

# Unmasking The Trolls: Research on Online Gender-Based Violence in Kenya



## Imprint

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# List of Abbreviations

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<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>CA</b>	Communications Authority of Kenya
<b>CREAW</b>	Kenya Center for Rights Education and Awareness – Kenya
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-based violence
<b>GNC</b>	Gender nonconforming
<b>KICTANet</b>	Kenya ICT Action Network
<b>OGBV</b>	Online Gender-Based Violence
<b>PWDs</b>	Persons Living with Disability

# Glossary of Terms

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**Doxxing:** sharing of personal information without one's consent. The information may include physical or email addresses, full names, and the identity of family members or loved ones. <sup>1.</sup>

**Cyberflashing:** the sending of unsolicited sexually explicit images or videos, particularly relating to genitalia. <sup>2.</sup>

**Hate speech:** threatening, abusive, or insulting content that is spread with the intention to provoke ethnic hatred. <sup>3.</sup>

**Identity theft/impersonation:** the appropriation of someone's identity or information so as to pretend

to be them. This can occur through the creation of fake social media accounts in the name of the person being impersonated <sup>4.</sup>

**LGBTQ+:** a term encompassing individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning or other sexual identity.

The term is fluid as it may be expressed differently for example as 'LGBQ', 'LGBTQI', or 'LGBTQIA+' (to include individuals who are intersex or asexual) <sup>7,8.</sup> This study uses **LGBTQ+**.

**Troll:** the perpetrator of any form of OGBV. <sup>9.</sup>

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3. National Cohesion and Integration Commission. (n.d.). Kenya's national action plan against hate speech.

[https://cohesion.or.ke/images/docs/downloads/Kenyas\\_National\\_Action\\_Plan\\_Against\\_Hate\\_Speech.pdf](https://cohesion.or.ke/images/docs/downloads/Kenyas_National_Action_Plan_Against_Hate_Speech.pdf)

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5. galck+ (n.d.). The Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Kenya is the national SOGIE umbrella body, representing LGBQ voices across Kenya.

<https://www.galck.org/about/>

6. Kenya Law. (2019). Petition 16 of 2019 <http://kenyalaw.org/caselaw/cases/view/252450/>

7. Cherry, K. (2023, June 2). What does LGBTQIA+ mean?

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8. Stonewall.org. (n.d.). List of LGBTQ+ terms. <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/list-lgbtq-terms>

9. Amnesty International. (2021). What is online violence and abuse against women? <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2017/11/what-is-online-violence-and-abuse-against-women/#:~:text=Taking%20many%20different%20forms%2C,wants%20to%20kill%20you.%E2%80%9D&text=Taking%20many,kill%20you.%E2%80%9D&text=different%20forms%2C,wants%20to>

# Executive summary

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**Online gender-based violence (OGBV) is on the rise across the world. Much of OGBV research focuses on high-visibility individuals – such as journalists and politicians – but OGBV also affects traditionally marginalised communities such as persons with disabilities (PWDs) and LGBTQ+ people.**

This study sought to establish the nature and prevalence of OGBV in rural and urban Kenya, its impact, and the effectiveness of the available legal and regulatory framework in the country.

The study data was drawn from responses to a survey and focus group discussions (FGDs) held in Kakamega, Kisumu, Machakos, Mombasa, and Nairobi. Majority of survey respondents had experienced OGBV directly or knew someone who had, an indicator that the phenomenon is not restricted to high-visibility individuals.

Gender-based violence is prevalent in Kenya and with technological advances, has spread to digital platforms. Most of the survey respondents and FGD participants principally accessed the Internet several times a day through their personal smartphones.

OGBV was experienced by Kenyans in both rural and urban areas, though more in urban areas.

Female, urban and individuals under the age of 40 were more likely to have experienced OGBV compared to individuals of other genders, rural residents, or individuals over the age of 40.

OGBV is therefore a gendered phenomenon in the ways it was experienced and reported. The data indicates that while more frequently men are perpetrators and women victims of OGBV, the roles can be reversed.

Female friends, alongside male friends, and unknown attackers, were among the top three perpetrators of online attacks among the survey respondents.

In the FGDs, most men tended to talk about someone they knew who had experienced OGBV, and these men had an authority that enabled them to intervene or mediate.

Women in contrast tended to have experienced OGBV personally and were more stuck in knowing how to respond to it.

The types of OGBV reported included abusive messages, false posts on social media, sharing of intimate images (cyberflashing) or personal information without one's consent, sexual harassment, sharing of personal information (doxxing), digital

manipulation of images, body shaming, identity theft, and the non-consensual exposure of one's identity as a sex-worker or member of the LGBTQ+ community.

OGBV could escalate offline or vice versa.

Majority of survey respondents indicated that the top perpetrators of OGBV were unknown. Male, and female friends came second and third respectively.

OGBV was exploited to shame the victim for personal, political, family, or other reasons, or as a means to seek alternative justice separate from a mistrusted or ineffective law enforcement system. OGBV was also described as a means of monetary gain such as through blackmail and extortion.

Overall, OGBV largely had negative physical and emotional effects on those who experienced it such as lowered self-esteem, depression, emotional problems, living with shame, feeling discriminated against, family/relationship breakups, financial consequences, fear for personal safety, and suicide. It could lead to isolation, social withdrawal, and high levels of stress.

The survey respondents and FGD participants explained their coping mechanisms and reported behavioural change resulting from OGBV, including an increased awareness of digital security and being

more conscious of what to post on social media.

**For various stakeholders, academia, business, civil society, citizens, policy makers, news media, and social media platforms**

**i).** Continued research on trends and occurrences of OGBV;

**ii).** Studying emerging technologies that may be used in new forms of OGBV (such as artificial intelligence);

**iii).** Assisting survivors in evidence preservation; building capacity of GBV-focused organisations to address OGBV;

**iv).** Provision of information about OGBV and media literacy for citizens including children and teenagers;

**v).** Better enforcement of existing law by the judicial and law enforcement system;

**vi).** The consistent collection of data to keep progress of gains/losses made in fighting various forms of GBV; b

**vii).** Better regulation of content on social media platforms;

**viii).** Protection of all citizens including marginalised communities such as members of the LGBTQ+ community.



# Introduction

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**K**enya has invested in digital infrastructure and technologies, and this has resulted in high Internet adoption and use among citizens.<sup>10</sup>

While this has proven beneficial in many sectors including education, governance and health, it has also enabled new, or exacerbated offline activities and practices that are harmful or illegal to extend to digital spaces.

This includes gender-based violence whose varied expressions include online gender-based violence (OGBV).

Gender-based violence is a global concern, and tends to affect many more women compared to men.

For instance, the Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2022 reported that 16% of women, and 10% of men had experienced domestic violence within 12 months of the report.<sup>11</sup>

A separate study found that adolescent girls and young women are more vulnerable to GBV,<sup>12</sup> and incidences of gender-based violence can increase during significant events as happened with the

COVID 19 pandemic and 2022 election.<sup>13</sup>

A UN Women (2023) report has documented the extension of GBV into the cybersphere with 'various digital tools and modalities [being] inextricably linked to the offline world'.<sup>14</sup>

OGBV has been recognised in Kenya for more than a decade. In 2014, a Kenyan government report included cyberstalking and cyberbullying as forms of domestic violence.<sup>15</sup>

A 2012 KICTANet report indicated that cybercrimes against women had become a "widespread and destructive problem involving stalking, sexual harassment, digital manipulation of photographic images, fraudulent postings and advertisements, persistent abusive mobile messages, sex trafficking, humiliating comments that reinforce gender constructed stereotypes, professional sabotage, identity theft, and intimate photos and videos used for blackmailing women in violent relationships, among others".<sup>16</sup>

Various organisations have been engaged in addressing OGBV through advocacy, awareness raising, and education.

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10. Communications Authority of Kenya. (2023). Second quarter sector statistics report for the Financial Year 2022/2023. (1st October -31st December 2022). <https://www.ca.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Sector-Statistics-Report-Q2-2022-2023.pdf>

11. Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. (2022). Kenya Demographic and Health Survey: Key Indicators Report. <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/PR143/PR143.pdf>

12. Decker MR, Bevilacqua K, Wood SN, Ngare GW, Thiongo M, Byrne ME, Williams A, Devoto B, Glass N, Heise L, Gichangi P. (2022). Gender-based violence during COVID-19 among adolescent girls and young women in Nairobi, Kenya: A mixed-methods prospective study over 18 months. *BMJ Glob Health*, 7(2). <https://gh.bmj.com/content/7/2/e007807>

13. African Woman and Child Feature Service. (2022, September 3). Online violence used to intimidate women candidates. <https://kw.awcfs.org/article/online-violence-used-to-intimidate-women-candidates/>

14. UN Women. (Technology-facilitated violence against women: Taking evidence of data collection. (p. 3) <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2023-04/Technology-facilitated-violence-against-women-taking-stock-of-evidence-and-data-collection-en.pdf>

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16. Global Information Society Watch (2013). Kenya: Women and cyber crime in Kenya. (p. 159) [https://www.giswatch.org/sites/default/files/kenya\\_gisw13\\_0.pdf](https://www.giswatch.org/sites/default/files/kenya_gisw13_0.pdf)

For instance, the Gender Violence Recovery Centre, a non-profit organization, initiated the Zuia Noma Mtaani project which sought to prevent online child abuse and other forms of violence against children in Kibra, a Nairobi low income neighbourhood.<sup>17</sup>

KICTANet developed an e-learning module on OGBV and has run workshops for women on how to counter OGBV, and to protect their data and privacy in the cyberspace.<sup>18 19</sup>

As Kenya embarks on a new wave of revision of ICT laws and policies, a more comprehensive understanding of the nature and extent of online gender based violence is needed.

This study sought to establish the knowledge, practices and behaviours of OGBV.

It addressed the following research questions:

**1. What is the nature and prevalence of online gender-based violence in Kenya?**

**2. What is the impact of OGBV on individuals and the society in Kenya?**

**3. How effective are existing policies in addressing online gender-based violence?**

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<sup>17</sup> GVRC. (2018, October 12). Zuia Noma Mtaani. <https://gvc.or.ke/portfolio/zuia-noma-mtaani/>

<sup>18</sup> Minayo, A. (2022, September 29). Peeling off progress: Gender based violence online. <https://www.kictanet.or.ke/peeling-off-progress-gender-based-violence/>

<sup>19</sup> Minayo, A. (2022, November 17). KICTANet conducts two community of practice activities on OGBV and women's data protection and privacy in Kakamega and Kisumu. <https://www.kictanet.or.ke/kictanet-conducts-two-community-of-practice-activities-on-ogbv-and-womens-data-protection-and-privacy-in-kakamega-and-kisumu/>.

# CONTEXT

## National demographics and Internet statistics

As per the 2019 census, Kenya had a population of 47.6 million citizens categorised as female, male, and intersex as shown in Table 1. A majority of the population, 69% , reside in rural areas.<sup>20</sup>

**Table 1: Census information**

	No. of individuals	% age of population
Female	24,014,716	50.5%
Male	23,548,056	49.5%
Intersex	1,524	
<b>Total</b>	<b>47,564,296</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Kenya Population and Housing Census 2019<sup>21</sup>

The census recorded **20.7 million** individuals with access to a mobile phone, of which **10.4 million (50.4%)** were female, and **10.3 million (49.6%)** male.

The poll also indicated that of the 9.87 million Kenyans (**22.6%** ) of the population) that used the Internet, **42%** were rural area residents, while **58%** lived in urban areas.

There is a digital gender divide in use of the Internet. Of the **9.87 million** Kenyans using the Internet, **55%** were male and **45%** female.

Table 2 presents a breakdown of Internet use by the **9.87 million** Internet users in terms of location and gender.

20. Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. (2019). 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census: Volume III – Distribution of population by age and sex. KNBS

21. Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. (2019). 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census: Volume III – Distribution of population by age and sex. KNBS

	Female (%)	Male (%)	TOTAL
Rural	17.57	24.37	41.94
Urban	27.62	30.44	58.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>45.19</b>	<b>54.81</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Kenya Population and Housing Census 2019 <sup>22</sup>

As in the larger Eastern Africa, there is a digital access divide between rural and urban residents, as well as between men and women. <sup>23</sup>

In both rural and urban areas, more men (54.81%) used the Internet compared to women (45.19%). More urban women (27.62%) used the Internet compared to rural men (24.37%).

Women in rural areas (17.57%) and men in the urban areas (30.44%) were the smallest and the largest groups respectively, of Internet users. <sup>24</sup>

This data relates with periodic statistics by the communications regulator- Communications Authority (CA)- whose latest figures indicate about 48 million mobile data/internet subscriptions, of which 67% were on mobile broadband. <sup>25</sup>

The data was drawn from the number of active mobile SIM cards registered, rather than individual users. The number of fixed data/Internet subscriptions stood at 1.1 million. <sup>26</sup>

The demand for faster Internet speeds has also resulted in the expanding of network infrastructure to include 4G and 5G speeds. <sup>27</sup>

Datareportal figures show that in 2022, more than 42% of Kenyans were on the Internet, with an estimated 21.1% using social media. <sup>28</sup>

In 2023, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram were the leading social media applications at 81%, 77% , and 61% respectively. <sup>29</sup>

22. Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. (2019). 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census: Volume IV Distribution of population by socio-economic characteristics. KNBS.

23. World Wide Web Foundation. (2022, September 21). OGBV in the Global South. <https://webfoundation.org/2022/09/ogbv-in-the-global-south/>

24. Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. (2019). 2019 Kenya Population and Housing Census: Volume IV – Distribution of population by socio-economic characteristics. KNBS.

25. Communications Authority of Kenya. (2023). Third quarter sector statistics report for the Financial year 2022/2023. <https://www.ca.go.ke/sites/default/files/2023-06/Sector%20Statistics%20Report%20Q3%202022-2023.pdf>.

26. Communications Authority of Kenya. (2023). Third quarter sector statistics report for the Financial year 2022/2023. <https://www.ca.go.ke/sites/default/files/2023-06/Sector%20Statistics%20Report%20Q3%202022-2023.pdf>

27. Communications Authority of Kenya. (2023). Third quarter sector statistics report for the Financial year 2022/2023. <https://www.ca.go.ke/sites/default/files/2023-06/Sector%20Statistics%20Report%20Q3%202022-2023.pdf>.

28. Datareportal. (2022). Digital 2022: Kenya.

<https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-kenya> Statista. (2023). Social network usage by brand in Kenya 2023. <https://www.statista.com/forecasts/1409955/social-network-usage-by-brand-in-kenya>

29. Statista. (2023). Social network usage by brand in Kenya 2023. <https://www.statista.com/forecasts/1409955/social-network-usage-by-brand-in-kenya>.

The data does not provide differentiated information such as on Internet use by gender, but shows that overall, the citizenry make extensive use of mobile gadgets to access the Internet.

In addition to these platforms, Whatsapp is a widely used but relatively understudied application.

This study contributes to an understanding of how OGBV is manifested on various social media platforms, including Whatsapp.

## What is OGBV?

Azziad Nasenya, a female Kenyan social media personality is among individuals who have endured harassment online.

Earlier this year, Nasenya reported Brian Chira, another influencer, leading to his prosecution for the offense of criminal defamation under the Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act.<sup>30</sup>

Chira had allegedly made Azziad the subject of his TikTok livestream, made derogatory sexual comments about her and in the process, revealed her personal phone number online.

This subsequently led to Nasenya receiving harassing messages from unknown people. The case is still in court.<sup>31</sup>

While Azziad's case has come to the limelight, such occurrences are not isolated. They are examples of gender-based violence, described as one of the most prevalent forms of human violation globally.<sup>32</sup>

GBV is defined as "any harmful act that is perpetrated against one person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females.

It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life".<sup>33</sup>

A broader definition of GBV cautions against focusing only on women, terming it as "more inclusive than violence against women.

[It] could include violence against men, provided the violence stems from a man's gender identity of presentation".<sup>34</sup>

There have been attempts to protect the vulnerable from the forms of GBV committed through digital technologies.<sup>35</sup>

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) uses the terms 'technology-facilitated violence' and 'online gender-based violence' (OGBV) to refer to the violence that takes place on digital platforms.

This report uses the latter expression.

Some of the terms used in OGBV include doxxing, cyberbullying, cyberflashing, impersonation or identity theft.

A 2020 KICTANet report on cyberbullying defined OGBV as an umbrella term that encompasses

30. Tonui, P. (2023, July 28). Brian Chira arrested on accusations of posting Azziad's personal number on livestreamed show. *Tuko.co.ke*. <https://www.tuko.co.ke/entertainment/celebrities/515658-brian-chira-arrested-accusations-posting-aziads-personal-number-live-streamed-show/>

31. Mora, B. (2023, July 28). Tiktoker Brian Chira arrested for defamation against Azziad. *Capital FM*. <https://www.capitalfm.co.ke/thesauce/tiktoker-brian-chira-arrested-for-defamation-against-azziad/>

32. UNFPA (n.d.). Gender-based violence. <https://www.unfpa.org/gender-based-violence#readmore-expand>

33. Aura, R. (n.d.) Situational analysis and the legal framework on sexual and gender-based violence in Kenya: Challenges and opportunities. <http://kenyalaw.org/kl/index.php?id=4512#:~:text=The%20framework%20also%20makes%20provision,girls%20case%20already%20alluded%20to.>

34. USA for UNFPA (n.d.). What is gender-based violence (GBV)? <https://www.usaforunfpa.org/what-is-gender-based-violence-gbv/#:~:text=The%20United%20Nations%20definition%20of,term%20than%20violence%20against%20women.>

35. UNFPA (n.d.). Gender-based violence. <https://www.unfpa.org/gender-based-violence#readmore-expand>.

defamation (a statement injuring a third party's reputation), sharing private messages (distribution of information between two parties where one party has not given consent), non-consensual distribution of intimate images, and body shaming (criticising of one's appearance).<sup>36</sup>

It can also occur as an attack from 'online mobs,' where multiple social media accounts target an individual in a sustained attack.<sup>37</sup>

In countries such as Kenya where access to digital technologies is varied, OGBV is an insidious problem that affects individuals across multiple platforms, and may extend to texts and phone calls.<sup>38 39 40</sup>

UN Women observes that among the challenges of addressing OGBV is that there is no standardised definition.

This, coupled with inadequate comprehensive data and continually emerging technologies, has contributed to insufficient knowledge on the nature, extent, and catalysts of OGBV.<sup>41</sup>

Studies have tended to focus on the experiences of individuals in positions of high visibility or marginalised communities.<sup>42</sup>

For instance, high visibility women – such as politicians, journalists, activists, and lesbian,

gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ+) persons -or those from minority groups are more highly vulnerable to OGBV.<sup>43</sup>

The experience of citizens who are less high-profile or are not considered members of a marginalised group is understudied.<sup>44</sup>

## OGBV- a rising problem in Kenya

Studies show a relation between the rise of gender based violence with major events in society.

For example, economic strain, social isolation and exploitative relationships were among the contributors to a rise in GBV during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>45</sup>

The Kenya Demographic Health Survey (2022) provides an overview of gender-based violence (GBV).

Although it does not provide statistics specific to OGBV, the survey indicated that women experienced physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence.

Of individuals aged between 15 to 49, 41% of women and 36% of men reported experiencing any of the four types of violence from an intimate partner.

36. KICTANet (2020, March). *Creating safe spaces online for women: Policy Brief*. Available at <https://www.kictanet.or.ke/mdocs-posts/creating-safe-online-spaces-for-women/>

37. UNFPA. (2023, March 23). *BodyRight campaign: Meet the young Kenyans calling for an end to technology facilitated gender-based violence*. <https://kenya.unfpa.org/en/news/bodyright-campaign-meet-young-kenyans-calling-end-technology-facilitated-gender-based-violence>

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40. OGBV Toolkit. <https://kryssnetwork.gitbook.io/resource toolkit/>

41. UN Women (n.d.). *Recommendations on online and ICT-facilitated VAWG*. <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/UN%20Women.pdf>

42. Indeje, D. (2023, August 17). *Training on online gender-based violence for law enforcement sector*. <https://www.kictanet.or.ke/training-on-online-gender-based-violence-for-law-enforcement-sector/#:~:text=Unfortunately%2C%20women%20in%20politics%2C%20journalists%20and%20LGBTQIA%2B%20Community,buid%20a%20community%20of%20practice%20on%20online%20safety>

43. Plan International. (2020). *Free to be online? The state of the world's girls*. <https://plan-international.org/uploads/2023/06/SOTWGR2020-CommsReport-edition2023-EN.pdf>

44. Amnesty International. (2021). *What is online violence and abuse against women?* <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2017/11/what-is-online-violence-and-abuse-against-women/#:~:text=Taking%20many%20different%20forms%2C,wants%20to%20kill%20you.%E2%80%9D&text=Taking%20many,kill%20you.%E2%80%9D&text=different%20forms%2C,wants%20to>

45. Ajayi, T. (2020, May 20). *Violence against women and girls in the shadow of COVID-19: Insights from Africa*. <https://kujenga-amani.ssrc.org/2020/05/20/violence-against-women-and-girls-in-the-shadow-of-covid-19-insights-from-africa/>

Other highlights from the report were that among individuals who had experienced physical or sexual violence, **42%** of women and **58%** of men did not report it or seek help. <sup>46</sup>

A 2022 Media Council of Kenya report noted that incidences of gender-based violence had spiked in Kenya during the COVID-19 pandemic, and that victim shaming and bullying had increased on digital platforms during the same period.

The same report indicated that media coverage of GBV during the pandemic was insensitive, lacking in depth and was prioritised more by digital media compared to by mainstream media. <sup>47</sup>

Similarly, data from the Center for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW-Kenya) indicated that in 2022, it had received nearly 4,000 cases of gender-based violence in Kenya, **79%** of which were reported by women, and **21%** by men.

The types of GBV reported included physical assault, emotional abuse, defilement and rape. This was a rise from prior to the pandemic, where 41% of women and girls had reported experiencing different forms of gender-based violence. <sup>48</sup>

The numbers increased by **92%** during COVID-19, the majority of perpetrators being intimate partners, close relatives or people known to those who had experienced GBV. <sup>49</sup>

Reports focussing on OGBV during the period noted that girls and women were also harassed online, <sup>50</sup> and such attacks often drove them away from the Internet. <sup>51</sup>

A 2021 Pollicy study of 5 African countries, Kenya among them, found that **28%** of the study participants had experienced OGBV with **71.2%** having experienced it on Facebook. <sup>52</sup>

Among groups that bear the burden of OGBV are high profile individuals such as politicians, female social media personalities and LGBTQ+ persons.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union and African Parliamentary Union in a 2021 report found that **46%** of female parliamentarians had experienced a sexist attack via the Internet, smartphone or social media. <sup>53</sup>

During the lead-up to the 2022 general election, Kenyan women political aspirants experienced OGBV such as online gendered disinformation and harassment. <sup>54</sup>

The Digital Dada podcast whose guests feature social media influencers demonstrated how personalities with a huge follower base are also vulnerable to GBV attacks.

In one podcast, journalist and podcaster Adelle Onyango described how faceless and inauthentic online characters perpetrate violence online saying,

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46. Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. (2022). Kenya Demographic Health Survey summary report.

