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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study, conducted by Paradigm Initiative between March and October 2025 reveals a pervasive and deeply gendered pattern of Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) across the six focus countries: Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Young people are overwhelmingly affected, with those aged 18-34 making up the vast majority of survivors. Women bear the brunt of the abuse: A total of 182 women compared to 93 men reported experiencing TFGBV, underscoring the strong feminisation of online violence.

TFGBV prevalence is high, with 67% of respondents reporting direct victimisation. Experiences range from sexual harassment, threats, and misogynistic attacks to severe violations such as stalking, non-consensual image sharing, hacking, sextortion, and identity-based harassment. Personal testimonies reveal profound emotional, psychological, and reputational harm. Platforms most implicated include Facebook, WhatsApp, and X (formerly Twitter), indicating that mainstream social media spaces remain structurally unsafe for many users, especially women and advocates.

Reporting patterns reveal mixed outcomes: while 56% of respondents are aware of platform reporting mechanisms, only about 42% actually utilise them, and a significant proportion (38.8%) report receiving no meaningful support. Many survivors resort to self-censorship, withdrawing from platforms, or relying solely on friends and family. Formal systems: police, employers and institutions are underutilised due to fear, mistrust, or anticipated inaction. Awareness of national laws addressing TFGBV is also uneven, with 47.5% indicating knowledge, 41.3% unaware, and 10.9% unsure.

Overall, the findings reveal systemic gaps across platforms, institutions, and legal frameworks, but also highlight survivors' resilience and continued willingness to seek safer digital spaces.

## INTRODUCTION

Africa's ongoing digital transformation has created new avenues for innovation, participation, and social inclusion. Yet, as digital platforms become integral to communication and public life, they have also emerged as spaces where gendered discrimination and violence are reproduced and amplified. Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV), violence enabled or perpetrated through digital technologies, has evolved into a significant threat to gender equality, freedom of expression and digital rights. These acts of harm take many forms, including cyberstalking, online harassment, impersonation, non-consensual sharing of intimate images, and other digitally mediated violations that often spill into survivors' offline lives.

Despite growing awareness of TFGBV, institutional responses across the continent remain uneven. Many national legal systems lack specific provisions addressing online abuse, while survivors often face significant social, procedural, and technological barriers when seeking redress. Platform-level mechanisms are inconsistent and, in many cases, ineffective. As a result, the gap between policy rhetoric and survivor reality continues to widen. Most research and advocacy efforts to date have focused on legal or regulatory frameworks, leaving the voices and lived experiences of survivors largely absent from evidence-based discourse.

Paradigm Initiative recognises that this gap limits both the understanding of TFGBV and the development of effective solutions. In response, this study adopts a survivor-centered approach that reframes how TFGBV is researched, discussed, and addressed. By prioritising survivors' perspectives, the research seeks to uncover the emotional, social, and systemic dimensions of digital violence that formal reports and statistics often obscure. It also interrogates how survivors navigate reporting systems, access justice, and exercise agency in digital spaces that are frequently hostile or unsafe.

## BACKGROUND



The exponential growth of digital connectivity across Africa has opened new frontiers for expression, entrepreneurship, and civic participation. Yet, alongside these opportunities, digital spaces have become new arenas for gendered violence and exclusion. TFGBV has emerged as one of the most pervasive and least understood threats to digital rights and gender equality on the continent. It extends beyond online harassment; it encompasses a spectrum of abuses including cyberstalking, non-consensual dissemination of intimate images, impersonation, digital surveillance, and coordinated online attacks that silence, shame, and disempower women and gender-diverse persons.

Despite the seriousness of this phenomenon, discourse and policy responses to TFGBV in Africa remain fragmented and, in many cases, detached from the lived realities of survivors. Much of the existing research is legalistic or institutional in nature, focusing on laws, frameworks, and enforcement, while the actual experiences, needs, and coping strategies of survivors remain underexplored. This research deliberately situates survivors at the center of analysis, treating their voices not as anecdotal evidence but as critical data for understanding how TFGBV operates and how systems of redress succeed or fail in practice, complementing other existing approaches.

The study spans six African countries; Cameroon, Kenya, Senegal, Nigeria, Zambia and Zimbabwe, chosen to reflect diverse linguistic, legal, and socio-political systems. Beyond its geographical scope, this report is a strategic contribution to ongoing continental efforts to combat TFGBV. It aligns with the African Union's commitments under the Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Right of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol)<sup>1</sup>, reinforcing regional advocacy for safer, more equitable digital spaces. By grounding this work in lived experience, Paradigm Initiative aims to shift the conversation from abstraction to accountability, from acknowledging TFGBV as a "digital rights issue" to recognising it as a systemic human rights violation that demands coordinated action. This report, therefore, is both an act of documentation and a call to transformation: to build digital ecosystems that uphold dignity, agency, and justice for all users, particularly those whose voices have been most silenced.



## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To document and analyse the lived experiences, forms, and impacts of Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) across six African countries, with emphasis on survivor perspectives.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of existing reporting mechanisms, institutional responses, and redress pathways, both formal and informal, while identifying the barriers that limit survivor access to justice and support.
3. To generate actionable, evidence-based recommendations that inform policy, strengthen platform accountability, and guide advocacy interventions aimed at preventing TFGBV and improving protection and redress for survivors.

## Significance of this study

In 1993, the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women<sup>2</sup>, officially recognised gender-based violence as a fundamental human rights violation. This classification of violence is one that has gained traction all over the world due to the visible harm it causes. With the advent of technology Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) has gained more traction with policy literature, legal analysis, and regulatory frameworks on digital safety expanding. Yet, survivor narratives remain largely absent from both scholarship and policymaking.

