



CONCEPT NOTE

National Dialogue on strategies of mitigating Technology Assisted Violence Against women in Kenya

Background

In recent years, there has been a steady growth in the number of online users across the world, with internet penetration in East African Countries such as Kenya estimated to be at 67%, which translates to more than 31 million users, according to recent reports by the Communications Authority of Kenya¹. This therefore means that two in every three users have internet access, which translates to a raft of socio-economic opportunities. However, the proliferation of new technologies in recent years has also seen the evolution of various social injustices, including women on the web who continue to face disproportionate levels of online violence. Technology-Assisted Violence against Women (TAVAW) has been on the rise and it manifests itself in different ways such as cyber bullying, trolling, cyber stalking, defamatory remarks, sexual abuse and vitriol on personal characters, identity theft, and hacking amongst other offences.

The effects of TAVAW are quite dire and include loss of privacy, reinforced prejudice, psychological and emotional harm, reputational damage which can subsequently lead to economic loss and in some instances sexual and other forms of physical violence as well as hampering women's participation in politics and public discourse. In most cases, the motivation behind these malpractices is largely anchored on the sociological norms and intent to publicly shame women into self-censorship or withdrawal from online platforms. As a result, widening the digital gender gap within different jurisdictions.

¹https://ca.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/ICT_Access_Gap_Study.pdf

The digital space holds the promise of achieving stronger and more diverse citizen participation in politics. Despite existing data gaps, there is a growing evidence of the need to strategize on how to mitigate misogynistic behavior online.

To this end, and in line with the 16 days of activism agenda ARTICLE 19 Eastern Africa and the Kenya ICT Action Network(KICTANet) seek to provide a platform for women in: media, politics, tech, academia as well as broadly categorized women in the public domain; To deliberate on strategies of mitigating and addressing technology assisted violence against women; collaborate on resilience mechanisms of counter speech through digital advocacy and campaigns alongside pushing for policy reforms with tech companies, governments, as well as other strategic actors.

Objectives of the Engagement

The workshop will be conducted in a consultative and engaging approach to achieve the following objectives:

- Provide a platform for strengthening policies and regulations that seek to protect women's rights online including their security and literacy to increase women's decision making and influence in governance and socio-economic spheres.
- Highlight and build consensus on the findings on the study on tech-assisted violence against women in Kenya and how the trends replicate within the region.
- Provide a platform for different actors to share best practices in advocating for implementation of the laws.

Date

11th November 2018 (9.00am-5.00pm)

Venue

Radisson Blu Nairobi