<https://www.knbs.or.ke/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/2022-KDHS-Summary-Report.pdf>

47. Media Council of Kenya (2022). Media coverage of gender-based violence during the COVID 19 period.

<https://mediacouncil.or.ke/sites/default/files/downloads/GBV%20Report.pdf>

48. Teyie, S. (2023, January 14). Over 3,762 cases of GBV were reported in 2022 – lobby. The Star. <https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/realtime/2023-01-23-over-3762-cases-of-gbv-were-reported-in-2022-lobby/>

49. CREAW. (2022, January 14). Letitia Achieng: I teach my boys to respect women. <http://home.creaw.org/tag/gbv/>

50. Plan International. (2020). Free to be online? The state of the world's girls. <https://plan-international.org/uploads/2023/06/SOTWGR2020-CommsReport-edition2023-EN.pdf>

51. KICTANet (2020, March). Creating safe spaces online for women: Policy Brief. Available at

<https://www.kictanet.or.ke/mdocs-posts/creating-safe-online-spaces-for-women/>

52. Pollicy. (2021). Alternate realities, alternate Internets: Feminist research for a feminist Internet.

<https://pollicy.org/projects/alternate-realities-alternate-internets/>

53. Inter-Parliamentary Union & African Parliamentary Union. (2021). Sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments in Africa.

<https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/issue-briefs/2021-11/sexism-harassment-and-violence-against-women-in-parliaments-in-africa>

54. Awino, F. & Mujesia, N. (2022). Examining online gender-based violence on female politicians and leaders in Kenya. KICTANet.

<https://www.kictanet.or.ke/examining-online-gender-based-violence-on-female-politicians-and-leaders-in-kenya/>

'I can get away with saying the most crass things to you and there will be no consequences because you don't know who I am.

*I have a Bible as my profile picture or like a football team or whatever and nobody will know who I am and I can say all of these things...'*<sup>55</sup>

LGBTQ+ people also face discrimination offline and online because of their sexual orientation.<sup>56</sup>

The punitive legal framework, cultural taboos, and conservative religious beliefs in Kenya contribute to the societal attitudes against LGBTQ+ people.<sup>57</sup>

LGBTQ issues are often studied separately, and this research sought to include LGBTQ persons in a general study.

OGBV has serious effects on individuals and society. Survivors of OGBV have reported feeling afraid, humiliated, exposed, and/or shamed which has a negative effect on their physical and emotional wellbeing, careers, reputations, and livelihoods.

It can also have an impact on citizen participation in democratic endeavours by deterring vulnerable people from vying for political office or engaging in public participation activities for fear of OGBV.<sup>58 59 60 61 62</sup>

Despite the serious consequences, comprehensive OGBV response has been slow.

In October 2021, the Kenyan government launched a policy for the establishment, management and operations of one-stop centres for survivors of gender-based violence.

Dubbed 'Policare' the centres were designed to provide a range of services including legal, health, psychosocial and police support at no cost.<sup>63</sup>

Current Policare data was not available at the time of the writing of this report.

## Overview of OGBV-related laws

There are multiple Kenyan laws that address gender-based violence, though for the most part, online gender-based violence is not specifically addressed. These laws are summarised in Table 3.

55. Digital Dada Podcast. (2022, July 21). *Why do we glorify bullies? Adelle Onyago talks of her experience with online bullies.* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zL5ZbNjPfts>

56. Human Rights Watch. (2015, September 28). *The issue is violence: Attacks on LGBT people on Kenya's coast.* Human Rights Watch. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/09/28/issue-violence/attacks-lgbt-people-kenyas-coast>

57. Ombur, R. (2023, March 9). *A pro-LGBTIQ court ruling in Kenya sparks hope despite a fierce backlash.* openDemocracy. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/kenya-supreme-court-lgbt-gay-rights-organisations-register-backlash/>

58. KICTANet (2020, March). *Creating safe spaces online for women: Policy Brief.* Available at <https://www.kictanet.or.ke/mdocs-posts/creating-safe-online-spaces-for-women/>

59. Digital Dada Podcast. (2022, July 21). *Why do we glorify bullies? Adelle Onyago talks of her experience with online bullies.* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zL5ZbNjPfts>

60. Parsitau, D. (2020, August 14). *Cyberbullying: The digital pandemic.* The Elephant. <https://www.theelephant.info/features/2020/08/14/cyberbullying-the-digital-pandemic/>

61. Milimo, D. (2023, July 23). *Tiktoker Brian Chira arrested for allegedly defaming Azziad Nasenya.* The Star. <https://www.the-star.co.ke/sasa/entertainment/2023-07-28-tiktoker-brian-chira-arrested-for-allegedly-defaming-azziad-nasenya/>

62. KICTANet & ICNL. (2023, August). *Internet access and its impact on Kenyan women's engagement in public participation: Policy Brief.* Available at <https://www.kictanet.or.ke/policy-briefs/>

63. CREAM. (2021, October 18). *Kenya launches its first police policy for an integrated response to GBV.* <https://home.cream.org/2021/10/18/kenya-launches-its-first-policy-for-police-integrated-response-to-gbv/>



Table 3:

Laws/Policies	Description
Constitution of Kenya	All individuals are guaranteed their rights to dignity, equality, and freedom from discrimination, as well as access to justice and a fair trial under Chapter 4 - Articles 27, 28, and 51 of the Kenyan Constitution. Further, the Constitution entrenches protection of marginalised and vulnerable groups
The Sexual Offences Act, 2006	The Sexual Offences Act defines sexual offences, and provides for the prevention, response, and protection of everyone from impermissible sex actions.
The Protection Against Domestic Violence Act, 2015	The Act provides for protection from violence in domestic spaces. It defines violence to include defilement, maltreatment, and sexual violence during marriage.
The Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act, 2011	The Act aims to protect people from having their mental or bodily integrity violated through female genital mutilation (FGM) by prohibiting the practice.
Sexual Gender-based Violence Act, 2021	This Act aims to expedite efforts to eradicate all types of GBV in Nairobi County and ensure that offenders face harsh punishment.
The Computer Misuse Cybercrime Act, 2018	The Act specifically defines online crimes including child pornography, publication of false, as well as obscene information . The Act also reintroduces criminal defamation, which victims of OGBV have used to pursue justice.
Children Protection Act	The Act shields children against obscene materials and sexual exploitation, prostitution, incitement or pressure to engage in sexual behaviour.
Data Protection Act, 2019	This Act regulates the processing of personal data, and provides for the rights of data subjects, and the duties of data controllers and processors. It outlaws non-consensual sharing of personal information and can be extrapolated to address OGBV such as non-consensual distribution of intimate images
Employment Act, 2007	This Act regulates employment and among other things, prohibits sexual harassment in the workplace.
Victim Protection Act, 2014	This Act protects victims of abuse of authority and criminality through protection of vulnerable victims. It defines injury as physical harm, emotional suffering, trauma, or pregnancy brought on by sexual assault.

Source: Kenya Law Reports (<http://kenyalaw.org/kl/>)

# The Study of Online Gender Based Violence in Kenya

## Research design & approach

**T**he study was exploratory in nature and took a mixed methods approach, with the quantitative and qualitative data collected using a survey and focus group discussion (FGD) tools, respectively.

Survey and FGD discussions were anonymised to protect the privacy of participants, given the sensitivity of the topic.

The survey was sent to 200 potential respondents, out of which 156 people responded, a 78% response rate.

Studies from various disciplines have shown that response rates for online surveys vary between 25% to 44%,<sup>64 65</sup> and that sending a survey to a clearly defined population had a likelihood of having a higher response rate as opposed to sending to a large number of people.<sup>66</sup>

This study assumed that individuals of different genders may experience OGBV, and that particular

groups – such as women, politicians, journalists, people living with disabilities, LGBTQ+ persons, and youth – were likely to have experienced the phenomenon.

For this reason, the researchers focused on reaching those particular groups through purposively sampled organisations with access to the populations of interest to the study.

The purposively sampled organisations have membership of or access to content creators, politicians, journalists, human rights defenders, people living with disabilities, LGBTQ+ people, and students.

Those individuals received the online survey (available in Appendix I). Participation in the survey was voluntary.

Individuals who were sent the survey received reminders through those who had shared it with them.

This was a tactic to increase the likelihood of a higher response rate.<sup>67</sup>

64. Menon, V. & Muraleedharan, A. (2020). *Internet-based surveys: Relevance, methodological considerations and troubleshooting strategies*. *Gen Psychiatr*. doi: 10.1136/gpsych-2020-100264

65. Wu, M-J, Zhao, K. & Fils-Aime, F. (2022). *Response rates of online surveys in published research: A meta-analysis*, *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2022.100206>.

66. Wu, M-J, Zhao, K. & Fils-Aime, F. (2022). *Response rates of online surveys in published research: A meta-analysis*, *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2022.100206>.

67. Wu, M-J, Zhao, K. & Fils-Aime, F. (2022). *Response rates of online surveys in published research: A meta-analysis*, *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2022.100206>

The FGDs were held in the cities of Kisumu, Mombasa, and Nairobi, and the towns of Kakamega and Machakos.

The aim was to get the perspectives of urban dwellers as well as those who live in rural communities. Each FGD comprised eight purposively selected participants with an emphasis on those who had personally experienced OGBV or knew someone

who had. A schedule of guiding questions for the FGDs is provided in Appendix II.

In the presentation of findings, the FGDs are numbered FGD1, FGD2, FGD3, FGD4, and FGD5.

**Table 4 provides an overview of the FGD participants.**

Location	No. of participants	Comment
Kakamega	8	The participants were largely youth (20s to 30s) from various backgrounds including journalism, education, politics, civil society and legal practice.
Kisumu	8	The participants had varied ages, and included a PWD. Their professions included politics, civil society, education, entrepreneurship and civil service.
Machakos	8	The participants were mostly middle-aged, and included PWDs. They mainly worked in human rights activism and politics.
Mombasa	8	The participants represented a wide range of ages, and included PWDs and an individual who works with sex workers and LGBTQ people. They came from diverse backgrounds including counselling psychology, politics, sex workers' rights activism, PWD rights, civil service and drug rehabilitation.
Nairobi	8	The participants were drawn from the LGBTQ+ community and came from various backgrounds including the performing arts, visual arts, counselling psychology, and entrepreneurship.

*Table 4: Overview of FGD participants*

# Overview of survey respondents and FGD participants

There were 156 responses to the questionnaire. Nairobi, Kakamega and Tana River counties led in the number of respondents at 28.2%, 17.9% and 10.3% respectively. Other counties represented included Embu, Kajiado, and Kiambu as shown in Table 5.

**Which County do you live in?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Mombasa	10	6.4	6.4	6.4
	Kwale	3	1.9	1.9	8.3
	Kilifi	3	1.9	1.9	10.3
	Tana River	16	10.3	10.3	20.5
	Lamu	1	.6	.6	21.2
	Garisa	1	.6	.6	21.8
	Mandera	1	.6	.6	22.4
	Meru	1	.6	.6	23.1
	Embu	3	1.9	1.9	25.0
	Kitui	2	1.3	1.3	26.3
	Machakos	6	3.8	3.8	30.1
	Nyeri	1	.6	.6	30.8
	Kirinyaga	2	1.3	1.3	32.1
	Kiambu	11	7.1	7.1	39.1
	Laikipia	2	1.3	1.3	40.4
	Nakuru	2	1.3	1.3	41.7
	Kajiado	5	3.2	3.2	44.9
	Kakamega	28	17.9	17.9	62.8
	Vihiga	2	1.3	1.3	64.1
	Bungoma	1	.6	.6	64.7
	Busia	2	1.3	1.3	66.0
	Siaya	1	.6	.6	66.7
	Kisumu	4	2.6	2.6	69.2
	Homa Bay	1	.6	.6	69.9
	Migori	1	.6	.6	70.5
	Kisii	1	.6	.6	71.2
	Nyamira	1	.6	.6	71.8
	Nairobi	44	28.2	28.2	100.0
	Total	156	100.0	100.0	

The respondents were drawn from a range of occupations including healthcare, advocacy government, politics, agribusiness, consultancy and entrepreneurship, and students.

