

GBV AoR HELPDESK

Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies

Learning Brief: Risks of Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence to Publicly Visible Women



Hanna Smit | December 2022

Introduction

This learning brief focuses on technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) affecting publicly visible women in humanitarian and emergency contexts. The learning brief begins with an overview of TFGBV prevalence, then focuses on risk groups of publicly visible women and how TFGBV impacts them, including women parliamentarians and politicians, journalists, women human rights defenders and activists. It moves on to provide examples of good practice in working with these different groups of publicly visible women to prevent and respond to their particular risks of TFGBV. The learning brief concludes with recommendations to highlight key issues for consideration by GBV actors working with publicly visible women as part of wider GBV prevention and response programming in humanitarian settings.

Of note, there is very limited information on this issue from emergency contexts. Grey literature, regional reports and anecdotal evidence have been considered and included here, as well as global reports that include countries experiencing emergency contexts. It is highly likely that TFGBV is occurring at similar or higher rates to non-emergency settings given the increased vulnerabilities and risks facing women and girls created by conflict, disaster and displacement.¹

Key Terms

TFGBV: Technology-facilitated gender-based violence, also called online violence, cyberviolence and digital violence, is “any act of gender-based violence against women that is committed, assisted or aggravated in part or fully by the use of information, communication technologies (ICT), such as mobile phones and smartphones, the Internet, social media platforms or email, against a woman because she is a woman, or affects women disproportionately.”² The broader term TFGBV is used to be inclusive of violence perpetrated by technology not reflected in the terms ‘online’, ‘cyber’ or ‘digital’— for example, violence perpetrated by mobile phone calls and texts, Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and Bluetooth.³ Common TFGBV behaviors include threats, harassment (such as cyberbullying, mobbing, trolling and hate speech); stalking (also referred to as cyberstalking); image-based abuse; publishing private information (referred to as ‘doxing’); and impersonation (including luring someone into a relationship by means of a fictional online persona,

¹ GBV AoR Helpdesk (2021). *Learning Brief 1: Understanding Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence*.

<https://www.sddirect.org.uk/resource/learning-brief-1-understanding-technology-facilitated-gender-based-violence>

² Simonovic, D. (2018). *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Its Causes and Consequences on Online Violence Against Women and Girls from a Human Rights Perspective*. UN Human Rights Council.

³ Ibid.

commonly referred to as 'catfishing').⁴

Gendered Disinformation: The spread of deceptive or inaccurate information and images against women political leaders, journalists and female public figures in a way that draws on misogyny and societal stereotypes, "framing them as untrustworthy, unintelligent, emotional/angry/crazy, or sexual."⁵

Scope of TFGBV

Understanding global prevalence of TFGBV is extremely challenging, not only because of limited data, but also because different studies use different methods and definitions of information and communication technologies (ICT) mediums, types of GBV, and categorizations for online 'threats' and 'behaviors', often drawing disparate conclusions.⁶ For example, the Economist Intelligence Unit surveyed 4,500 women aged 18-74 across 51 countries and concluded the global prevalence of online violence against women is 85 percent.⁷ The World Wide Web Foundation survey of 8,109 respondents (51 percent of whom were women) found 52 percent of women had experienced TFGBV.⁸ Meanwhile, a global UNFPA report suggests 38 percent of women with internet access have personally experienced online violence.⁹

In any case, evidence suggests TFGBV is a growing global phenomenon and publicly visible women are particularly targeted due to their public engagement. Amnesty International in India found that of all tweets mentioning women politicians between March and May of 2019, 13.8 percent (1 in 7 tweets) were problematic or abusive.¹⁰ A similar study conducted by Amnesty International in the UK and USA in 2018 found that 7 percent of tweets that mentioned women politicians were problematic or abusive.¹¹ This experience of TFGBV can become more pronounced for women from racial, ethnic, religious or other minority groups, such as Black, Asian and ethnic minority women, LBTQI+ women, and women with disabilities. The Amnesty International India research found women politicians belonging to marginalized castes received 59 percent more abuse compared to women from other castes (with abuse focusing on issues of caste), and Muslim women received 94 percent more ethnic or religious slurs than women politicians of other religions.¹²

Emerging evidence suggests women living in humanitarian contexts are at higher risk than other women. Data from Uganda indicates that 33 percent of 720 adult women surveyed have experienced online GBV, increasing to 75 percent among women refugees living in the country.¹³ The refugee women reported experiencing online abuse, stalking, unwarranted sexual advances and hacking of social media accounts.¹⁴ In the Arab States, a

⁴ GBV AoR Helpdesk (2021). *Learning Brief 1: Understanding Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence*.

<https://www.sddirect.org.uk/resource/learning-brief-1-understanding-technology-facilitated-gender-based-violence>

⁵ Excerpted from EU DisinfoLab (2021). *Gender-Based Disinformation: Advancing Our Understanding and Response*.

<https://www.disinfo.eu/publications/gender-based-disinformation-advancing-our-understanding-and-response/>

⁶ Ahlenback, V., Clugston, N. & Vlahakis, M. (2022). *Issues Paper: Global Prevalence of Online VAWG*. What Works Violence against Women and Children Helpdesk. London: Social Development Direct.

⁷ Economist Intelligence Unit (2020). *Measuring the Prevalence of Online Violence Against Women*.

<https://onlineviolencewomen.eiu.com/>

⁸ The World Wide Web Foundation (2020). *The online crisis facing women and girls threatens global progress on gender equality*.

<https://webfoundation.org/2020/03/the-online-crisis-facing-women-and-girls-threatens-global-progress-on-gender-equality/>

⁹ UNFPA (2021). *Making All Spaces Safe: Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence*. UNFPA.

https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/unfpa-tfgbv-making_all_spaces_safe.pdf

¹⁰ Amnesty International India. (2020). *Troll Patrol India: Exposing Online Abuse Faced by Women Politicians in India*. Amnesty International.

https://decoders.blob.core.windows.net/troll-patrolIndia-findings/Amnesty_International_India_Troll_Patrol_India_Findings_2020.pdf

¹¹ Amnesty International (2018). *Troll Patrol Findings*. <https://decoders.amnesty.org/projects/troll-patrol/findings>

¹² Amnesty International India. (2020). *Troll Patrol India: Exposing Online Abuse Faced by Women Politicians in India*. Amnesty International.

https://decoders.blob.core.windows.net/troll-patrolIndia-findings/Amnesty_International_India_Troll_Patrol_India_Findings_2020.pdf

¹³ Iyer, N., Nyamwire, B., & Nabulega, S. (2020). *Alternate Realities. Alternate Internets: African Feminist Research for a Feminist Internet*. Policy. <https://ogbv.policy.org/report.pdf>

¹⁴ Kalemera, A. (2019). *Building Digital Literacy and Security Capacity of Women Refugees in Uganda*.