The study prioritises the perspectives of those directly affected, thereby providing nuanced evidence of the emotional, psychological, social, and material consequences of TFGBV that formal statistics often fail to capture. It informs evidence-based reforms aligned with regional instruments such as the African Union Digital Transformation Strategy and the Maputo Protocol, while advancing global conversations on gender, technology, and digital justice.

The study advances a human-centred understanding of digital harms at a time when online engagement is essential to education, employment, activism, and civic participation. It demonstrates how TFGBV not only threatens individual safety and dignity but also deters women and gender-diverse people from meaningful participation in public discourse, leadership, and digital economies. This has profound implications for democratic engagement, media pluralism, digital inclusion, and gender equality across the continent.

This study is beneficial for policymakers of all levels from lawmakers, regulators, platforms, and judicial actors to assist in making human-centric policy and legislation that is evidence-based and addresses the concerns of survivors. It will further assist in the design of trauma-aware responses that strengthen or help establish redress pathways, address systemic failures, and close gaps. The study will further empower civil society actors to design advocacy strategies and survivor-centred solutions while holding governments and platforms accountable.

<sup>1</sup> [https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/37077-treaty-charter\\_on\\_rights\\_of\\_women\\_in\\_africa.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/37077-treaty-charter_on_rights_of_women_in_africa.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-elimination-violence-against-women>

The study also validates the experiences of survivors whose experiences are often diminished, it allows them to have a reference point held in solidarity with others from different parts of the continent.

Ultimately, the study contributes to shaping a rights-respecting digital future in Africa by equipping stakeholders with the insights necessary to build safer, more inclusive digital environments where all individuals can exercise agency free from online violence and discrimination.

## Literature Review

### Definitions

Over the last ten years, various terms have been used in an attempt to describe the type of violence referenced in this research. A concept first recognised in an international instrument in CEDAW General Recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19 (1992)<sup>3</sup>, which explicitly recognised that gender-based violence extends to all spaces including digital and technology-mediated environments.

The term "Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence" (TFGBV) specifically was adopted in 2022, when UN Women convened a group of global experts to agree on a common definition of online violence against women. The group initially adopted the term "Technology-Facilitated Violence Against Women (TFVAW)"<sup>4</sup>, defining it as: "Any act that is committed, assisted, aggravated, or amplified by the use of ICTs or other digital tools, that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological, social, political, or economic harm, or other infringements of rights and freedoms."

However, during this process, experts recognised that violence online affects not only women but also gender-diverse and gender non-conforming people. As a result, the broader and more inclusive term "Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV)" was adopted.

Building on this, the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)<sup>5</sup> describes TFGBV as a complex and pervasive problem citing the definition given by Hinson, Mueller, O'Brien-Milne, & Wandera as "Action by one or more people that harms others based on their sexual or gender identity or by enforcing harmful gender norms. This action is carried out using the internet and/or mobile technology and includes stalking, bullying, sex-based harassment, defamation, hate speech, exploitation and gendertrolling."

Similarly, the UNFPA<sup>6</sup> defines TFGBV as an act of violence perpetrated by one or more individuals that is committed, assisted, aggravated and amplified in part or fully by the use of information and communication technologies or digital media, against a person on the basis of their gender. Highlighting that it occurs where digital technology is used to enable, assist or amplify abuse or coercive control of a person or group of people and can take many forms. These definitions highlight that technology functions not merely as a medium but as an enabler and amplifier of pre-existing gender inequalities and patriarchal power structures.

<sup>3</sup><https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/general-recommendation-no-35-2017-gender-based>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/03/expert-group-meeting-report-technology-facilitated-violence-against-women>

<sup>5</sup>[https://www.svri.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2019-03-25/ICRW\\_TFGBVMarketing\\_Brief\\_v3\\_WebReady\\_0.pdf](https://www.svri.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2019-03-25/ICRW_TFGBVMarketing_Brief_v3_WebReady_0.pdf)

<sup>6</sup><https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/A%20Framework%20for%20TFGBV%20Programming.pdf>

Conceptually, TFGBV sits at the intersection of gender-based violence (GBV) and information and communication technologies (ICTs). The Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace, and Security<sup>7</sup> goes a step further to describe that although in reference to TFGBV Digital and Online are used interchangeably, it might occur via digital means but not always online. It is further often seen through the lens of social media harassment, primarily affecting prominent people such as politicians, journalists, and public figures. However, these visible cases represent only a fraction of the problem. The rapid pace of technological innovation and the constant evolution of digital spaces have led to new and shifting forms of TFGBV, making the phenomenon complex to monitor, document, and effectively address.

Acts such as online stalking, image-based sexual abuse, non-consensual distribution of intimate images, doxing, deepfake pornography, cyberstalking, and gendered disinformation campaigns all constitute forms of TFGBV. Despite increasing global consensus on the term, no single, universally accepted definition of TFGBV exists.<sup>8</sup>

## Gender, power, and digital spaces

Women, girls and other vulnerable gender groupings such as LGBTQI+ have suffered disproportionate harms from TFGBV across all levels of society. Concerningly, according to an Economist Intelligence Unit report, a sizeable proportion of women around the world have “witnessed or experienced online violence,” with 62% feeling a sense of hopelessness because little was done to address the issue.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, TFGBV incidences continue to be underreported with one of the reasons being attributed to societal stigma and attitudes of victim blaming around online harms and abuse.<sup>10</sup>

The internet presents a double-edged sword for these groups; the scourge of TFGBV is only increasing in complexity and threat at a time when increasing digital inclusion and the coming online of more people means that digital technologies are playing an increasingly integral role in how individuals live their lives, relate and engage with various processes such as civic and political engagement.