There were 17 respondents (11%) who indicated they were unemployed. The majority of the respondents (64%) indicated they lived in an urban area while 36% reported living in a rural area.

In regards to gender, 55.1% identified themselves as female, 40.4% as male, and 1.9% as inter-sex. In the other responses, one person identified themselves as trans-gender, one as 'transman', one as GNC (gender nonconforming), and the other as non-binary. Figure 1 shows the breakdown by number of responses.

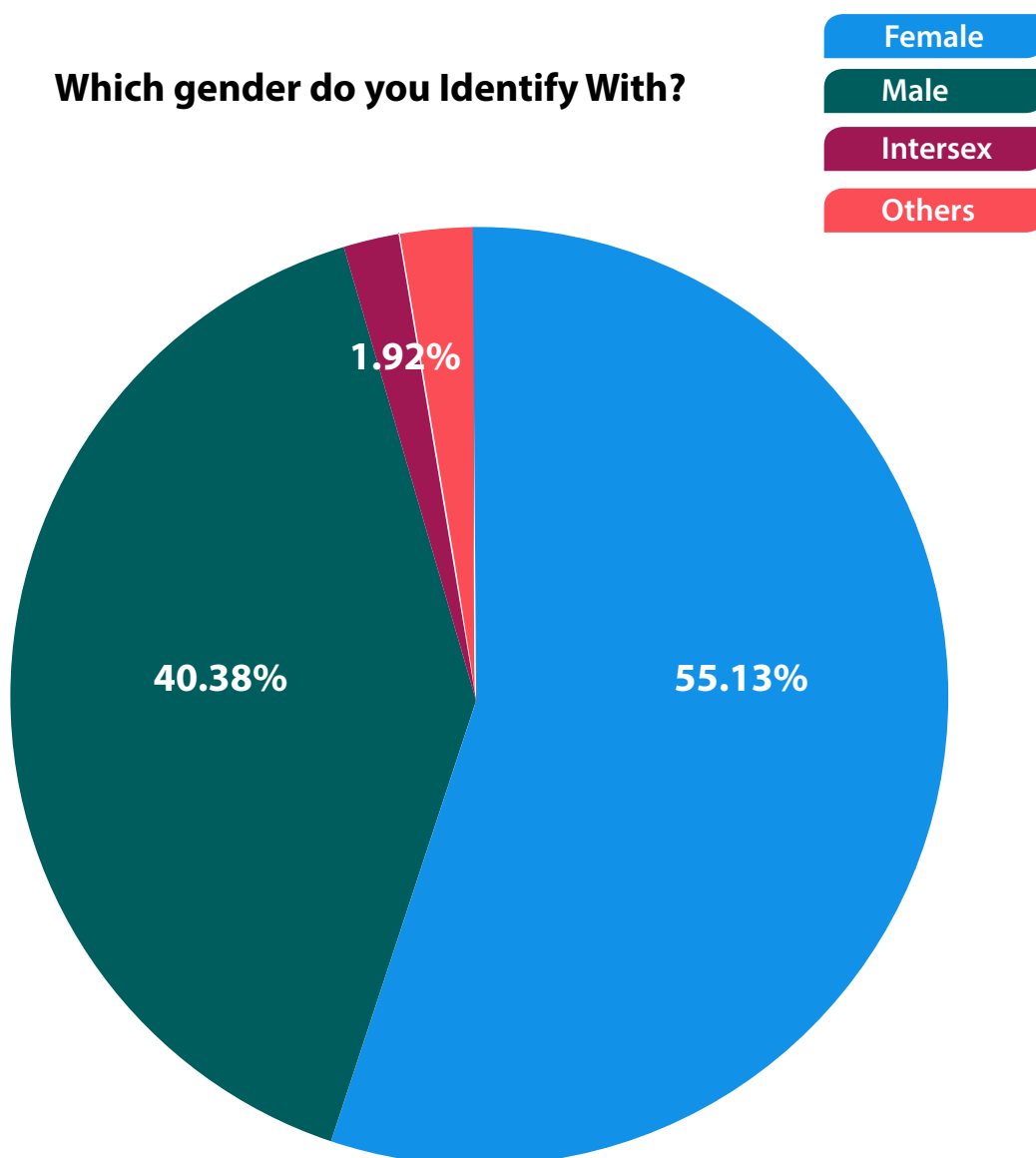


Figure 1: Survey respondents' identification by gender

Further, of the 26 survey respondents who specifically identified themselves as LGBTQ+ persons, 19 (73%) had experienced an OGBV attack, while 7 (27%) had not.

and an average age of 32 years. Figure 2 provides a breakdown of the respondents' ages.

The LGBTQ+ population in this study was composed of individuals in their 20s or 30s.

The ages of the survey respondents ranged from 18 to 58 years, with a median age of 30 years

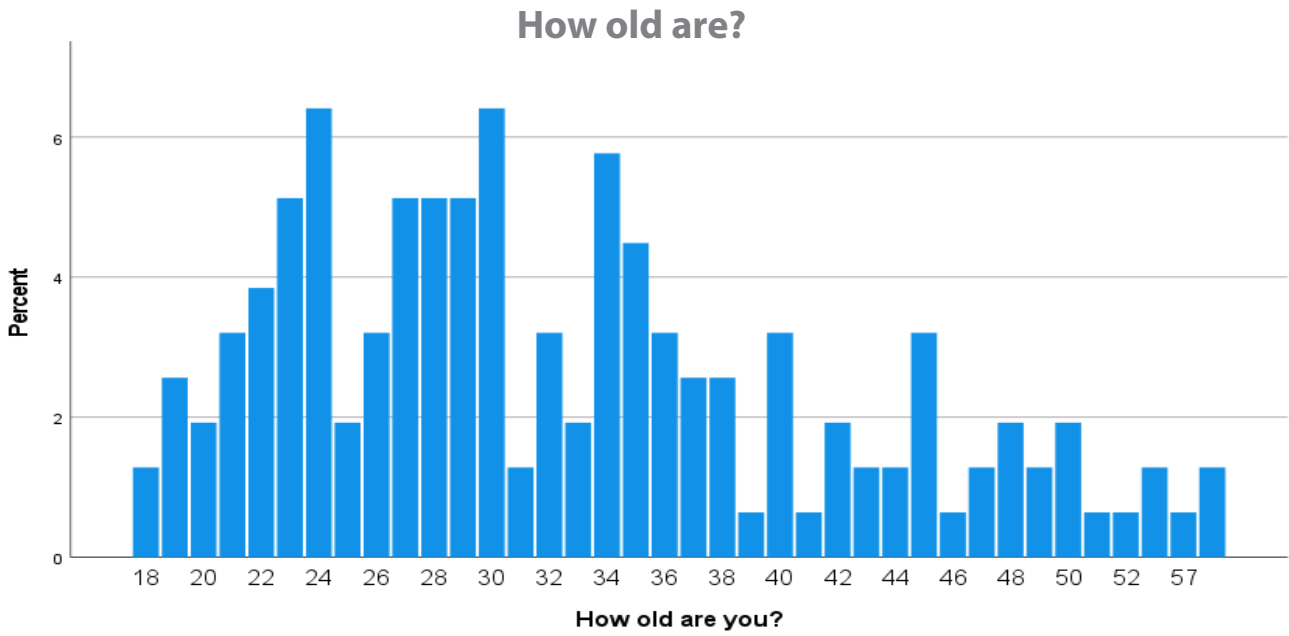


Figure 2: Age of survey respondents

Respondents accessed the Internet from a variety of sources. The majority (95%) used a personal smartphone, 30% from a personal, family or work computer, and 2% from a cyber café. Most of the respondents (85.3%) accessed the Internet several times a day as shown in Figure 3.

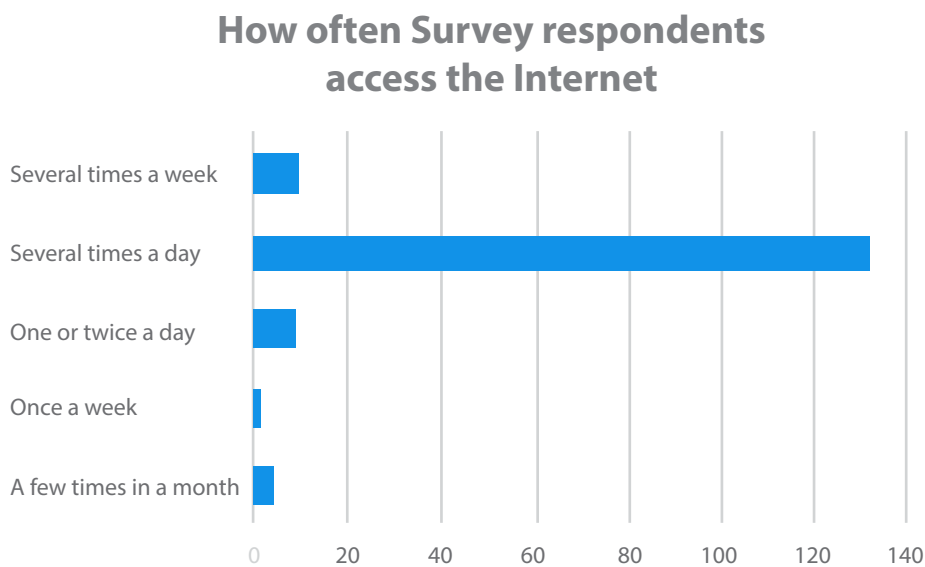


Figure 3: How often survey respondents accessed the Internet

The three leading uses of the Internet for the respondents were: work (81%), entertainment (78%), and staying in touch with family (76%).

A slight majority (54%) of the respondents had never been married, 36.5% were married and 4% were divorced as shown in Figure 4.

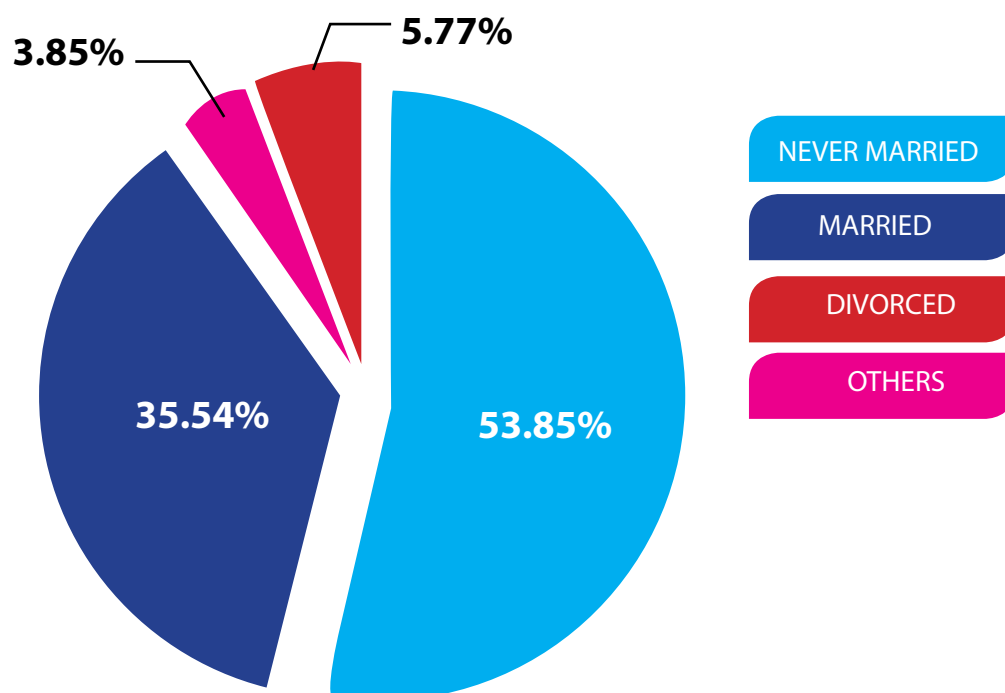


Figure 4: Marital status of respondents

Statistical correlation on demographics and the nature of OGBV

The target population in the study was not representative of the entire country. This is exemplified by various demographics such as on the respondents' county of residence and occupation.