<https://cipesa.org/2019/12/building-digital-literacy-and-security-capacity-of-women-refugees-in-uganda/>

study on online violence demonstrated the highest proportion of women survivors who reported having been exposed to online violence in the past year was in Iraq (70.4 percent) followed by Yemen (62 percent) and Palestine (54.2 percent).¹⁵ During the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a global surge in non-consensual sharing of images designed to threaten, shame and control women as much of life shifted online and to digital devices.¹⁶

Whether in humanitarian settings or not, reports by journalists, politicians and human rights defenders demonstrate that publicly visible women are among those most heavily affected, including through coordinated harassment campaigns used to silence them and “put them in their place.”^{17,18,19} Publicly visible women are especially at risk when they are vocal about human rights, women’s rights, and racism.²⁰ Given the preponderance of women speaking out about rights issues in fragile states and conflict-affected settings, it is important for GBV experts working in emergencies to understand the growing level of risk to this group of TFGBV. Some of the specific TFGBV issues affecting publicly visible women are described in greater detail below.

Risk Groups of Publicly Visible Women for TFGBV

Politicians and Parliamentarians

An Inter-Parliamentary study on sexism, harassment and violence researched the prevalence of various forms of violence against women parliamentarians across 39 countries. Of the 55 respondents, 81.8 percent reported experiencing psychological violence, of whom 44.4 percent had received threats of death, rape, beatings or abduction during their parliamentary term. The study showed that social media has become the number one place in which psychological violence is perpetrated against women parliamentarians, and to a lesser extent, by telephone or e-mail. The same research identified a number of factors that can make some women parliamentarians targets of this violence: belonging to an opposition party, being young, or belonging to a minority group.²¹

These experiences have personal consequences: 66.7 percent of the women parliamentarians impacted by sexism, harassment and violence reported feeling distressed by what had happened to them, and 46.7 percent had feared for their security and that of their friends and family.²² This can have a cumulative impact over time, affecting women parliamentarian’s emotional and physical wellbeing throughout their term, and beyond. The negative repercussions can extend to their families, as illustrated in research by ActionAid in Nigeria, in which 39 percent of 72 respondents who were female relatives of politicians (wife, mother, daughter, sister) reported experiencing online media harassment and hateful discourse due to their familial affiliation.²³

¹⁵ UN Women (2021). *Violence Against Women in the Online Space: Insights From a Multi-Country Study in the Arab States*. UN Women.

https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Arab%20States/Attachments/Publications/2021/11/Summary_Keyfindings_Final_EN.pdf

¹⁶ Brudvig, I., Chair. C., van der Wilk. A. (2020). *Covid-19 and Increasing Domestic Violence Against Women: the Pandemic of Online Gender-Based Violence*. <http://webfoundation.org/docs/2020/07/MWWF-Submission-COVID-19-and-the-increase-of-domestic-violence-against-women-1.pdf>

¹⁷ Sessa, M.G. (2020). *Misogyny and Misinformation: An Analysis of Gendered Disinformation Tactics During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. EU Disinfo Lab. <https://www.disinfo.eu/publications/misogyny-and-misinformation-an-analysis-of-gendered-disinformation-tactics-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

¹⁸ UN Women (2020). *Online Violence Against Women in Asia: A Multi-Country Study*. <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Fieldpercent20Officepercent20ESEAsia/Docs/Publications/2020/12/ap-ICT-VAWG-report-7Dec20.pdf>

¹⁹ Amnesty International (2018). *Toxic Twitter*. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2018/03/online-violence-against-women-chapter-1-1/>

²⁰ UNFPA (2021). *Making All Spaces Safe: Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence*. UNFPA. https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/unfpa-tfgbv-making_all_spaces_safe.pdf

²¹ Inter-Parliamentary Union (2016). *Sexism, harassment and violence against women parliamentarians*. Inter-Parliamentary Union

²² Ibid.

²³ Stand to End Rape (2022). *Vulnerable and Outside the Margins: From Challenges to Informed in ‘A study on violence against women in the political space’*. ActionAid and The Women’s Voice & Leadership Project. <https://standtoendrape.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Violence-Against-Women-in-Political-Spaces-1.pdf>

The strategic targeting of women politicians has direct implications for the democratic process. TFGBV can discourage women from pursuing public-facing careers, push women out of politics or activism, or lead them to disengage from online discourse.^{24,25,26} A study of online GBV in Uganda featuring women politicians, journalists and activists, found 11.9 percent of the 283 respondents suffered economic losses and unemployment as a result of experiencing TFGBV.²⁷ Ugandan female politicians use social media less than their male counterparts and are almost entirely absent from Twitter as a result of abuse they have received.²⁸

Journalists

A UNESCO study on violence against women journalists from 125 countries found 73 percent of female respondents experienced online violence; 25 percent had received threats of physical violence, 18 percent threats of sexual violence and 13 percent threats of violence against those close to them, including children and infants.²⁹ Black, Indigenous, Jewish, Arab, Asian and lesbian women journalists participating in the research experienced both the highest rates of online violence, as well as the most severe impacts.

One of the key findings from the UNESCO report was the impact of TFGBV on personal health. Mental health impacts were most frequently cited (26 percent of female respondents), with 12 percent of female respondents seeking medical or psychological help due to the effects of online violence, including therapy and treatment for PTSD connected to online attacks.³⁰ Women journalists reported modifying personal and professional behavior as a result of experiencing TFGBV. The existence of an unknown digital presence can instill fear and paranoia, which can lead to self-censorship; in a study of online violence against women who are journalists in Pakistan, results showed that 8 out of 10 women self-censor in an attempt to counter online violence.³¹ In the UNESCO study, 30 percent of women journalists reported self-censoring themselves on social media, 20 percent described how they withdrew from all online interaction, and 18 percent specifically avoid audience engagement.³² These behavior changes, and the experience of TFGBV more generally, can significantly impact women journalists' productivity and employment; according to the UNESCO study, 11 percent reported missing work, 38 percent retreated from visibility (e.g. by asking to be taken off air and retreating behind pseudonyms online), 4 percent quit their jobs, and 2 percent abandoned journalism altogether.³³

TFGBV against women journalists can also significantly affect their physical safety, as well as the safety of

²⁴Di Meco, L. (2020). *Online Threats to Women's Political Participation and the Need for a Multi-Stakeholder. Cohesive Approach to Address Them*. https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/65/EGM/Di%20Meco_Online%20Threats_EP8_EGMCSW65.pdf

²⁵ Di Meco, L. & Brechnemacher, S. (2020). *Tackling Online Abuse and Disinformation Targeting Women in Politics*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/11/30/tackling-online-abuse-and-disinformation-targeting-women-in-politics-pub-83331>

²⁶ Association for Progressive Communications (2015). *A Case Study from Kenya: Violence Against Women on the Campaign Trail in End Violence: Women's Rights and Safety Online*. https://genderit.org/sites/default/files/case_studies_ken4_1_0.pdf

²⁷ Women of Uganda Network (2021). *Not Just a Trend: Assessing the Types, Spread and the Impact of Online Gender-Based Violence in Uganda*. <https://wougnet.org/website/publications/publicationsingle/42>