TFGBV trends are also increasingly reflecting cultural and social norms or beliefs that contribute to the power imbalance experienced by women and other marginalised groups. As digital spaces increasingly mirror the views expressed in physical spaces, this presents distinct risks to women and other vulnerable groups when accessing and making use of ICTs.

## Prevalence

Data on TFGBV prevalence remains limited due to underreporting, inconsistent definitions, and gaps in national statistics. Available research often covers a cross section of society, it however indicates a significant and growing global concern.

An Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) study<sup>11</sup>, “Measuring the Prevalence of Online Violence Against Women”, provides one of the most comprehensive global snapshots of technology-facilitated gender-based violence. Covering 45 countries, the report reveals an 85% prevalence rate of TFGBV targeting women worldwide.

<sup>7</sup> <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Technology-Facilitated-Gender-Based-Violence.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> [https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/unfpa-tfgbv-making\\_all\\_spaces\\_safe.pdf](https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/unfpa-tfgbv-making_all_spaces_safe.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Economist Intelligence Unit (2021). Measuring the prevalence of online violence against women, Economist Intelligence Unit.

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

<sup>10</sup> <https://blogs.icrc.org/law-and-policy/2024/01/04/online-violence-real-life-impacts-women-girls-humanitarian-settings/#:~:text=There%20are%20significant%20gaps%20in%20data%20and%20underreporting,methodologies%2C%20societal%20stigma%20and%20access%20to%20relevant%20services.>

<sup>11</sup> <https://onlineviolencewomen.eiu.com/>

According to the findings, 38% of women globally have personally experienced online violence, while 65% know someone who has been targeted. Even more striking, 85% of women report having witnessed online violence against other women. Younger women,

especially those aged 18 to 29 are at the highest risk, with nearly half (45%) reporting direct experiences compared to 31% among older women. On the other hand the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse,<sup>12</sup> reports nearly 38% of women globally have experienced some form of online harassment, with young women (ages 18–29) disproportionately affected.

While a 2021 Pollicy study<sup>13</sup> across Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania found that over 70% of women internet users had encountered online abuse, ranging from unsolicited sexual advances to coordinated attacks.

## Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods research design combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to generate a comprehensive understanding of Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) across the six African countries. The design was developed to capture both the measurable scope of TFGBV and the nuanced, context-specific experiences of survivors.

The quantitative component consisted of an online survey aimed at gathering data on the prevalence, patterns, and perceived impacts of TFGBV, as well as survivors' experiences with reporting and redress mechanisms. The survey was distributed through Paradigm Initiative's networks and digital platforms, yielding 276 valid responses from individuals across the six countries and beyond. Respondents included persons of diverse age groups, gender identities, and digital engagement levels, providing a rich snapshot of how TFGBV manifests across different demographic and national contexts.

To deepen the analysis, the qualitative component complemented survey data with insights drawn from key informant interviews (KIIs) and expert consultations. These interviews involved practitioners, digital rights advocates, gender specialists, and representatives from civil society organizations working on online safety and gender justice. We also drew on additional case data submitted through RIPOTI<sup>14</sup>, Paradigm Initiative's digital rights reporting platform, to enrich and validate the survey findings. This approach enabled the research team to triangulate findings, contextualize survivor narratives, and examine how institutional and policy frameworks respond to technology-facilitated abuse.

The integration of these methods allowed the study to combine statistical trends with human-centered insights, ensuring that survivor voices remained central while situating their experiences within broader systemic patterns. The mixed-methods design thus provided both depth and breadth, aligning with Paradigm Initiative's commitment to evidence-based advocacy and survivor-centered policy reform.

<sup>12</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64abe2b21121040013ee6576/Technology\\_facilitated\\_gender\\_based\\_violence\\_preliminary\\_landscape\\_analysis.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64abe2b21121040013ee6576/Technology_facilitated_gender_based_violence_preliminary_landscape_analysis.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> <https://ogbv.policity.org/report.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Ripoti enables you to report digital rights violations. We are dedicated to safeguarding the principles of digital freedom <https://ripoti.africa>

## Collection, Ethical considerations, and Data analysis



The target population for this study comprised individuals with lived or observed experiences of Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) in the six focus countries: Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, Zambia and Zimbabwe, as well as professionals and experts engaged in gender, digital rights, or online safety work. The inclusion of both survivors and practitioners ensured a holistic understanding of TFGBV that captures individual, social, and institutional perspectives.

A purposive sampling technique was adopted to ensure that the data reflected diversity in geography, gender, age, and digital engagement. For the survey, respondents were reached through Paradigm Initiative's online platforms, partner organisations, and social media networks.

Strong ethical safeguards were applied throughout the research process to protect participants' dignity, privacy, and psychological well-being. Participation was with informed consent obtained at all stages, and respondents were not required to provide any identifying information. Sensitive questions were designed with opt-out options to avoid retraumatization, and all testimonies presented in this report have been anonymised.

Data analysis involved a systematic review of quantitative responses using descriptive statistics to identify prevalence, patterns and comparative trends across countries and demographic groups. Qualitative responses were examined through thematic analysis, allowing the research team to surface recurring themes such as sexualized harassment, threats of violence, identity-based attacks, and gaps in reporting and redress. This integrated analytic approach ensured that the final findings reflect both empirical rigor and survivor-centered interpretation.