The statistical tests conducted were therefore limited to three demographics (age, gender, and location) which gave a broad overview of the likelihood of occurrence of OGBV among sections of Kenyan society.

For age, gender, and location (rural/urban), the study findings indicated a positive correlation in the incidence of OGBV.

This means that for those that had personally experienced OGBV, the younger the person, the more likely they were to have experienced OGBV, but only up to the age of 40.

The personal experience of OGBV among those 40 and above was more likely to diminish.

For gender, the positive correlation indicated that those who identified as female were more likely to have experienced OGBV personally, and the likelihood is that an increase in the number of female participants in a study will result in an increase in the reporting of OGBV.

As regards location, one was more likely to experience OGBV in an urban location, and less likely to do so in a rural location.

# Findings

## 1: Nature & prevalence of OGBV

This section presents the types of OGBV reported, platforms on which it occurs, and perpetrators.

Of the 156 survey respondents, 84 (54%) had personally experienced OGBV, while 71 (46%) had not.

One respondent did not offer a clear response. Overall, 63% of the survey respondents knew someone who had experienced OGBV.

Of those who had directly experienced OGBV, 37% indicated they lived in rural areas while 63% lived in urban areas; 50 (59.5%) were female, 28 (33.3%) were male, 2 (2.38%) were intersex, while 4 individuals identified themselves as GNC, transgender, transman or non-binary; and the majority fell within the age range of 24 to 40.

Figure 5 provides the breakdown by age range.

### Age range of individuals who had personally experience OGBV

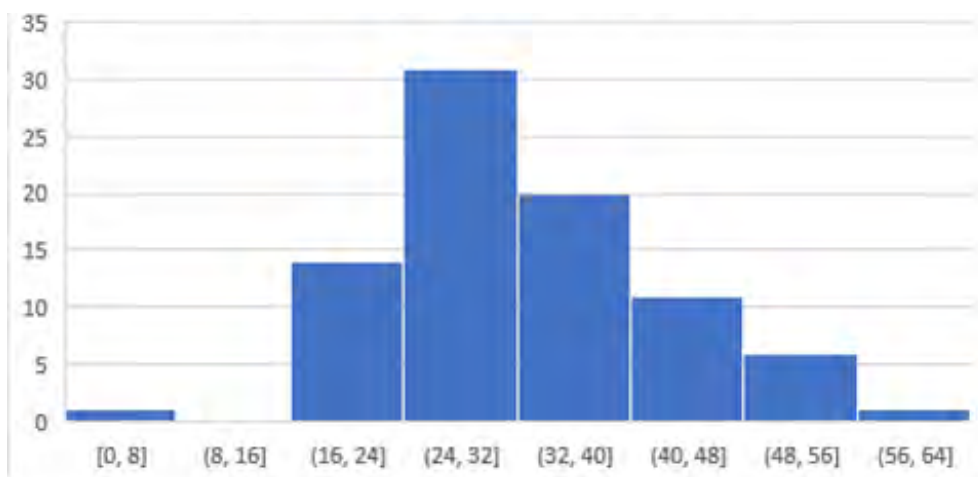


Figure 5: Age range of individuals who had personally experienced OGBV

Of the 84 survey respondents who had indicated personally experiencing OGBV, 18% had experienced it several times in a month, while 9.5% indicated they had experienced it several times in a week.

This amounts to 27.5% of the participants experiencing it at least several times in a month. Nearly 68% of them indicated they had experienced it rarely or once or twice in total. Figure 6 provides more information.



## How often have you experienced those attacks?

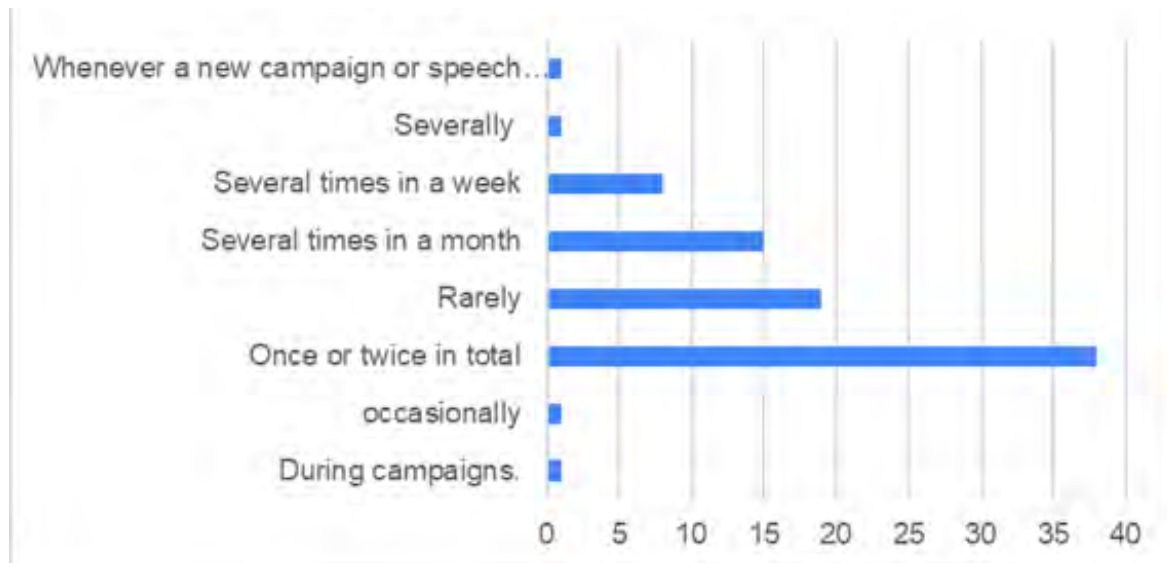


Figure 6: Frequency of OGBV attacks among survey respondents who had personally experienced OGBV

To further understand the survey responses, researchers discussed the nature and prevalence of OGBV in FGDs.

The majority of the FGD participants had experienced OGBV personally or knew people who had. It was generally observed that the women participants were more open in sharing their personal OGBV experiences compared to their male counterparts, who tended to speak of individuals they knew who had experienced it.

In Machakos however, the respondents were a relatively older group. Not all were exposed to OGBV, and neither did they all have smart gadgets. Machakos is a largely rural area and residents would likely have limited access to uninterrupted Internet connectivity.

This would reduce their exposure to online activities and communities. Additionally, the demographic within the FGD were not steeped in the handheld-gadget culture which immerses people into the virtual world of the internet.

Nevertheless, this did not diminish exposure to OGBV, for example in the political arena.

In Mombasa, FGD participants indicated that the extent to which OGBV occurred varied, and there were no definite time limits to which an OGBV attack would occur.

### 1. Types of OGBV experienced in Kenya

The types of OGBV that survey respondents reported experiencing included: receiving abusive messages, false posts on social media, sexual harassment, sharing of personal information, digital manipulation of images, and identity theft.

In the FGDs, the types of OGBV described included sharing of images, abusive messages, sharing of false information about an individual, and exposing one's sexual orientation (e.g if someone had not revealed to their families/social network that they were gay).

Given the stigmatisation and levels of discrimination that LGBTQ+ people face in Kenyan society, an accusation of being gay can lead to physical attack or in extreme cases, death.<sup>68</sup>

68. Ombuor, R. (2023, March 9). A pro-LGBTIQ court ruling in Kenya sparks hope despite a fierce backlash. openDemocracy. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/kenya-supreme-court-lgbt-gay-rights-organisations-register-backlash/>

In the FGDs, the participants confirmed the types of OGBV reported in the survey and also added online stalking as another kind.

In FGD3 for instance, a participant reported of a young woman who had been stalked online for more than three years by a rejected suitor.

She blocked his number but he created new social media accounts where he would send her direct messages (such as on Facebook) and abuse her.

One of the FGD participants narrated how her close friend who was running for office in the August 2022 General Election had her nude pictures posted on Twitter, Facebook and various Whatsapp groups.

The FGD participant called her friend to check on her. The friend said she did not have the energy to discuss the matter. The FGD participant shared what followed next:



***I then called the person who I suspected was spreading the nude pictures, but the perpetrator threatened to 'expose' me next. Later that day, my friend brought down all her social media accounts and switched off her phone. We had to go looking for her from her house. She had locked herself in and didn't want to see anyone. She was crying. For about 3 to 4 months, she was in extreme distress. Since that incident, she [has] never restored her social media accounts'***

(FGD Participant).

Of the 34 survey respondents who identified as PWDs, 20 of them (59%) had experienced various forms of OGBV, including digital manipulation of

images, receiving abusive messages or being insulted, non-consensual sharing of personal information, posting of nude pictures and attaching the OGBV victim's name to it, false posts on social media, and identity theft.

There were also multiple illustrations of OGBV which started online and moved offline or vice versa. For instance, an FGD2 participant explained how an online crime led to offline GBV:

As a pastor, I was called to reconcile a couple who had separated because of online crime. The woman had been duped to send money to a stranger claiming to be her child's teacher.

When she realised she had been conned, she told her husband but he insisted that the man was a lover and not an online criminal. The husband became violent and the woman had to leave her home for a while.

While mediating the case, I had to explain to the man that online crime is common and his wife was just many of the targets (FGD Participant). In FGD3, one man indicated that he had been attacked online because he was working for a female politician.

Rumours arose that his work included having a sexual relationship with his boss and it moved online when bloggers who had written about the alleged relationship posted them in Whatsapp and Facebook groups.

In FDG5, a participant reported that they belong to a savings and credit cooperative society (SACCO) for LGBTQ people.

In this community, when someone is attacked online, the other SACCO members would protect their colleague by attacking the troll in return, as a form of defence.

## 2. Platforms

Social media applications were a leading site of OGBV activity with survey respondents reporting Facebook (69.4%) and Whatsapp (55.6%) as the top two platforms where they had experienced an online attack.

WhatsApp has been widely adopted in multiple African countries as a frequently used social media platform that allows individuals with common interests to congregate on a shared secure community

platform, and to easily share multimedia data. It started as a mobile application though it has since developed a Web version, but its availability on smartphones make it easily and constantly accessible to anyone with Internet access (be it wifi or mobile data).

One study indicated that its widespread adoption on the African continent could be attributed to a combination of features including its simplicity, user friendly features, and availability on different platforms .<sup>69</sup>

Figure 7 indicates the platforms on which OGBV activity was experienced by the respondents.

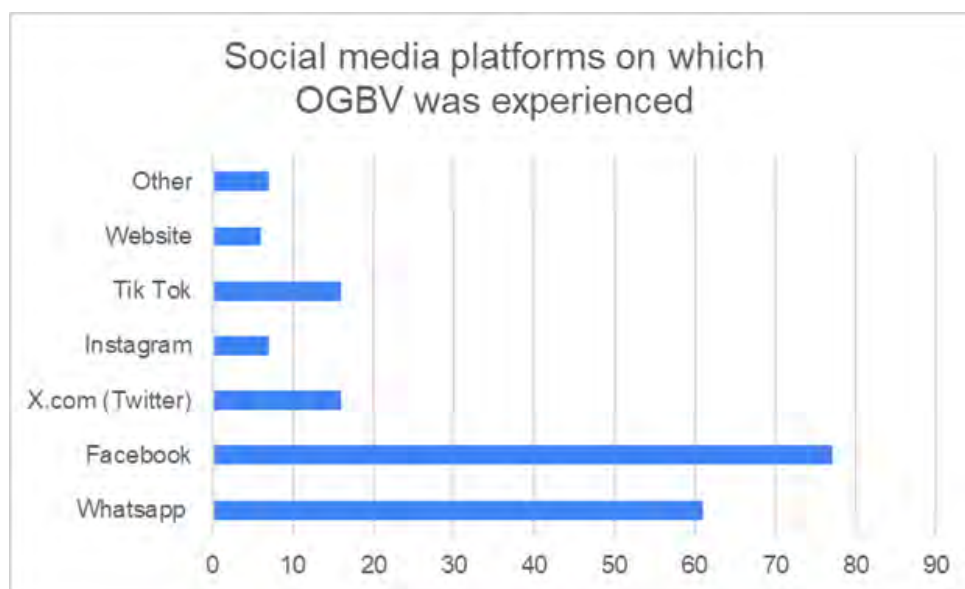


Figure 7: Platforms on which OGBV was experienced.