²⁸ Kakande, A., Achieng, G., Iyer, N., Nyamwire, B., Nabulega, S., & Mwendwa, I. (2021). *Amplified Abuse: Report on Online Violence Against Women in the 2021 Uganda General Elections*. Pollicy. <https://pollicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Amplified-Abuse-Report-on-online-violence-during-the-2021-uganda-general-elections-summary.pdf>

²⁹ Posetti, J., Shabbir, N., Maynard, D., Bontcheva, K. & Aboulez, N., (2021). *The Chilling: Global Trends in Online Violence against Women Journalists – Research Discussion Paper*. Paris: UNESCO & ICFJ. https://www.icfj.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/The%20Chilling_POSETTI%20ET%20AL_FINAL.pdf

³⁰ Posetti, J., Shabbir, N. (2022). *The Chilling: A Global Study of Online Violence Against Women Journalists*. ICFJ & UNESCO. https://www.icfj.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/ICFJ_UNESCO_The%20Chilling_2022_1.pdf

³¹ Kamran, H. (2019). *Hostile Bytes: A Study of Online Violence Against Women Journalists*. <https://digitalrightsmonitor.pk/95-women-journalists-say-online-violence-has-an-impact-on-professional-choices-77-self-censor-study-finds/>

³² Posetti, J., Aboulez, N., Bontcheva, K., Harrison, J., Waisbond, S. (2020). *Online Violence Against Women Journalists: a Global Snapshot of Incidence and Impacts*. UNESCO. <https://www.icfj.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/UNESCO%20Online%20Violence%20Against%20Women%20Journalists%20-%20A%20Global%20Snapshot%20ec9pm.pdf>

³³ Ibid.

their families. Women journalists reporting in Iran and in the Iranian diaspora have been affected by photoshopped images of their faces on pornographic or nude images being shared to family members.³⁴ Similar cases of sexualized trolling have been documented against Lebanese journalists.³⁵ This can impact a woman's personal and professional reputation and result in smear campaigns against the individual and any associated persons, intended to cause familial and personal shame and humiliation.

Online campaigns can lead to physical danger: 20 percent of female journalists (119 women) in the UNESCO study had been attacked or abused offline in connection with online violence they had experienced, and a similar percentage had experienced offline harassment (i.e. stalking, physical assault and legal harassment) associated with online attacks.³⁶ When women are fearful about their private information being stolen or released by abusive people, it can limit their ability to express themselves in digital spaces or save private content via digital means – pushing women out of journalism altogether.³⁷

In the context of Covid-19 lockdowns many journalists became more dependent on technology, increasing their experience of online violence and online toxicity.³⁸ A study from African Women in Media found almost two-thirds of 100 women journalists in Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya experienced increased online violence at the onset of the pandemic.³⁹ Similar findings emerged from the ICFJ and Columbia University's Journalism and the Pandemic Project, with 16 percent of the 490 women journalists from 125 countries surveyed expressing that online harassment was "much worse" than before the pandemic.⁴⁰

Human Rights Defenders and Activists

In a UN Women Arab States study undertaken with 90 women activists and human rights defenders (WHRDs), 70 percent reported feeling unsafe online and 70 percent also reported receiving unwanted images or symbols with sexual content; 62 percent received insulting and/or hateful messages; and 58 percent reported inappropriate or unwelcome communications.⁴¹ Similarly, an ActionAid study on violence against women in the political space in Nigeria found that 70 percent of respondents who identified as women political activists (29 of 730 total respondents) had experienced online media harassment and hateful discourse targeted at their participation in politics.⁴² A survey conducted by the *Kvinna till Kvinna* Foundation of 66 women human rights defenders in 6 countries, including Iraq and the Democratic Republic of Congo, found 55 percent had faced threats on the internet, with 14 percent of them being death threats.⁴³

The use and reliance of social media and ICTs for advocacy and engagement work can make TFGBV feel relentless and widespread, directly impacting activists' personal wellbeing.⁴⁴ Pollicy's in-depth interviews with

³⁴ Article 19 (2021). "Online Harassment and Abuse Against Women Journalists in the Iranian Diaspora". *Committee to Protect Journalists*. <https://www.article19.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Iran-Harrasment-Briefing-1.pdf>

³⁵ Posetti, J., Shabbir, N. (2022). *The Chilling: A Global Study of Online Violence Against Women Journalists*. ICFJ & UNESCO. https://www.icfj.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/ICFJ_UNESCO_The%20Chilling_2022_1.pdf

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Dunn, S. (2020). *Technology-Facilitated Gender Based Violence: An Overview*. Centre for International Governance Innovation. https://www.cigionline.org/static/documents/documents/SaferInternet_Paper%20no%201_0.pdf

³⁸ Posetti, J., Shabbir, N. (2022). *The Chilling: A Global Study of Online Violence Against Women Journalists*. ICFJ & UNESCO. https://www.icfj.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/ICFJ_UNESCO_The%20Chilling_2022_1.pdf

³⁹ African Women in Media (2020). *The Impact: Covid-19 on East African Women Journalists*. African Women in Media and UNESCO.

⁴⁰ Posetti, J., Bell, E., Brown, P. (2020). *Journalism & the Pandemic: A Global Snapshot of Impacts*. ICFJ and Columbia University's TOW Center for Digital Journalism. https://www.icfj.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/Journalism%20and%20the%20Pandemic%20Project%20Report%201%202020_FINAL.pdf

⁴¹ UN Women (2021). *Violence Against Women in the Online Space: Insights From a Multi-Country Study in the Arab States*. UN Women.

https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Arab%20States/Attachments/Publications/2021/11/Summary_Keyfindings_Final_EN.pdf

⁴² Stand to End Rape (2022). *Vulnerable and Outside the Margins: From Challenges to Informed in 'A study on violence against women in the political space'*. ActionAid and The Women's Voice & Leadership Project. <https://standtoendrape.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Violence-Against-Women-in-Political-Spaces-1.pdf>

⁴³ Kvinna till Kvinna (2015). *The Hatred Against Women Human Rights Defenders – Online and Offline*. <https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Fem%20Defenders.pdf>

⁴⁴ Dunn, S. (2020). *Technology-Facilitated Gender Based Violence: An Overview*. Centre for International Governance Innovation.

