms.
- Establish a functional sickbay with adequate First Aid materials.
- Consider proximity to hospitals, clinics and or referral services in case of an emergency.
- Develop a system of identification for the students that is recognised by the nearby hospitals in the event of an emergency.
- Provide for female teachers to be resident in the community to maintain safe spaces for the girls.
- Space for gaming and recreational activities.

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