X.com(formerly Twitter), Tik Tok, and Instagram were also identified as sites of OGBV activity.

Also, survey respondents indicated that the 'Other' platforms on which OGBV was experienced included Grindr (an online dating application targeted at LGBTQ+ persons), YouTube, Telegram, and short messaging services (texts).

In the Machakos FGD, participants described OGBV as an attack that could also take place via texts or phone calls.

## 3 Perpetrators

Survey respondents who had experienced OGBV indicated that they sometimes knew the person attacking them.

The three leading sources of attack were from unknown individuals, male friends, and female friends as indicated by 58.7%, 32.6% and 20.7% respectively of the respondents. Figure 8 illustrates this.

69. Shambare, R. (2014). The adoption of WhatsApp: Breaking the vicious cycle of technological poverty in South Africa. *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies*, 6(7), 542-550. DOI: 10.22610/jebis.v6i7.515

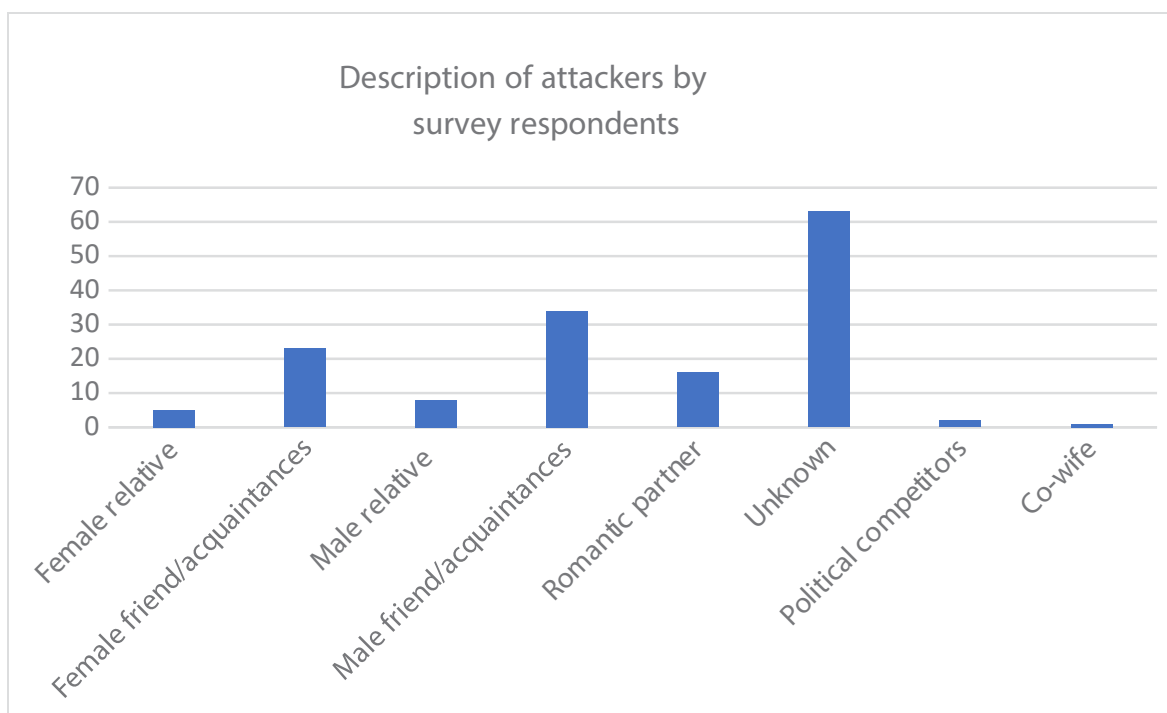


Figure 8: Identity of OGBV attackers

While the majority of reported incidents of attack were from unknown individuals, the two next leading perpetrators of OGBV were male and female friends/acquaintances.

Intimate partner violence was also reported in both the survey and the FGDs. In FGD1, a participant reported that a family dispute over property had started with GBV (offline) but moved online when her husband posted intimate pictures of her on Whatsapp groups.

OGBV was seen to be a negative online interaction between individuals who may or may not know one another, and has been weaponised as a tool to publicly shame for personal, political, family, or other reasons, or as a means to seek alternative justice separate from a mistrusted judicial system.

OGBV was also described as a means of monetary gain such as through blackmail and extortion.

2: Impact of OGBV on individuals and society  
The survey respondents and FGD participants

shared some coping mechanisms and reported behaviour change related to OGBV experiences.

A survey respondent reported having become stronger against trolls. FGD participants narrated that they or people they knew had become more conscious of what to post on social media.

There was also removal of content or deleting of accounts to minimise incidences of attack. Some individuals had become more conscious about securing their digital presence for example by avoiding spam messages in their social media or email accounts or applying two-factor authentication of their accounts.

In the LGBTQ+ focussed FGD, participants said that coming to the defence of a peer sometimes involved responding to the troll using the same tactics the troll had used against their peer.

In FGD2, a participant noted that after getting to know an LGBTQ+ individual, they had decided to understand and get to know that community in a

better way. However, among participants identifying as LGBTQ+, the data indicated that members of the group feel isolated and stigmatised, given that in the social and religious context in which they live, their gender identity is not readily accepted.

The study participants repeatedly expressed the view that their families, teachers, colleagues and even those they considered friends all discriminated against them because of their sexual orientation.

Overall, survey respondents reported that OGBV had serious consequences, including death. One respondent disclosed that they had to briefly leave the country for their safety.

Another one responded to the question of what impact OGBV had on an individual:

Psychological and social effects. Mistrust, anxiety, professional harm which directly affects finances thus economical harm.

Withdrawal from social media thus missing out on opportunities in the digital space.

Digital footprints of OGBV can cause permanent damage with the digital footprints not only in social media but blogs as well. Stress and feelings of sadness.

Other comments from survey respondents on the impact of OGBV include:

It is demeaning and lowers a person[s] self esteem and also can lead to depression.

I deleted my Twitter account after the last time I experienced OGBV. Initially it made me question the validity of my existence.

In FGD1, a participant reported of a teenage boy who had committed suicide due to OGBV:



***We lost a young boy, he was a teenager in high school. He took away his own life because he could not bear the pain and shame that came with being exposed online. He had fallen out with his teenage girlfriend who they attended the same school. After their fall out, the girl decided to expose intimate pictures of him on social media platforms including WhatsApp groups where his parents were. He could not bear the effects of that. It's very sad that we lost a young soul.***

(FGD Participant)

OGBV can also have spillover effects. The survey respondents and FGD participants reported that while the OGBV victims tend to be adults, it also affects children.

For instance, in FGD2, a participant reported that information about a fight between a particular couple had been shared online. Teachers of the couple's child became aware of the fight and made comments to the child which affected the child psychologically.

There were also reports of the threat of OGBV being used for blackmail or extortion.

One FGD1 participant reported of a young man who had taken intimate pictures of his girlfriend and blackmailed her to send him money by threatening to post the pictures if she did not do as he demanded:



***My schoolmate almost dropped out of school. She ended a relationship with her campus boyfriend, but the guy already had intimate pictures they had taken. He demanded that they get back together or he would expose the pictures everywhere on campus. He also demanded money in exchange for not going ahead with the exposure.***

***It was a large sum she was asked to pay. She thought the issue would end if she paid the money, but he kept asking for more money every few months.***

***My friend had to borrow money from her parents or sometimes use part of her school fees to silence the guy. He kept asking for more money.***

***Finally my friend ran out of options for getting the money. He made good his threat and exposed the intimate pictures. At that point, my friend stopped attending classes, hid herself in the hostels to avoid shame. She left school and went missing. For several months, we looked for her.***

***We found her and took her for counselling and convinced her to go back to school. It was really hard for her. She is slowly recovering.***

(FGD Participant)

Among PWDs, an effect of OGBV that was reported was exacerbation of their vulnerability.

One survey respondent said that PWDs were vulnerable to attack because of the perception that they could not do anything about it. Another survey respondent who identified as a PWD said

the following about its effects:

Increased paranoia and anxiety that someone may attack you on what you say or do online.

OGBV also was reported to be used for body-shaming. For instance, an FGD participant spoke of people with albinism being told they would be taken to Tanzania where there have been documented killings against the community.

Data from the survey and the LGBTQ+ FGD indicates that OGBV had other potent uses beyond sending abusive messages, doxxing, cyberflashing, or identity theft. It was also used to expose one's gender identity leaving the targeted individual at risk of offline violence, including physical attacks.

This is because some LGBTQ+ persons often live their lives in secrecy, and are careful about whom they associate with for fear of being attacked, mocked or exposed.

From the FGDs, the participants suggested that OGBV of a sexual or personal nature tended to go on for extended periods of time. In contrast, politically-motivated OGBV escalated during a political season although it could continue beyond the season. Other types of OGBV were also short-lived, such as when one was being blackmailed into giving money.

Overall, OGBV largely had negative physical and emotional effects on those who experienced it such as lowered self-esteem, depression, emotional problems, living with shame, feeling discriminated against, family/relationship breakups, financial consequences, and suicide.

It could lead to isolation, social withdrawal, and high levels of stress. One individual stayed home for three months unable to face the world. For activists and politicians, OGBV silences them or limits their activity in public life.

### 3: Effectiveness of OGBV-related laws and policies

The survey respondents showed awareness of various laws related to gender-based violence or online crime, with 62% of them indicating their familiarity with the Sexual Offences Act, 51% with the Computer Misuse and Cyber Crime Act 2018, and 49.4% with the Sexual Gender-Based Violence Act (Nairobi County) 2021.

Only, five out of 143 individuals (3%) indicated they did not know of any OGBV-related laws.

Survey respondents also gave a mixed response to whether laws related to OGBV provided protection and access to justice.

Out of 156 respondents, 39% said yes, 23% said no, and 38% said they were not sure as shown in Figure 9.