11 WHRDs in the Greater Horn of Africa identified that WHRDs were unable to focus on their activism work when most of their time was used fighting online trolls, bullies, spies and tracking.⁴⁵ Plan International's survey of 14,000 girls and young women (including young female activists) in 22 countries found lower self-esteem or loss of confidence and mental or emotional stress were the most common negative effects of TFGBV.⁴⁶ Nearly a quarter of respondents reported feeling physically unsafe, with others having problems at school, problems with friends or family and in finding or keeping a job. Thirty-five percent of activists responding to the UN Women survey in the Arab States said they experienced a continuum between online and offline violence, with 6 percent reporting that their online violence continued offline.⁴⁷

The risks and impacts of TFGBV extend to activists' families too: the *Kvinna till Kvinna* Foundation has documented case studies of online and offline violence against women human rights defenders, including death and rape threats via text messages to activists' children in the Democratic Republic of Congo.⁴⁸ In Russia, feminist activists have described being the targets of online threats and slurs, including the posting of personal data and physical addresses of activists and their relatives, which has enabled physical stalking, posing threats to activists' lives and health.⁴⁹

Women's rights activists caution that heightened insecurity may discourage women from engaging politically due to the generally increased risks of GBV.⁵⁰ Self-censorship becomes a key protective strategy to ensure personal safety online, but it means a silencing of women activists in online spaces. In key informant interviews conducted by Plan International with 18 young activists across 16 countries (including Sudan, South Sudan, and Myanmar), 18 percent stopped posting content that expressed their opinions and 16 percent changed the way they expressed themselves in order to avoid harassment.⁵¹ WHRDs in the Greater Horn of Africa have reported limiting or not using social media in order to reduce their visibility because publicity makes them targets.⁵²

Good Practices Addressing TFGBV

Although this is a newly emerging area of work, there are several good practices that have been shown to benefit the safety and wellbeing of publicly visible women. A few of these are highlighted below, focusing specifically on work with different risk groups of publicly visible women. Importantly, all of these resources and approaches underscore the emotional burden and impact on wellbeing that TFGBV provokes, emphasizing the importance of survivor support.

These approaches and associated resources expand on the GBV AoR Learning Brief on [Strategies and Actions for Preventing and Responding to TFGBV](#), which details an overarching framework of action that includes supporting and empowering survivors; capacity-building; raising community awareness and education;

https://www.cigionline.org/static/documents/documents/SaferInternet_Paper%20no%201_0.pdf

⁴⁵ Mardiya, S.Y., & Iyer, N. (2022). *(In)Visible: The Digital Threats Muslim Women Human Rights Defenders Face in the Greater Horn of Africa*. Pollicy.

⁴⁶ Plan International (2020). *Free to be Online? Girls' and Young Women's Experiences of Online Harassment*. Surrey: Plan International. <https://plan-international.org/uploads/2022/02/sotwgr2020-commsreport-en-2.pdf>

⁴⁷ UN Women (2021). *Violence Against Women in the Online Space: Insights From a Multi-Country Study in the Arab States*. UN Women.

https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Arab%20States/Attachments/Publications/2021/11/Summary_Keyfindings_Final_FN.pdf

⁴⁸ Kvinna till Kvinna (2015). *The Hatred Against Women Human Rights Defenders – Online and Offline*.

<https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Fem%20Defenders.pdf>

⁴⁹ Merkuryeva, K. & Coalson, R. (2021). 'We are Coming For You': Russian Feminists Face Intimidation Campaign Online. Radio Free Europe. Radio Liberty. <https://www.rferl.org/a/russian-feminists-face-intimidation-campaign-online/31136971.html>

⁵⁰ Brechenmacher, S. & Hubbard, C., (2020). *How the Coronavirus Risks Exacerbating Women's Political Exclusion*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/11/17/how-coronavirus-risks-exacerbating-women-s-political-exclusion-pub-83213>

⁵¹ Plan International (2020). *Free to be Online? Girls' and Young Women's Experiences of Online Harassment*. Surrey: Plan International. <https://plan-international.org/uploads/2022/02/sotwgr2020-commsreport-en-2.pdf>

⁵² Mardiya, S.Y., & Iyer, N. (2022). *(In)Visible: The Digital Threats Muslim Women Human Rights Defenders Face in the Greater Horn of Africa*. Pollicy.

introducing legislative measures; and undertaking advocacy and action.⁵³

Politicians and Parliamentarians

Rather than seeing the offline and online worlds as separate spaces, the UN Special Rapporteur's report on 'Violence Against Women, its Causes and Consequences on Online Violence Against Women and Girls' has recognized each world must be viewed along the same continuum of misogyny, patriarchal norms and GBV.⁵⁴ States hold the responsibility to develop legislative, policy and regulatory frameworks to address violence along this continuum. However, the process of seeking legal protection or recourse for TFGBV through law enforcement, criminal or civil courts can revictimize survivors and expose them to further shame or blame, for example through further public exposure of intimate images.⁵⁵ Women politicians in particular can be put in the unique position of driving legislative change to address TFGBV, while also being at risk for it, including at risk for violence because of their efforts to reduce that violence.

Given the unique position held by women politicians, it is recommended they take preemptive action to strengthen their digital security, have access to resources on digital security, and reduce vulnerability to unwanted information sharing. The [Digital Resilience Toolkit for Women in Politics](#) produced by #ShePersisted is committed to tackling gendered disinformation against women in politics, and provides simple and clear instructions on how to report TFGBV, examples of effective push back, and insight on whether or not to respond.⁵⁶

Key guidance also encourages politically active women to fight back against the misogyny of TFGBV by raising awareness of digital platforms' failures. For instance, the business model and algorithmic design of social media platforms are known to amplify threats, resulting in the use of digital technologies as tools to persecute, control, silence and surveil publicly visible women. Research by Amnesty International has shown that social media platforms in particular are failing in their responsibility to protect women's rights online by "inadequately investigating and responding to reports of violence and abuse in a transparent manner."⁵⁷ Companies tend to focus their resources on the United States and Europe, resulting in a serious enforcement gap against abusive content between the Global North and South.⁵⁸ Raising and maintaining societal awareness of these oversights can support campaign efforts to improve platforms' reporting mechanisms and ensure consistent application and better response to complaints of TFGBV.

Efforts to document, raise awareness and campaign against TFGBV of publicly visible women is another strategy to increase public understanding that online behavior is linked to patriarchal norms and gender discrimination. Online campaigns can demonstrate solidarity with and advocate for social movements, where protests are commonly referred to by their 'hashtags' — the Twitter convention for marking a topic.⁵⁹ The 2017 [#BetterThanThis](#) campaign in Kenya brought attention to the state of violence against women in Kenya's

⁵³ GBV AoR Helpdesk (2021). *Learning Brief 2: Strategies and Action for Preventing and Responding to Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence*. <https://www.sddirect.org.uk/resource/learning-brief-2-strategies-and-action-preventing-and-responding-technology-facilitated>

⁵⁴ Simonovic, D. (2018). *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Its Causes and Consequences on Online Violence Against Women and Girls from a Human Rights Perspective*. UN Human Rights Council.