# Findings & Results

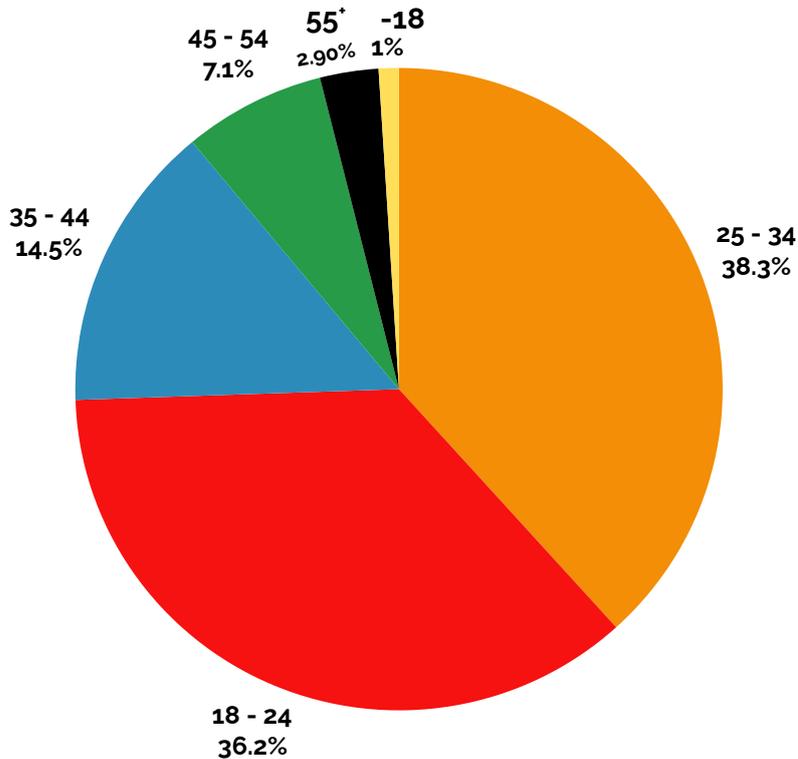
## Forms, Frequency, and Platforms

The analysis presented in this report draws from the combined quantitative and qualitative datasets collected across the six study countries. The aim is to unpack not only the prevalence and manifestations of TFGBV but also the deeper emotional, social, and systemic dimensions that shape survivors' experiences. Survey responses from 276 participants provide a broad overview of emerging patterns, while insights from expert and key informant interviews offer contextual interpretation of these trends. Together, these sources allow for a layered analysis that connects individual narratives with institutional realities.

This section examines the survivors' responses through a series of interconnected themes that reflect how they encounter violence, make decisions about reporting, navigate available support mechanisms, and build resilience in hostile digital environments. Patterns drawn from the Ripoti platform further illuminate the typologies of abuse and highlight persistent gaps in response systems across the six countries. By integrating survivor accounts with expert perspectives and digital case data, the analysis aims to present a grounded and comprehensive understanding of TFGBV as it is lived, perceived, and addressed within diverse contexts.

### What is your age group ? / Quelle est votre tranche d'âge ?

276 Responses



Analysis of the survey data indicates that TFGBV disproportionately affects younger age groups. Among the 276 respondents, the 25-34 years age group emerged as the most affected, with 105 individuals reporting experiences of digital abuse. This is closely followed by the 18-24 years age group, which accounted for 99 respondents, highlighting that young adults are particularly vulnerable to TFGBV.

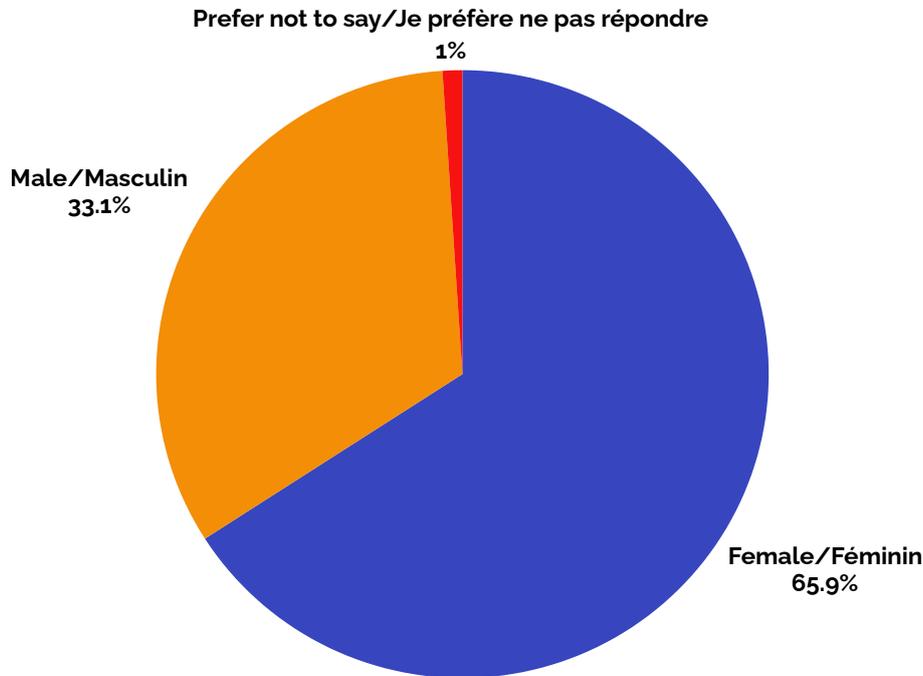
Overall, the data reflects a predominantly young demographic experiencing digital violence, suggesting that age-related digital engagement and online visibility may be key factors influencing exposure to abuse. Notably, only 9 respondents were aged 55 and above, indicating either lower digital participation among older adults or reduced reporting of such incidents in this age group.