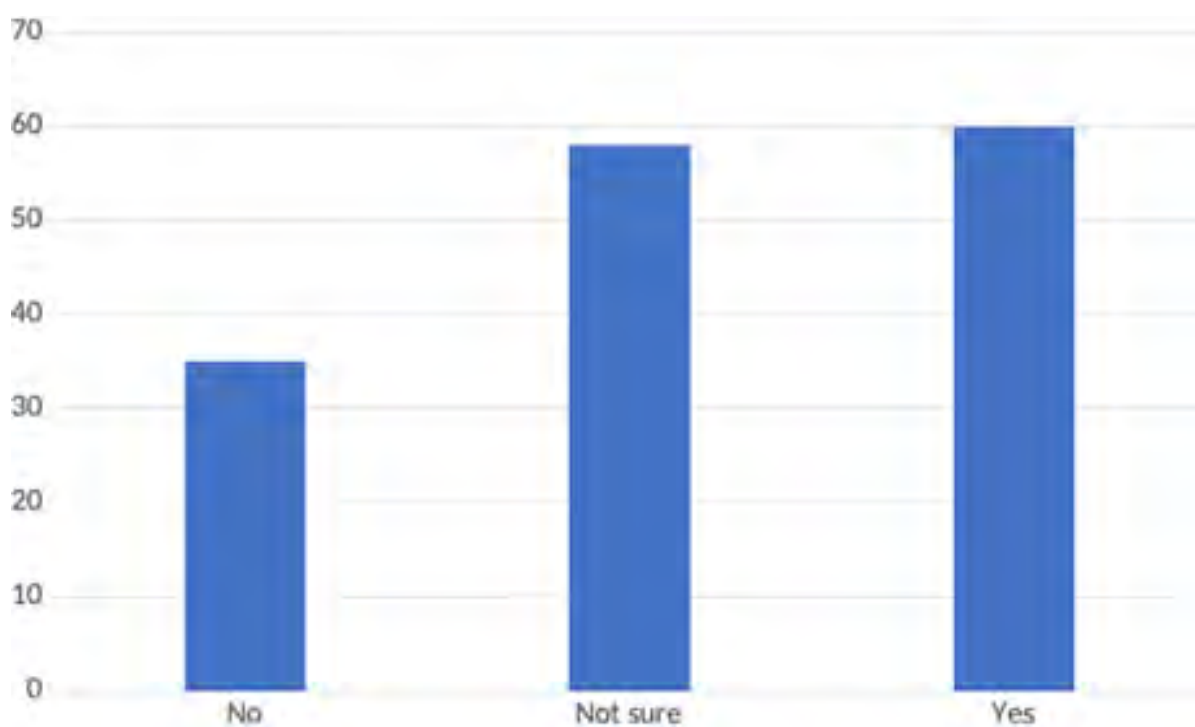


Figure 9: Survey responses as to whether OGBV-related laws and policies provide protection and access to justice

In FGD3, a participant spoke of the need for a legal environment that protected children in the event of OGBV taking place among their parents or guardians.



*I work with child protection agencies. Many times, when parents are in dispute, they drag their children along. There is a couple we are prosecuting for using their children's images in an online fight.... The case is still in court. I hope we find justice for the children.*  
(FGD participant)

Another survey respondent observed that OGBV victims did not always receive justice when they reported a case to law enforcement, citing the difficulty in evidence collection, saying:

***Suspect always won since court and police insist victims to produce evidence.***

Participants in the LGBTQ+ persons FGD indicated that the stigma against them extended to those entrusted with law enforcement, including police officers.

They described themselves as living in a society that does not recognise them as human and so any legal interventions are limited or biased against the LGBTQ+ people.

They had therefore developed means of pushing back against OGBV through community solidarity.

In the recommendations they provided concerning ways to prevent or limit the occurrence of OGBV, survey respondents also indicated that the legal environment should be evaluated.

Three of their suggestions are shared below:

**i). Expansion of laws to cover the digital space the same as the physical space.**

**ii). The law should have clear consequences for culprits of OGBV. The law should also clearly define what constitutes OGBV and how to prosecute such cases.**

**iii). Have real time reporting and apprehension of sexual predators especially for minors given the high incidents among cartoons and [TikTok].**

In addition, participants recommended that the social media platforms need to take greater responsibility in curbing incidences of OGBV. One survey respondent said:

***The owner of the apps should be more careful with their customers to reduce this act.***

Overall, survey respondents and FGD participants indicated that there was not a widespread knowledge of laws and policies that could protect them against OGBV.

Further, they did not have high levels of trust in the enforcement of law where it existed. Vulnerable people such as women, PWDs and LGBTQ+ found OGBV incidences difficult to report to law enforcement for fear of discrimination or being exposed to further violence.

The legal-regulatory environment is therefore perceived to be inadequate in defining, prosecuting and enforcing existing law against GBV and OGBV.

LGBTQ+ people felt vulnerable and had found ways to push back against attacks.

For instance, they said that when a peer faced OGBV or other forms of attack online, they would come to their peer's defence in solidarity.



# A call for a comprehensive and coordinated response to OGBV in Kenya

**Study respondents and participants shared definitions of OGBV, their experience of it, its impact, and their perceptions of the effectiveness of related laws.**

Under *nature and prevalence of OGBV*, the data indicated that OGBV is a form of gender-based violence that occurs in both rural and urban areas.

The majority of the study respondents had experienced (54%) or knew someone who had experienced OGBV (63%), indicating that the phenomenon is experienced not only among prominent or famous individuals, but also among other members of the population.

From the data we inferred that female, urban and individuals under the age of 40 were more likely to have experiencing OGBV compared to individuals of other gender, rural residents, or individuals over the age of 40 respectively.

However, a worrying trend is the rise of OGBV in rural areas.

OGBV is therefore a gendered phenomenon in the ways it is experienced and reported. For instance, the discussions around OGBV often assume women to be the subjects of attack and men as the perpetrators.

An interesting finding from this study was that female friends, alongside male friends and unknown attackers, were among the top three sources of online attacks among the survey respondents.

Many of the attacks from female friends occurred on Facebook and/or Whatsapp, and involved name-calling or false posts.

There were also attacks from female relatives and in one instance, a co-wife. The involvement of women in perpetrating violence against other women could be explained as a structural problem.

Kenya is a largely patriarchal society where gendered norms emphasise the weakness of women and power of men.

For instance, women vying for political office are more likely to be targeted for sexualised attacks that their male counterparts will not.<sup>71</sup>

Discussions about OGBV frequently presume men and women to be perpetrators/aggressors and victims/subjects of OGBV respectively.

However, the data from this study showed that OGBV transcends those categorisations and enables more publicly visible attacks between individuals of the same gender.

In the FGDs, most men tended to talk about someone they knew who had experienced OGBV, and these men had an authority that enabled them to intervene or mediate.

Women however tended to have experienced OGBV personally and were more at odds in knowing how to respond to it.

<sup>71</sup> Wa Mutonya, M. (2022, March 3). Kenya election: Sexist language shows that patriarchy refuses to give way. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/kenya-election->

Most of the survey respondents (60%) indicated that their attackers were unknown, but the second and third leading sources of attack were male friends and female friends, as reported by 31.4% and 21% of the respondents respectively.

One survey respondent reported that her co-wife had been a source of an OGBV attack.

For policy makers and citizens, the understanding and resolving of OGBV should go beyond stereotypes and be addressed in nuanced terms, with an understanding of the socio-cultural and economic context in which it occurs.

There were varied definitions of OGBV, some of which are established in literature (such as the exposure of one's nudity without consent, sharing of private messages or pictures, and body shaming) and others that emerged from the data (being outed as gay without consent in a society that has cultural and religious taboos against same-sex relationships).

In the latter case, non-consensual exposure of sexual orientation becomes a violation of privacy that can lead to physical harm or even death.

LGBTQ+ persons face the further challenge of mistrusting the judicial system due to fears of being discriminated against or stigmatised.

The study respondents made extensive use of digital gadgets and smartphones in particular to access the Internet.

However, as was evident in Machakos (a rural town that was the site of one focus group discussion), the incidences of OGBV were limited to illustrations from the political campaign period preceding the general election of 2022.

The inference could be made that OGBV is less likely to occur or be experienced in rural communities, and when it does occur, may do so during a particular event or season such as a political campaign.

OGBV was also found to take place primarily on social media platforms. This study established that beyond Facebook and Twitter, WhatsApp is also a primary site of OGBV activity.

As a platform that draws together individuals of common interests, families, or communities, WhatsApp allows the easy and fast spread of information. Its devastating effectiveness as a weapon is that it enables individuals known to one another or otherwise – including intimate partners - to settle scores, shame, humiliate, expose and attack not only in private but in a shared online community that has offline connections as well e.g. church group, extended family, network of friends, etc.

The incident where a teenager committed suicide because his former girlfriend had shared intimate pictures of him on WhatsApp Groups that included his parents is an illustration.

Additionally, Instagram, X.com (formerly Twitter), and Tik Tok are also sites of OGBV activity, though to a lesser extent compared to Facebook and Whatsapp.

Three of the platforms – Facebook, Whatsapp and Instagram – are owned by one company Meta.

Information gathered from the FGDs indicated that social media has created a peer pressure that compels people to match up to what they see others doing on social media.

In doing so, they may lose a sense of boundaries and privacy and in sharing intimate details or information about themselves, they expose themselves to OGBV.

The social media platforms also have yet to find a sufficient response to OGBV, particularly on issues such as content moderation that is nuanced to the local languages and culture.

Meta, alongside other social media platforms,

have an elevated responsibility to provide more content monitors from particular linguistic locales, as well as to establish higher standards in flagging OGBV content across platforms, educating users about reporting unacceptable activity on the platforms, and providing users with quick, safe ways to report OGBV.

The types of OGBV included image sharing of nudes, sending of abusive messages, cyberstalking, sexually suggestive messaging shared on public digital platforms such as social media, and extortion.

For LGBTQ+ people, being 'outed' on a social media platform as gay when the individual had not revealed that publicly or to family and friends, was a form of OGBV.

The impact of OGBV is far-reaching. Data from the survey and the FGDs indicated that those who undergo OGBV feel ashamed, ridiculed in society, and discriminated against.

In one FGD, there was a report of OGBV leading to a teen's suicide while in the survey responses, one rural-based respondent indicated that he had close friends who had nearly committed suicide due to OGBV.

The data showed that OGBV negatively affects mental health and physical safety.

It can also be deadly (as in the case of the teenager who committed suicide), and in taking measures to protect themselves, those attacked will delete social media accounts, maintain a low profile online, or take matters into their own hands (as with LGBTQ+ people who troll those who attack their peers).

This can lead to the loss of economic opportunities -e.g. to make money online – and the muting of voices, such as when a politician or activist withdraws from engaging online.

Trolling and counter-trolling could also potentially escalate offline. When individuals are limited, unable, or afraid to participate in family, community or civic life because of OGBV, it is a loss to Kenyan society as a whole.

There were reports that OGBV had raised a consciousness of what people posted, a greater sense of awareness about digital safety, and an interest in learning more about individuals or communities that are exposed to it.

Such behaviour change can be highlighted in digital literacy campaigns that raise awareness about OGBV and ways in which one can protect themselves from it.

In regards to the effectiveness of the legal framework, there are laws that may be applied towards OGBV but they are not far-reaching or specific enough to address the particularities of online forms of violence.

The law enforcement system is also not very friendly as participants reported that police officers can be ignorant of or insensitive about OGBV.

The majority of survey respondents and FGD participants were aware of the relevant laws which they said could be useful in curbing OGBV.

It was telling however that 61% of the survey respondents were either not sure or felt that the OGBV-related laws did not provide protection and access to justice.

In the LGBTQ+ FGD, it was even more apparent that they considered the laws to largely be irrelevant to them as they tend to be stigmatised against within the judicial system, and they did not expect to receive justice or support when they reported OGBV.

Overall, the study participants were of the view that there is insufficient knowledge among citizens

about laws that relate to OGBV, as well as a lack of consistency and goodwill in law enforcement and implementation.

This finding echoes the KICTANet (2020) study which established that there were varying laws and policies that could address cyberbullying but the implementation was poor <sup>72</sup>

The manipulation of digital images was cited by survey respondents as a frequently used form of OGBV.

New technologies – including artificial intelligence (AI) – are enabling the spread of disinformation such as during the COVID-19 pandemic, and are likely to be used for OGBV.

Policy making should develop laws and regulations that are cognisant of constantly evolving technologies.

The documentation of OGBV such as by government bodies and the police service (which launched the Policare centres for support of GBV survivors) was also found to be insufficient.

The frequent collection of data and sharing of it with the public would create awareness about the problem, show steps taken by law enforcement to address it, and promote a culture of providing information to the public.

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<sup>72</sup> KICTANet (2020, March). *Creating safe spaces online for women: Policy Brief*. Available at <https://www.kictanet.or.ke/mdocs-posts/creating-safe-online-spaces-for-women/>

# Conclusion & Recommendations

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**O**GBV has become a pervasive phenomenon in both rural and urban communities, and presumes the availability of smart gadgets and Internet access.