⁵⁵ GBV AoR Helpdesk (2021). *Learning Brief 2: Strategies and Action for Preventing and Responding to Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence*. <https://www.sddirect.org.uk/resource/learning-brief-2-strategies-and-action-preventing-and-responding-technology-facilitated>

⁵⁶ Wilfore, K. (2022). *A Digital Resilience Toolkit for Women in Politics*. #ShePersisted. https://secureservercdn.net/160.153.137.5/r2g.26a.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/ShePersisted_Digital_Resilience_Toolkit.pdf

⁵⁷ Amnesty International (2018). *Toxic Twitter*. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2018/03/online-violence-against-women-chapter-1-1/>

⁵⁸ World Wide Web Foundation (2020). *Activists and Tech Companies Met to Talk about Online Violence Against Women: Here are the Takeaways*. <https://webfoundation.org/2020/08/activists-and-tech-companies-met-to-talk-about-online-violence-against-women-here-are-the-takeaways/>

⁵⁹ Tufekci, Z. (2017). *Twitter and Tear Gas: How Social Media Changed Protest Forever*. Wired. <https://www.wired.com/2017/05/twitter-tear-gas-protest-age-social-media/>

electoral process and challenged Kenyans to “do better” in the fight against TFGBV.⁶⁰

Journalists

TFGBV against women journalists and media workers can sow disinformation, intimidate and discredit the journalist and the news media, and lead to significant professional harm.⁶¹ Newsrooms have a responsibility to be aware of TFGBV and these impacts, and should implement policies and best practices to protect their employees. The International Women’s Media Foundation (IWMF) is dedicated to promoting a culture of change when it comes to tackling online violence. Their guidance suggests that there is no one-size-fits-all solution for newsrooms when it comes to policies for managing safety; newsrooms must work with their staff to design and implement effective policies that work for the organization’s size and management structure. Beyond raising awareness of TFGBV, newsrooms can measure the scale of the issue and better understand barriers to reporting by anonymously surveying staff’s experience of online violence. They can also help staff secure their online data; stringently monitor risks to and protect staff data; and develop reporting and escalation policies. IWMF guidance on protecting newsrooms and journalists against online violence includes templates and checklists that can be referenced and adapted for this.⁶²

Not all publicly visible women experience TFGBV in the same way; while more prominent journalists and politicians often receive more abuse, they may also have better access to resources like digital training, or media and legal support. Freelance journalists and grassroots activists are less likely to have access to these same resources.⁶³ The [Coalition Against Online Violence](#) is a collection of global organizations seeking to find better solutions for women journalists facing online abuse, harassment and other forms of digital attack. Their website compiles a wide variety of resources for journalists, newsrooms and allies related to digital security and online violence, including psychosocial trauma response and the latest digital safety guides.⁶⁴

Human Rights Defenders and Activists

Women human rights defenders (WHRDs) and activists need support to be able to protect themselves in the digital environment. Various initiatives provide training in online safety focusing on increasing activists’ knowledge and capacity around reporting incidents of TFGBV to the platform of concern; knowing the laws that can provide support; reporting the case to judicial authorities; taking control over technology settings; and promoting dialogue within communities. One example is [Digital First Aid Kit](#), created by the Digital Defenders Partnership, which focuses on providing advice and information about the most common threats and attacks online. The Kit offers a set of self-diagnostic tools for individuals facing attacks, as well as guidelines for digital first responders to assist a person under threat, including how to preserve evidence if users want to compile a legal case.⁶⁵

While the majority of these resources also rely on digital platforms to raise awareness of TFGBV, some providers have created more traditional tools to engage with WHRDs and their communities. For example, Acosco.online has produced a board game to help schools and workplaces identify forms of TFGBV, including the relevant terminology, i.e. sextortion, doxing and trolling.⁶⁶ By discussing a scenario – i.e. dissemination of

⁶⁰ International Foundation for Electoral Systems, (2017). “Kenyans Say “We are #BetterThanThis,” Aiming to support women’s Participation in Elections.” <https://www.ifes.org/news/kenyans-say-we-are-betterthanthis-aiming-support-womens-participation-elections>

⁶¹ International Women’s Media Foundation (2022). *A Guide to Protecting Newsrooms and Journalists Against Online Violence*. International Women’s Media Foundation. <https://www.iwmf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/IWMF-Guide-to-Protecting-Newsrooms-And-Journalists-Against-Online-Violence.pdf>

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ World Wide Web Foundation (2020). *The Impact of Online Gender-Based Violence on Women in Public Life*. <https://webfoundation.org/2020/11/the-impact-of-online-gender-based-violence-on-women-in-public-life/>

⁶⁴ Coalition Against Online Violence (n.d.) *Online Violence Response Hub*. <https://onlineviolenceresponsehub.org/resources>

⁶⁵ Digital Defenders Partnership (n.d.) *Digital First Aid Kit*. RaReNet and CiviCERT. <https://digitalfirstaid.org/en/index.html>

⁶⁶ Sextortion occurs when an individual has, or claims to have, a sexual image of another person and uses it to coerce a person into doing something they do not want to do. Doxing is the non-consensual disclosure of personal information involving the public release of an individual’s private, personal, sensitive information, such as home and email addresses, phone numbers, employer and family

intimate content without consent – users become familiar with the reporting channels available and what legal structures can be accessed.⁶⁷

Feedback from WHRDs in the Greater Horn of Africa has shown that most digital security work and training can be too technical, creating challenges for WHRDs working at the local level to access, disseminate, or teach others about mitigating risks for TFGBV.⁶⁸ Guidance on digital security must be informed (and, ideally, co-created with) women in these publicly visible roles and illustrate understanding of the context in which insecurity and threats are carried out and their effects.⁶⁹

Conclusions and Key Recommendations

In contexts where women’s participation in public life is already undermined or at risk, technology has emerged as a space for connection, networking, engagement and activism. Yet technology is also changing women and girls’ experience of violence. Publicly visible women are particularly at risk of being strategically targeted through digital platforms and ICTs. This poses a threat to their physical safety and mental wellbeing, a threat which may extend to their family members. While TFGBV is understudied in humanitarian settings, it is highly likely that it occurs at similar or higher rates to non-emergency settings given the increased vulnerabilities and risks facing women and girls created by conflict, disaster and displacement.⁷⁰

GBV actors working in emergencies should be aware of these growing risks in order to more effectively anticipate, prevent and respond to them. Some core actions to improve attention to TFGBV include:

- **Integrating the issue of TFGBV in anti-GBV legislation, policies and programs.** This means ensuring civil, criminal laws, regulations and policies regulate technology companies and hold offenders accountable. Programmatically, integrating TFGBV into GBV service providers’ protocols and guidelines ensures that all forms of GBV are considered and addressed.
- **Researching the risks and impacts of TFGBV in humanitarian settings.** It is particularly important to understand the nature and scale of the problem as it is experienced by specific groups, such as female politicians, journalists and women human rights defenders, in order to inform contextually relevant strategies for preventing and responding to TFGBV.
- **Supporting efforts to raise awareness of TFGBV among service users and providers and encourage capacity building on digital security.** Helping GBV providers enhance their understanding of issues of digital protection and reporting, as well as familiarity with ICT and digital evidence, can improve their ability to support survivors.
- **Ensuring survivor-centered response services are accessible to survivors of TFGBV,** and survivor-centered support is provided for any reporting decisions. Include survivors in feminist-informed, participatory approaches to designing laws, strengthening response mechanisms and developing capacity-building and other training materials.
- **Undertaking online campaigns and collective action to bring visibility to TFGBV and prevent it.** This might address issues such as tech platforms improving their reporting mechanisms to ensure consistent application and better response to complaints of TFGBV, and in a wider number of languages than currently practiced.

member’s contact information, or photos of their children and the school they attend with the purpose of locating and causing physical harm. Trolling is when someone posts or comments online to ‘bait’ people, which means deliberately provoking an argument or emotional reaction.