### Gender distribution

The survey findings reveal a striking gender disparity in experiences of TFGBV. Of the 276 respondents, 182 identified as women, compared to only 93 men, underscoring the feminization of technology-facilitated abuse. This disproportion highlights the heightened vulnerability of women in digital spaces, reflecting broader patterns of gender inequality and systemic online harassment. The data suggests that women are not only more frequently targeted but may also face unique forms of abuse, including gender-specific harassment, threats, and image-based violations.

#### What is your gender ? / Quelle est votre sexe ?

276 Responses



## When asked if they have had personal experience with TFGBV

The survey reveals a high prevalence of Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) among respondents. Of the 276 participants, 186 individuals (67%) reported experiencing some form of TFGBV, while only 84 respondents indicated that they had not been subjected to digital abuse. This finding underscores the widespread nature of TFGBV and highlights its significance as a critical barrier to safe and inclusive digital participation.

Analysis of incident frequency further illustrates how these experiences manifest over time. The most common pattern is occasional exposure, reported by 113 respondents, suggesting that many individuals encounter sporadic but impactful instances of abuse. A substantial number, 76 respondents, indicated experiencing TFGBV once, reflecting that even singular incidents can be profoundly traumatic. Meanwhile, 23 respondents reported continuous harassment, highlighting a smaller yet highly vulnerable group facing persistent and targeted digital abuse.

“Bullying me because of not managing to use certain technological devices” said respondent 011”

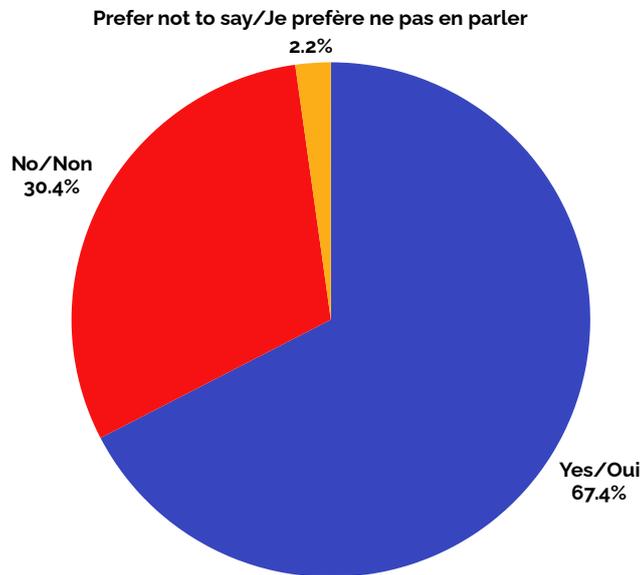
These patterns emphasize that TFGBV is not only widespread but also diverse in its frequency and intensity. While occasional or one-time incidents dominate, continuous harassment signals a critical need for sustained protective measures and support systems for survivors. Understanding these exposure patterns is essential for developing interventions that are both responsive and preventative, tailored to the varying degrees of risk and harm experienced across different survivor profiles.

Respondent 211 recounted “Il y'a quelqu'un qui m'envoyait des messages sur snap puis insta. A l'époque, je voyais nos échanges comme rien de bien grave juste deux « amis » (il est beaucoup plus âgé que moi et j'étais mineur) mais c'est avec du recul que j'ai réalisé que c'était du harcèlement parce qu'il me forçait à envoyer des choses que je voulais pas( et que j'ai refusé bien sûr).”

There was someone who used to send me messages on Snapchat and then on Instagram. At the time, I didn't see our conversations as anything serious, just two 'friends' (he was much older than me, and I was a minor). But looking back, I realized that it was harassment because he was pressuring me to send things I didn't want to send (and which I refused, of course).

**Have you ever experienced any form of Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV)?/  
Avez-vous été déjà victime d'une forme de violence basée sur le genre facilitée par la technologie?  
(TFGBV)**

276 Responses



Respondents who reported experiencing TFGBV were asked to specify the forms of abuse they encountered. The data highlights that online harassment was the most prevalent form, reported by 153 participants, encompassing behaviors such as name-calling, threats, and other hostile interactions. This was closely followed by unwanted sexual messages or images, experienced by 136 respondents, indicating a significant gendered and sexualized dimension to online abuse. Additionally, 64 respondents reported non-consensual sharing of intimate images, reflecting the severe and deeply personal nature of certain TFGBV incidents.