It is a form of gender-based violence that may disproportionately affect certain communities or society members – such as LGBTQ+ persons or women – but it affects all members of society.

The OGBV experiences of citizens who are less high-profile or are not considered members of a marginalised group has tended to be understudied.

However the data from this research project indicated that OGBV affects all citizens, not only those in high visibility or influential positions.

OGBV also emerged as a weapon that is frequently sexual in nature and is deployed in different types of situations such as disputes (family or work), competitive scenarios (such as politics), rejection (of romantic overtures), and against a stigmatised community (PWDs and LGBTQ people+ or sex workers).

It is often intended to shame, intimidate, or silence those attacked, and sometimes translates to offline attacks as well.

OGBV can be a commercial enterprise where the intent is to extort money or favours through the exposure of information that is private to an

individual.

The incidences of OGBV confirm scholarship that has established that the socio-economic context in which the perpetrators and survivors of GBV can contribute to the incidence of different forms of gender-based violence, including OGBV.<sup>73,74</sup>

Patriarchal attitudes, economic pressures such as the high cost of living and high unemployment levels, social isolation and exploitative relationships were referenced by study participants in the course of data collection.

Despite OGBV being a serious issue, it has only been documented in a few reports and podcasts which focus on violence against women.

However, as a Media Council of Kenya (2022) report indicated, mainstream media coverage of gender-based violence during the pandemic tended to be insensitive, incomprehensive, and fairly limited.<sup>75</sup>

This calls for stakeholders to resolve OGBV affecting vulnerable groups such as women, PWDs, and LGBTQ+ people as their experiences and particular circumstances do not necessarily get the same attention as those of other 'mainstream' members of society.

Unlike in the past where GBV was perpetrated offline, the study found that digital platforms exacerbate the scale and reach of GBV.

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73. Akudolu, L.O. et al. (2023). Global rise in gender-based violence against women and girls during COVID-19 lockdown. An insight from Africa. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 10(1), DOI: 10.1080/23311983.2023.2188772

74. Ajayi, T. (2020, May 20). Violence against women and girls in the shadow of COVID-19: Insights from Africa. <https://kujenga-amani.ssrc.org/2020/05/20/violence-against-women-and-girls-in-the-shadow-of-covid-19-insights-from-africa/>

75. Media Council of Kenya (2022). Media coverage of gender-based violence during the COVID 19 period. <https://mediacouncil.or.ke/sites/default/files/downloads/GBV%20Report.pdf>

Platforms have also facilitated new forms of GBV. They therefore bear some responsibility towards addressing the spread of OGBV.

In particular, most OGBV reported in Kenya takes place in Meta owned platforms- Facebook, Whatsapp, and Instagram.

In light of these findings, this study makes the following recommendations to various stakeholders:

#### **Academia:**

- a) Engage in research that provides context and knowledge about OGBV to a wide range of stakeholders, including citizens, policy makers, and law enforcement officers;
- b) Develop methodologies that enable the study of closed digital spaces that foster or distribute OGBV – such as WhatsApp – so as to enable an understanding of how to curtail harmful use without infringing on personal privacy and rights to use a platform;
- c) Study patterns, platforms and evolving technological trends (such as AI) that are/ may become prevalent in the majority world;
- d) Develop media literacy training programmes for children and teenagers that enable them to understand and know how to protect themselves against OGBV.

#### **Civil society:**

- a) Engage citizens in campaigns to understand and protect themselves and communities against gender-based violence in all its forms, including OGBV;
- b) Lobby policymakers to develop and enact laws and policies that are cognisant of the nature and prevalence of OGBV in Kenya;
- c) Contribute through anti-OGBV advocacy efforts to a debunking of the stereotypical representations of OGBV;

- d) Build capacity of GBV-focused organisations to address OGBV.

#### **Citizens:**

- a) Make an active effort to understand and protect themselves and the vulnerable against OGBV;
- b) Practice digital safety for example by protecting personal privacy such as by limiting the sharing of intimate information in public spaces;
- c) Desist from spreading information of a personal nature of another individual on digital platforms without consent especially information that can cause harm. The information can include personal contact details, photographs/videos of children without their parents'/guardians' consent, etc.
- d) Protect children and teenagers from harmful exposure online .

#### **Government/policy makers:**

- a) Enact laws and policies that appreciate the particularities, pervasiveness, and evolving nature of OGBV;
- b) Fund/Support training of law enforcement officers on the nature and impact of OGBV-related crimes;
- c) Fund GBV and OGBV reporting desks at police stations where citizens can file reports to empathetic officers of both genders who have the training and sensitivity to assist all victims, including those from traditionally marginalized groups such as LGBTQ+ persons and PWDs;
- d) Support the running of 'Policare' centres and capacitate them to document the occurrences and actions taken against gender-based violence in all its forms, including OGBV;
- e) Vet judiciary and law enforcement officials handling GBV-related crimes and offences

to ensure they are not perpetrators themselves;

- g) Maintain and continually update data that records gains and losses made in fighting various forms of GBV, including OGBV.

#### Media

- a) Create awareness about OGBV- by spotlighting its occurrence, nature, and how to protect oneself,
- b) Responsibly and comprehensively report OGBV stories and adhere to codes on reporting the cases to protect OGBV survivors,
- c) Extend OGBV reporting to both traditional and digital media to catalyse raising of awareness on the issue,
- d) Partner with civil society and others to educate and raise awareness on OGBV.

#### Social media and other platforms where OGBV occurs:

- a) Curb violence on their platforms,
- b) Assist OGBV victims in evidence preservation,
- c) Remind users about community standards and encourage them to more proactively report instances of OGBV,
- d) Flag abusers/perpetrators of OGBV on the platforms,
- e) Invest in the resources to curb OGBV on their platforms including meaningfully and fairly engaging locally knowledgeable content moderators,
- f) Assist OGBV victims requiring data from their platforms for use in pursuing justice, and
- h) Collaborate with researchers and academia to unmask emerging forms of OGBV.

# Appendices

## Appendix I: Online survey

This survey is being conducted by the Kenya ICT Action Network (KICTANet) to find out the nature and extent to which online gender-based violence takes place in Kenya. Participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your privacy, identity and any information provided here is confidential and will only be accessed and used by the researchers for this assessment. By filling out the questionnaire, you confirm that you understand what this survey is for and are willing to fill it out. Thank you.

### Demographic information

1. Which county do you live in? \_\_\_\_\_ County.

2. How would you describe where you live?

- Urban (big town/city) \_\_\_\_\_
- Rural (small town, village) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_ years.

4. Which gender do you identify with?

- Female \_\_\_\_\_
- Male \_\_\_\_\_
- Intersex \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Which community group do you belong to? Select all that apply:

- Blogger/content creator \_\_\_\_\_
- Person living with disability \_\_\_\_\_
- LGBTQI+ \_\_\_\_\_
- Human Rights Defender \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (Please explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Marital status (select one):

- Never married \_\_\_\_\_
- Married \_\_\_\_\_
- Divorced \_\_\_\_\_



Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What is your occupation (select all that apply):

- Student \_\_\_\_\_
- Entrepreneur \_\_\_\_\_
- Politician \_\_\_\_\_
- Activist \_\_\_\_\_
- Journalist \_\_\_\_\_
- Unemployed \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. How do you access the Internet? (Select all that apply).

- Personal smartphone \_\_\_\_\_
- Borrowed smartphone \_\_\_\_\_
- Personal/family computer \_\_\_\_\_
- School computer \_\_\_\_\_
- Work computer \_\_\_\_\_
- Cyber café \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. How often do you access the Internet?

- Several times a day \_\_\_\_\_
- Once or twice a day \_\_\_\_\_
- Several times a week \_\_\_\_\_
- Once a week \_\_\_\_\_
- A few times in a month \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

10. What do you use the internet for? Select all that apply in order of importance, 1 being the most important, 5 being the least important.

- Work \_\_\_\_\_
- Entertainment \_\_\_\_\_
- Staying in touch with family & friends \_\_\_\_\_
- Engaging in political activity \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Nature and extent of OGBV

11. Have you ever experienced any form of gender-based violence?

- Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- No \_\_\_\_\_

*If your answer is yes, go to questions 12-17. If your answer is no, go to question 18.*

12. What type of online attack have you experienced? (Select all that apply)

- Abusive messages/name-calling \_\_\_\_\_
- Sexual harassment \_\_\_\_\_
- Digital manipulation of images \_\_\_\_\_
- False posts on social media \_\_\_\_\_
- Identity theft on digital platforms \_\_\_\_\_
- Sharing of intimate photos/videos on digital platforms without your consent \_\_\_\_\_
- Sharing of your personal information on digital platforms without your consent \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

- How often have you experienced those attacks? (Select only one).

- Once or twice in total \_\_\_\_\_
- Rarely \_\_\_\_\_
- Several times in a week \_\_\_\_\_
- Several times in a month \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

- On what platforms have you experienced any online attack? (Select all that apply).

- Whatsapp \_\_\_\_\_
- Facebook \_\_\_\_\_
- Twitter \_\_\_\_\_
- Instagram \_\_\_\_\_
- Tiktok \_\_\_\_\_
- Website \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

- Have any of these attacks extended to offline (e.g to verbal , emotional or physical violence)?

- Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- No \_\_\_\_\_
- Not sure \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

- Who has attacked you online? (Select all that apply)

- Female relative \_\_\_\_\_
- Female friend \_\_\_\_\_
- Male relative \_\_\_\_\_
- Male friend \_\_\_\_\_

- Romantic partner \_\_\_\_\_
- Unknown \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

- What is the biggest number of people who have attacked you online in one given incident?

- 1** \_\_\_\_\_
- 1-5** \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 -10** \_\_\_\_\_
- More than 10** \_\_\_\_\_

**Go to Question 23.**

- If you have not experienced online attacks, do you know anyone who has?

- Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- No \_\_\_\_\_

If your answer is yes, answer questions 19-22. If your answer is no, go to question 23.

- How often has that person experienced those attacks? (Select only one).

- Once or twice in total \_\_\_\_\_
- Rarely \_\_\_\_\_
- Several times in a week \_\_\_\_\_
- Several times in a month \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

- What type of online attack did that person experience? (Select all that apply)

- Abusive messages/name-calling \_\_\_\_\_
- Sexual harassment \_\_\_\_\_
- Digital manipulation of images \_\_\_\_\_
- False posts on social media \_\_\_\_\_
- Identity theft on digital platforms \_\_\_\_\_
- Sharing of intimate photos/videos on digital platforms without your consent \_\_\_\_\_
- Sharing of your personal information on digital platforms without your consent \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

- On what platforms did that person experience any online attack? (Select all that apply).

- Whatsapp \_\_\_\_\_
- Facebook \_\_\_\_\_
- Twitter \_\_\_\_\_
- Instagram \_\_\_\_\_
- Tiktok \_\_\_\_\_
- Website \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

- Who attacked that person online? (Select all that apply)

- Female relative \_\_\_\_\_
- Female friend \_\_\_\_\_
- Male relative \_\_\_\_\_
- Male friend \_\_\_\_\_
- Romantic partner \_\_\_\_\_
- Unknown \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

### Policy gaps and recommendations

- Which of the gender-based violence laws are you familiar with? Select all that apply.

- Cybercrime Act \_\_\_\_\_
- Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act 2011 \_\_\_\_\_
- Protection against Domestic Violence Act 2015 \_\_\_\_\_
- Sexual Offences Act 2006 \_\_\_\_\_
- Sexual Gender-based Violence Act 2021 (Nairobi County) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Have the OGBV laws and policies had any impact on your safety?

- Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- No \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Do the OGBV laws and policies limit support for the safe use of digital spaces?

- Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- No \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- What impact has OGBV had on you or anyone who you know has experienced it? Briefly explain.

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- What recommendations can you make to prevent OGBV in Kenya?

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