⁶⁷ Acoso.Online (2022). *Cinco claves para denunciar y resistir su publicación*. <https://acoso.online/>

⁶⁸ Mardiya, S.Y., & Iyer, N. (2022). *(In)Visible: The Digital Threats Muslim Women Human Rights Defenders Face in the Greater Horn of Africa*. Policy.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ GBV AoR Helpdesk (2021). *Learning Brief 1: Understanding Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence*.

<https://www.sddirect.org.uk/resource/learning-brief-1-understanding-technology-facilitated-gender-based-violence>

Additional Resources

General

- [DeStalk](#) has created a Toolkit and E-learning course for GBV service providers to learn how to recognize online violence and integrate it into their protocols and guidelines.⁷¹
- [DocuSafe](#) is a free app that helps survivors collect, store, and share evidence of abuse, such as domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, online harassment, and dating violence.⁷²
- Based on research in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Mexico, Pakistan and the Philippines, the Association for Progressive Communications has produced relevant guidance on [Domestic Legal Remedies for Cases of Technology-Related Violence Against Women](#).⁷³
- The [DIY Guide to Feminist Cybersecurity](#) guides internet feminists on how to exist safely in digital spaces, featuring detailed instructions for increasing security measures, ensuring privacy online, and advanced anonymity for users' laptops, desktops and phones. Many of the suggestions are invaluable for journalists, activists and public figures.⁷⁴

Politicians and Parliamentarians

- Glitch's [Dealing with Digital Threats to Democracy toolkit](#) is designed to help women in public life be safer online. Based on data from the UK, the recommendations of practicing digital self-defense and self-care; becoming an online active bystander; and keeping supporters safe online can extend to political activists, campaigners or elected officials globally.⁷⁵
- The [Think10 tool](#) is designed to provide women who participate in politics with a confidential way to assess their individual security and make a plan to increase their safety, online and offline. Available in several languages, users are asked to answer a questionnaire, including questions on the country they are located in, national political activities (i.e. political uprising or violent conflict), legislative system and community norms.⁷⁶
- The National Democratic Institute launched a global [#NotTheCost](#) campaign to stop violence against women in politics, declaring that violence should not be the cost of women's political participation, including TFGBV.⁷⁷

Journalists

- International Women's Media Foundation have produced a [Mental Health Guide for Journalists Facing Online Violence](#), addressing the culture of silence around online violence and mental health and encouraging users to get long-term practical help.⁷⁸
- Women of Uganda Networks' position paper on [Promoting Online Safety for Female Journalists](#) compiles key policy recommendations to the Parliament of Uganda, the Uganda Communications Commission, the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Judiciary, and the Police Force.⁷⁹

⁷¹ <https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/destalk>

⁷² <https://www.techsafety.org/docusafe>

⁷³ https://genderit.org/sites/default/files/flow_domestic_legal_remedies_0.pdf

⁷⁴ <https://hackblossom.org/cybersecurity/>

⁷⁵ <https://glitchcharity.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Dealing-with-digital-threats-to-democracy-PDF-FINAL-1-1.pdf-1.pdf>

⁷⁶ <https://think10.demcloud.org/>

⁷⁷ <https://www.ndi.org/publications/nottthecost-stopping-violence-against-women-politics-renewed-call-action>

⁷⁸ https://www.iwmf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Final_IWMF-Mental-health-guide.pdf

⁷⁹ https://wougnet.org/assets/portal/wougnetwebsite/publications/2021-11-15/POSTION_PAPER-Promoting_Online_Safety_for_Female_Journalists_in_Uganda.pdf

- The International Association of Women in Radio and Television (IAWRT) produced a concrete and practical [handbook for women journalists](#) working in war and conflict, containing advice and recommendations on security and safety, including for ICTs and social media.⁸⁰
- Tadwein developed a [Digital Security Training Manual](#) in Arabic for female journalists and activists who had experienced violence online, the material covers how to establish secure accounts with updated privacy settings, understand anti-viruses and malware, and how to protect social media accounts.⁸¹
- The [Coalition Against Online Violence Response Hub](#) provides emergency digital security or psychosocial/ mental health assistance because of an incident linked to online violence. A complete list of organizations and resources helps users find the support they need, with some services specifically catered to women journalists.⁸²
- [TrollBusters.com](#) is described as 'a just-in-time rescue service for women writers and journalists experiencing online harassment.' Founded by Michelle Ferrier, an African-American journalist and columnist, the service helps users assess threats and help users determine their next steps through personal endorsements, coaching and reputation repair services.⁸³

Human Rights Defenders and Activists

- [End Cyber Abuse](#), a global collective of lawyers and human rights activists working to tackle TFGBV, has mapped out different country's laws on image-based sexual abuse worldwide, including Bangladesh and Pakistan. The country factsheets identify civil remedies available to survivors, gaps in laws or their implementation, and good examples of reform.⁸⁴
- The [Defender Tools](#) by Protection International can be filtered by theme, including Women Human Rights Defenders, and cover counter-surveillance, self-protection strategies and computer security guides.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ <https://iawrt.org/iawrt/iawrt-safety-handbook-for-women-journalist-2nd-ed/>

⁸¹ ⁸¹ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/11irPk9kPlc49lv961JXtt7GPxzoOUkNd/view>

⁸² Coalition Against Online Violence (n.d.) *Online Violence Response Hub*. <https://onlineviolenceresponsehub.org/resources>

⁸³ <http://www.trollbusters.com/>

⁸⁴ <http://endcyberabuse.org/country-factsheets/>

⁸⁵ <https://www.protectioninternational.org/en/defendertools>

Bibliography

Acoso.Online (2022). "Cinco claves para denunciar y resistir su publicación." <https://acoso.online/>

Ahlenback, V., Clugston, N. & Vlahakis, M. (2022). "Issues Paper: Global Prevalence of Online VAWG. What Works Violence against Women and Children Helpdesk." *London: Social Development Direct.*

Amnesty International (2018). "Toxic Twitter". *Amnesty International.*
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2018/03/online-violence-against-women-chapter-1-1/>

Amnesty International (2018). "Troll Patrol Findings". *Amnesty International.*
<https://decoders.amnesty.org/projects/troll-patrol/findings>

Amnesty International India. (2020). "Troll Patrol India: Exposing Online Abuse Faced by Women Politicians in India". *Amnesty International.* [https://decoders.blob.core.windows.net/troll-patrol-india-findings/Amnesty International India Troll Patrol India Findings 2020.pdf](https://decoders.blob.core.windows.net/troll-patrol-india-findings/Amnesty%20International%20India%20Troll%20Patrol%20India%20Findings%202020.pdf)