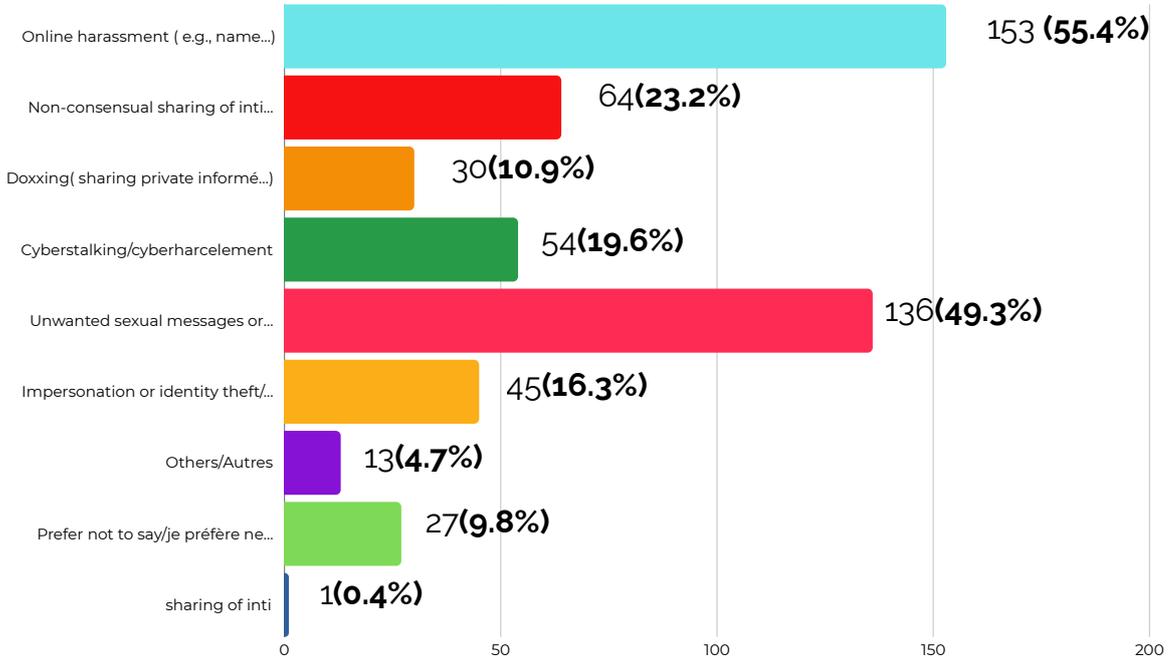
Other forms of abuse captured in the survey included cyberstalking, impersonation or identity theft, doxing (sharing private information without consent), as well as instances reported under "Other," allowing participants to describe experiences not covered by predefined categories. While less frequent, these forms of abuse contribute to a broader understanding of the diverse ways TFGBV manifests across digital spaces.

The data underscores that TFGBV is multifaceted and often overlapping. Many survivors experience more than one type of abuse, reflecting the complex and intersecting nature of digital violence. Understanding the specific forms of harm is critical for designing targeted interventions, platform policies, and support mechanisms that address the unique challenges posed by each type of abuse, from harassment and sexualized messaging to image-based violations and identity exploitation.

When asked further If you feel comfortable, please briefly describe your experience.

**What forms of TFGBV did you experience?/ Quelles formes de TFGBV avez-vous rencontrées ?**

276 Responses



The survey and narratives reveal that Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) occurs across multiple digital platforms, with social media being the most common space for abuse. Respondents reported harassment on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) , Instagram, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and even dating apps. Many survivors described repeated exposure to abuse, emphasising both frequency and platform-specific targeting. For instance, Respondent 163 shared, "I am constantly sexually harassed by men on Facebook," while Respondent 095 recounted:

Second was on LinkedIn when I was 18, two men kept sending me genitalia photos for weeks every time I came online, called me names, racial and misogynistic slurs... I couldn't take it anymore and left LinkedIn."

These testimonies indicate that TFGBV is persistent and can force survivors to withdraw from digital spaces entirely.

Frequency of abuse varied among respondents, with incidents ranging from one-time traumatic events to continuous harassment over years. Respondent 185 described a long-term experience:

"It's so common that it's become normal... I was also harassed by a man who had feelings for me that I didn't share. He attacked me many times on social media and email and sent messages to my family, friends and even at work. This has been going on for over 10 years."

Similarly, Respondent 006 experienced concentrated harassment after advocating for women's rights, stating:

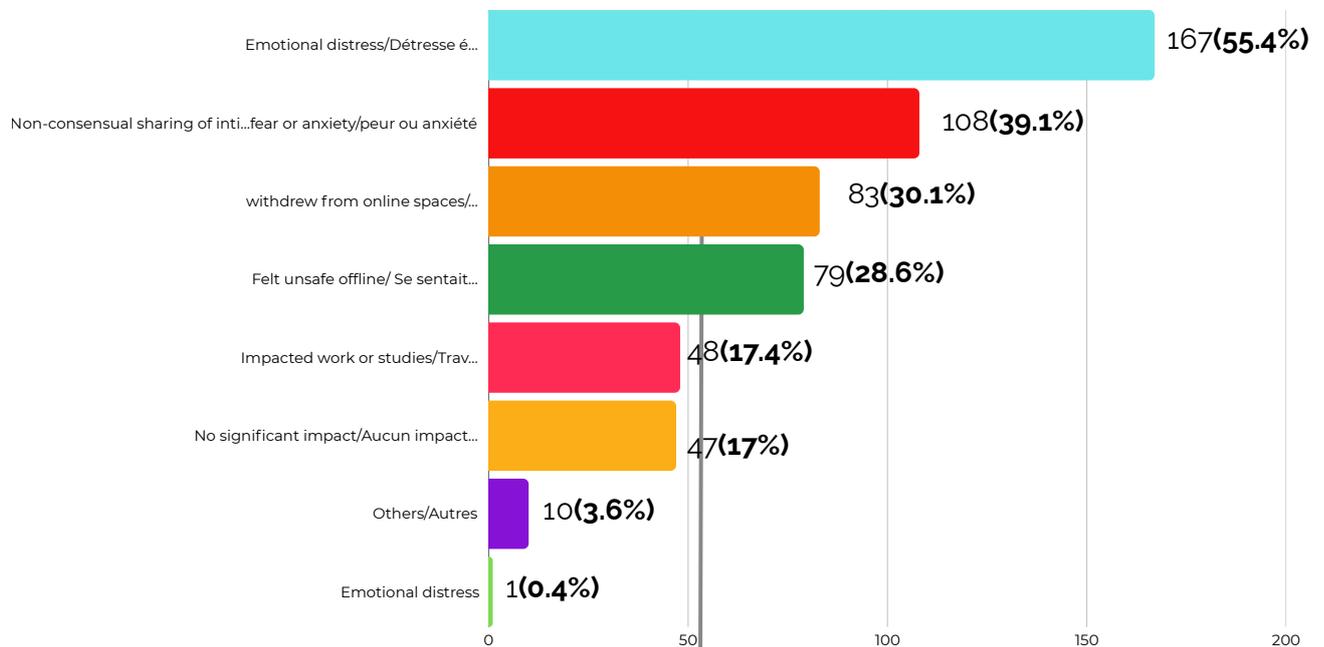
“The next day I kept receiving messages... insults, threats and harassment for being a feminist, for being an educated woman (I have a PhD) and for challenging patriarchy. Threats included threats of sexual violence for just challenging patriarchy and the status quo.”