Article 19 (2021). "Online Harassment and Abuse Against Women Journalists in the Iranian Diaspora". *Committee to Protect Journalists.* <https://www.article19.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Iran-Harrassment-Briefing-1.pdf>

Association for Progressive Communications (2015). *A Case Study from Kenya: Violence Against Women on the Campaign Trail in End Violence: Women's Rights and Safety Online.*
https://genderit.org/sites/default/files/case_studies_ken4_1_0.pdf

Brechenmacher, S. & Hubbard, C., (2020). "How the Coronavirus Risks Exacerbating Women's Political Exclusion". *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.* <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/11/17/how-coronavirus-risks-exacerbating-women-s-political-exclusion-pub-83213>

Brudvig, I., Chair. C., van der Wilk, A. (2020). "Covid-19 and Increasing Domestic Violence Against Women: the Pandemic of Online Gender-Based Violence." [http://webfoundation.org/docs/\(2020\)/07/WWWf-Submission-COVID-19-and-the-increase-of-domestic-violence-against-women-1.pdf](http://webfoundation.org/docs/(2020)/07/WWWf-Submission-COVID-19-and-the-increase-of-domestic-violence-against-women-1.pdf)

Coalition Against Online Violence (n.d.) "Online Violence Response Hub."
<https://onlineviolenceresponsehub.org/resources>

DeStalk (2022). "Detect and Stop Stalkware and Cyberviolence Against Women". <https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/destalk>

Di Meco, L. & Brechnemacher, S. (2020). "Tackling Online Abuse and Disinformation Targeting Women in Politics." *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.*
[https://carnegieendowment.org/\(2020\)/11/30/tackling-online-abuse-and-disinformation-targeting-women-in-politics-pub-83331](https://carnegieendowment.org/(2020)/11/30/tackling-online-abuse-and-disinformation-targeting-women-in-politics-pub-83331)

Di Meco, L. (2020). "Online Threats to Women's Political Participation and the Need for a Multi-Stakeholder Cohesive Approach to Address Them."
https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/65/EGM/Di%20Meco_Online%20Threats_EP8_EGMCSW65.pdf

Digital Defenders (n.d.). "Digital First Aid Kit." *RaReNet and CiviCERT*. <https://digitalfirstaid.org/en/index.html>

Dunn, S. (2020). "Technology-Facilitated Gender Based Violence: An Overview". *Centre for International Governance Innovation*.

https://www.cigionline.org/static/documents/documents/SaferInternet_Paper%20no%201_0.pdf

Economist Intelligence Unit (2020). "Measuring the Prevalence of Online Violence Against Women".

<https://onlineviolencewomen.eiu.com/>

EU DisinfoLab (2021). "Gender-Based Disinformation: Advancing Our Understanding and Response."

<https://www.disinfo.eu/publications/gender-based-disinformation-advancing-our-understanding-and-response/>

GBV AoR Helpdesk (2021). "Learning Brief 1: Understanding Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based

Violence". <https://www.sddirect.org.uk/resource/learning-brief-1-understanding-technology-facilitated-gender-based-violence>

GBV AoR Helpdesk (2021). "Learning Brief 2: Strategies and Action for Preventing and Responding to

Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence". <https://www.sddirect.org.uk/resource/learning-brief-2-strategies-and-action-preventing-and-responding-technology-facilitated>

Glitch (n.d.) "Dealing with Digital Threats to Democracy." <https://glitchcharity.co.uk/resources/>

Hackblossom (n.d.) "A DIY Guide to Feminist Cybersecurity." <https://hackblossom.org/cybersecurity/>

International Association of Women in Radio and Television (2017). "Safety Handbook for Women

Journalists." <https://iawrt.org/iawrt/iawrt-safety-handbook-for-women-journalist-2nd-ed/>

International Foundation for Electoral Systems, (2017). "Kenyans Say "We are #BetterThanThis," Aiming to

support women's Participation in Elections." <https://www.ifes.org/news/kenyans-say-we-are-betterthanthis-aiming-support-womens-participation-elections>

Inter-Parliamentary Union (2016). "Sexism, harassment and violence against women parliamentarians."

<http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/issuesbrief-e.pdf>

International Women's Media Foundation (2022). "A Guide to Protecting Newsrooms and Journalists Against

Online Violence". *International Women's Media Foundation*. <https://www.iwmf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/IWMF-Guide-to-Protecting-Newsrooms-And-Journalists-Against-Online-Violence.pdf>

International Women's Media Foundation (2022). "A Mental Health Guide for Journalists Facing Online

Violence". *International Women's Media Foundation*. https://www.iwmf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Final_IWMF-Mental-health-guide.pdf

Iyer, N., Nyamwire, B., & Nabulega, S. (2020). "Alternate Realities. Alternate Internets: African Feminist

Research for a Feminist Internet". *Pollicy*. <https://ogbv.pollicy.org/report.pdf>

Kakande, A., Achieng, G., Iyer, N., Nyamwire, B., Nabulega, S., & Mwendwa, I. (2021). "Amplified Abuse:

Report on Online Violence Against Women in the 2021 Uganda General Elections." [https://pollicy.org/wp-content/uploads/\(2021\)/12/Amplified-](https://pollicy.org/wp-content/uploads/(2021)/12/Amplified-Abuse_Report_on_online_violence_during_the_(2021)_uganda_general_elections_summary.pdf)

[Abuse_Report_on_online_violence_during_the_\(2021\)_uganda_general_elections_summary.pdf](https://pollicy.org/wp-content/uploads/(2021)/12/Amplified-Abuse_Report_on_online_violence_during_the_(2021)_uganda_general_elections_summary.pdf)