Such accounts highlight that TFGBV is not only frequent but can also be targeted, coordinated, and context-specific, particularly against women challenging social norms or engaging in activism.

The forms of abuse reported were diverse and often overlapping. Respondents detailed online harassment, sexual messaging, cyberstalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images, identity theft, and doxing. As Respondent 231 described, “Some men sending me their nudes and a comment in my messenger... I wonder how sex with a short girl feels like,” while Respondent 172 noted the compounded harm of intimate image abuse: “My privacy was breached by a previous partner of mine, and my personal information and details were being put in public, and my photos were leaked to family members. I was also subjected to sextortion, online sexual harassment, and bullying.” The cumulative effect of these abuses demonstrates that TFGBV is multidimensional, combining sexual, emotional, and reputational harm.

**What impact did the experience have on you?/ Quel impact cette expérience a-t-elle eu sur vous ?**

276 Responses



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The impact of these experiences on survivors' mental health and daily lives is profound. Respondents described anxiety, emotional distress, palpitations, and a sense of isolation.

“It was not a very good experience because it played with my mental health, caused me palpitations and anxiety. It also almost destroyed my online reputation.” Respondent 103

Others, like Respondent 114, highlighted the extreme psychological toll:

“Yes someone posted a video of me having sex and claimed that I was sleeping with my daughter... The trolling and abuse was massive, I almost committed suicide.”

Similarly Respondent 104 recounted in French;

“Yes, I have been a victim of technology-facilitated gender-based violence. The incident took place on social media, when someone created a fake account using my name, my profile photo, and posted degrading and humiliating messages about me. The comments were sexist and damaging to my reputation, insinuating things about my private life and my integrity.

After that, I started receiving insulting and threatening private messages from unknown accounts. Some people even shared screenshots to make fun of me. This situation caused me a lot of anxiety and sometimes kept me from logging into my own accounts out of fear of further attacks.

Beyond the harm to my reputation, I felt a constant sense of insecurity, as if my online and offline life were being watched. This experience deeply affected me and made me aware of the scale of digital violence and the urgent need to strengthen protection and accountability on online platforms.”

These narratives underline the urgent need for mental health support and accessible survivor-centered resources for victims of TFGBV.

The gaps in reporting and support mechanisms were also a recurring theme. Many survivors attempted to report abuse on platforms or to authorities but found the systems ineffective or inaccessible. Respondent 187 reflected:

“...I tried reporting this incident on Twitter then but there was no mechanism... I wanted to sue legally but it was exhausting. There is need for a specific section of the harassment”

reporting that should take into account the abuse feminists go through online for speaking out against patriarchy.”

Similarly, Respondent 120 shared the additional emotional burden of navigating reporting systems:

“I had to take steps to report the accounts, restrict my privacy settings, and rely on a trusted support network to process the emotional impact. It also made me more determined to advocate for safer digital spaces for women and girls.”

The survey and narratives reveal that survivors of Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV) not only endure abuse but also take a range of actions to cope or seek redress. Common strategies included self-censoring, temporarily leaving accounts, closing social media for a while, blocking offenders, or attempting to call back to seek peace.

Respondent 113 shared, “I blocked the offenders and left my account for some time to recover,” while Respondent 199 noted, “I had to close my social media for a while and self-censor my posts.”

These responses highlight the emotional toll of TFGBV, where survivors often feel compelled to alter their online behavior or withdraw from digital spaces to protect themselves.

When it came to reporting the incidents, outcomes were mixed and often unsatisfactory. Some respondents experienced minimal or delayed institutional response. For example, Respondent 147 explained,

“Well at some point it stopped but sometimes it kept coming. Then at some point Facebook told me they see no reasons to ban or block the person.”

Others received partial interventions, such as content removal or account restrictions: Respondent 205 noted, “The comment was pulled down,” while Respondent 210 shared, “His account was disabled/restricted.”

A few cases, however, involved more substantial follow-up. Respondent 020 recounted

“The Nigerian intelligence agency arrested the man that made rape threats against me and he was made to apologise after they’d held him for a few days,”

illustrating that when authorities are involved, accountability is possible. Several respondents reported receiving sympathy but no real redress, such as Respondent 041, who said, “I received some sympathy but nothing else. I also blocked the offenders,” or Respondent 178, who shared, “Facebook said they will get back to me,” reflecting the gaps and delays in platform responses. Other survivors simply took matters into their own hands, deleting content or blocking offenders to regain a sense of safety.