- Kalemera, A. (2019). "Building Digital Literacy and Security Capacity of Women Refugees in Uganda." <https://cipesa.org/2019/12/building-digital-literacy-and-security-capacity-of-women-refugees-in-uganda/>
- Kamran, H. (2019). "Hostile Bytes: A Study of Online Violence Against Women Journalists". *Digital Rights Monitor*. <https://www.digitalrightsmonitor.pk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Hostile-Bytes.pdf>
- Kvinna till Kvinna (2015). "The Hatred Against Women Human Rights Defenders – Online and Offline". *Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation*. <https://www.peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/Fem%20Defenders.pdf>
- Lamensch, M. (2022). "Women Activists Lead the Struggle Against Online Gender-Based Violence Worldwide." *Centre for International Governance Innovation*. <https://www.cigionline.org/articles/women-activists-lead-the-struggle-against-online-gender-based-violence-worldwide/>
- Mardiya, S.Y., & Iyer, N. (2022). "(In)Visible: The Digital Threats Muslim Women Human Rights Defenders Face in the Greater Horn of Africa." *Pollicy*.
- Merkuryeva, K. & Coalson, R. (2021). "'We are Coming For You': Russian Feminists Face Intimidation Campaign Online." *Radio Free Europe. Radio Liberty*. <https://www.rferl.org/a/russian-feminists-face-intimidation-campaign-online/31136971.html>
- National Democratic Institute (2022). "Think10". <https://think10.demcloud.org/>
- National Democratic Institute (2021). "#NotTheCost - Stopping Violence Against Women in Politics: A Renewed Call to Action". <https://www.ndi.org/publications/notthecost-stopping-violence-against-women-politics-renewed-call-action>
- National Network to End Domestic Violence (n.d.). "DocueSAFE". <https://www.techsafety.org/docusafe>
- Protection International (n.d.). "Defender Tools." <https://www.protectioninternational.org/en/defendertools>
- Plan International (2020). "Free to be Online? Girls' and Young Women's Experiences of Online Harassment". *Surrey: Plan International*. <https://plan-international.org/uploads/2022/02/sotwgr2020-commsreport-en-2.pdf>
- Posetti, J., Aboulez, N., Bontcheva, K., Harrison, J., Waisbond, S. (2020). "Online Violence Against Women Journalists: a Global Snapshot of Incidence and Impacts". *UNESCO*. <https://www.icfj.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/UNESCO%20Online%20Violence%20Against%20Women%20Journalists%20-%20A%20Global%20Snapshot%20Dec9pm.pdf>
- Posetti, J., Bell, E., Brown, P. (2020). "Journalism & the Pandemic: A Global Snapshot of Impacts". *ICFJ and Columbia University's TOW Center for Digital Journalism*. https://www.icfj.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/Journalism%20and%20the%20Pandemic%20Project%20Report%201%202020_FINAL.pdf
- Posetti, J., Shabbir, N. (2022). "The Chilling: A Global Study of Online Violence Against Women Journalists". *ICFJ & UNESCO*. https://www.icfj.org/sites/default/files/2022-11/ICFJ_UNESCO_The%20Chilling_2022_1.pdf
- Posetti, J., Shabbir, N., Maynard, D., Bontcheva, K. & Aboulez, N., (2021). "The Chilling: Global Trends in

Online Violence against Women Journalists – Research Discussion Paper”. *Paris: UNESCO*.
https://www.icfj.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/The%20Chilling_POSETTI%20ET%20AL_FINAL.pdf

Sessa, M.G. (2020). “Misogyny and Misinformation: An Analysis of Gendered Disinformation Tactics During the COVID-19 Pandemic.” *EU Disinfo Lab*. <https://www.disinfo.eu/publications/misogyny-and-misinformation:-an-analysis-of-gendered-disinformation-tactics-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

Simonovic, D. (2018). “Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Its Causes and Consequences on Online Violence Against Women and Girls from a Human Rights Perspective”. *UN Human Rights Council*.

Stand to End Rape (2022). “Vulnerable and Outside the Margins: From Challenges to Informed in ‘A study on violence against women in the political space’”. *ActionAid and The Women’s Voice & Leadership Project*.
<https://standtoendrape.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Violence-Against-Women-in-Political-Spaces-1.pdf>

Tadwein (2017). “Digital Security Training Manual.” <https://tadwein.org/>

Tufekci, Z. (2017). “Twitter and Tear Gas: How Social Media Changed Protest Forever”. *Wired*.
<https://www.wired.com/2017/05/twitter-tear-gas-protest-age-social-media/>

UN Women (2020). “Online Violence Against Women in Asia: A Multi-Country Study”. *UN Women*.
[https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20ESEAsia/Docs/Publications/\(2020\)/12/a-p-ICT-VAWG-report-7Dec20.pdf](https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20ESEAsia/Docs/Publications/(2020)/12/a-p-ICT-VAWG-report-7Dec20.pdf)

UN Women (2021). “Violence Against Women in the Online Space: Insights From a Multi-Country Study in the Arab States”. *UN Women*.
https://arabstates.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Arab%20States/Attachments/Publications/2021/11/Summary_Keyfindings_Final_EN.pdf

UNFPA (2021). “Making All Spaces Safe: Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence”. *UNFPA*.
https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/unfpa-tfgbv-making_all_spaces_safe.pdf

Wilfore, K. (2022). “A Digital Resilience Toolkit for Women In Politics: Persisting and Fighting Back Against Misogyny and Digital Platforms’ Failures.” *#ShePersisted*.
[https://secureservercdn.net/160.153.137.5/r2g.26a.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/\(2022\)/06/ShePersisted_Digital_Resilience_Toolkit.pdf](https://secureservercdn.net/160.153.137.5/r2g.26a.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/(2022)/06/ShePersisted_Digital_Resilience_Toolkit.pdf)

Women of Uganda Network (2021). “Promoting Online Safety for Female Journalists in Uganda”. *WOUGNET*. [https://wougnet.org/assets/portal/wougnetwebsite/publications/\(2021\)-11-15/POSTION_PAPER-Promoting_Online_Safety_for_Female_Journalists_in_Uganda.pdf](https://wougnet.org/assets/portal/wougnetwebsite/publications/(2021)-11-15/POSTION_PAPER-Promoting_Online_Safety_for_Female_Journalists_in_Uganda.pdf)

Women of Uganda Network (2021). “Not Just a Trend: Assessing the Types, Spread and the Impact of Online Gender-Based Violence in Uganda”. *WOUGNET*.
<https://wougnet.org/website/publications/publicationsingle/42>

World Wide Web Foundation (2020). “Activists and Tech Companies Met to Talk about Online Violence Against Women: Here are the Takeaways”. *World Wide Web Foundation*.
<https://webfoundation.org/2020/08/activists-and-tech-companies-met-to-talk-about-online-violence-against-women-here-are-the-takeaways/>

World Wide Web Foundation (2020). "The Impact of Online Gender-Based Violence on Women in Public Life". *World Wide Web Foundation*. <https://webfoundation.org/2020/11/the-impact-of-online-gender-based-violence-on-women-in-public-life/>

World Wide Web Foundation (2020). "The online crisis facing women and girls threatens global progress on gender equality". *World Wide Web Foundation*. <https://webfoundation.org/2020/03/the-online-crisis-facing-women-and-girls-threatens-global-progress-on-gender-equality/>

The GBV AoR Help Desk

The GBVAoR Helpdesk is a unique research and technical advice service which aims to inspire and support humanitarian actors to help prevent, mitigate and respond to violence against women and girls in emergencies. Managed by Social Development Direct, the GBV AoR Helpdesk is staffed by a global roster of senior Gender and GBV Experts who are on standby to help guide frontline humanitarian actors on GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response measures in line with international standards, guidelines and best practice. Views or opinions expressed in GBV AoR Helpdesk Products do not necessarily reflect those of all members of the GBV AoR, nor of all the experts of SDDirect's Helpdesk roster.

The GBV AoR Helpdesk

You can contact the GBV AoR Helpdesk by emailing us at: enquiries@gbviehelpdesk.org.uk

The Helpdesk is available 09.00 to 17.30 GMT Monday to Friday.

Our services are free and confidential.