These narratives demonstrate that reporting and redress mechanisms are often inconsistent, leaving survivors to rely on self-protective strategies that may limit their engagement online or affect their participation in advocacy, work, or social interaction. These testimonies collectively reveal several key patterns:

1. Women and young adults are disproportionately affected, particularly those engaged in activism or public advocacy.
2. Social media platforms are the primary spaces for harassment, with Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and LinkedIn featuring prominently.
3. Abuse is multifaceted and often cumulative, combining sexual harassment, threats, image-based violations, stalking, and reputational harm.
4. Frequency varies, from isolated incidents to continuous, long-term harassment, with cumulative effects intensifying emotional and psychological harm.
5. Support and reporting mechanisms are largely inadequate, leaving survivors to navigate trauma largely on their own.

## Digital Platforms Involved

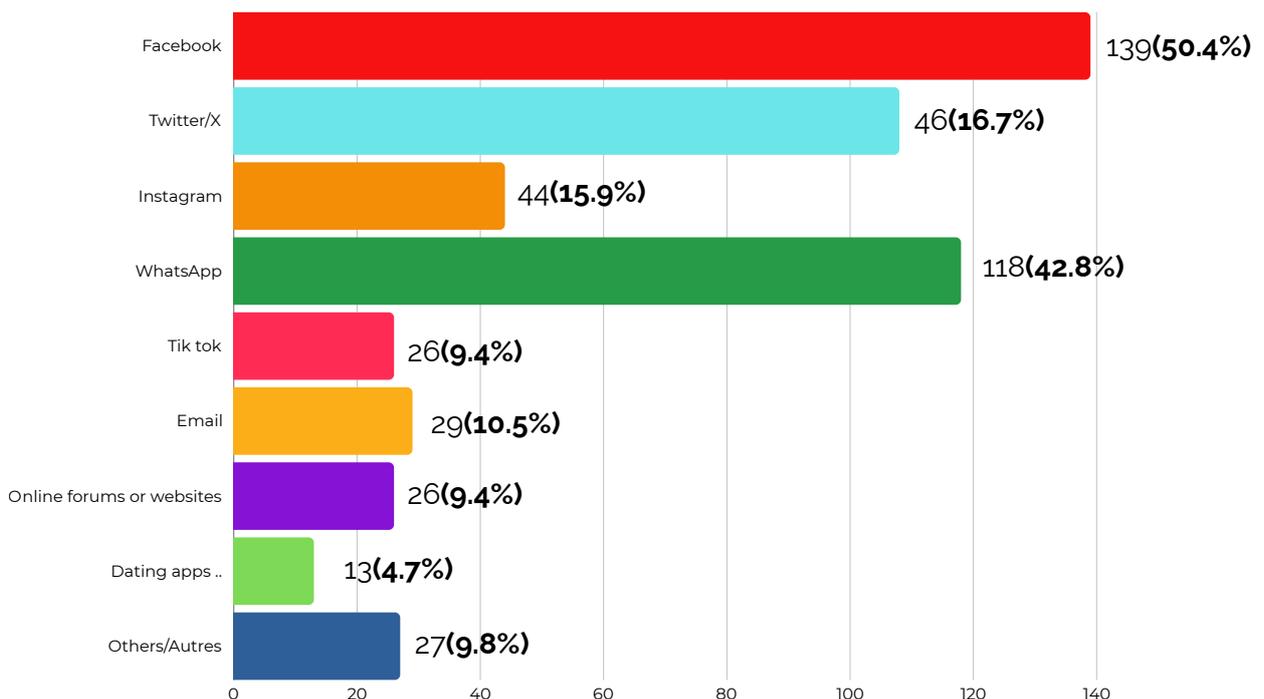
Analysis of survey responses highlights that TFGBV occurs across a range of digital platforms, with certain platforms emerging as high-risk spaces for abuse. Facebook was identified as the most common platform for incidents, with 139 respondents reporting experiences of harassment or abuse there. The prevalence of Facebook-related incidents underscores its role as a central hub for social interaction, which simultaneously exposes users to heightened vulnerability. As several respondents noted in their testimonies, harassment on Facebook often involved sexualized comments, threats, and image-based abuse, making it a primary site of concern.

WhatsApp was the second most reported platform, with 118 respondents indicating experiences of abuse via private messaging. This highlights the vulnerability of messaging platforms, where harassment can occur in a more private and often less monitored environment, making it harder for survivors to document and report incidents. The closed nature of messaging apps like WhatsApp allows perpetrators to target individuals directly, often exacerbating feelings of isolation and distress.

Other social networks, including X (formerly Twitter) (46 respondents) and Instagram (44 respondents), were also cited as platforms where TFGBV occurs, though with comparatively lower incidence. X (formerly Twitter) was described as a “problematic social network” for survivors of advocacy and feminist engagement, while Instagram, as a visual platform, was noted for harassment related to images and visual content. Snapchat and Telegram were also reported, though in smaller numbers compared to the rest.

Overall, the findings suggest a risk hierarchy among digital platforms, with Facebook and WhatsApp presenting the highest exposure to TFGBV, followed by X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram.

**Where did the TFGBV occur?/ Où avez-vous été victime de TFGBV ?**  
276 Responses



## Did you take any action?

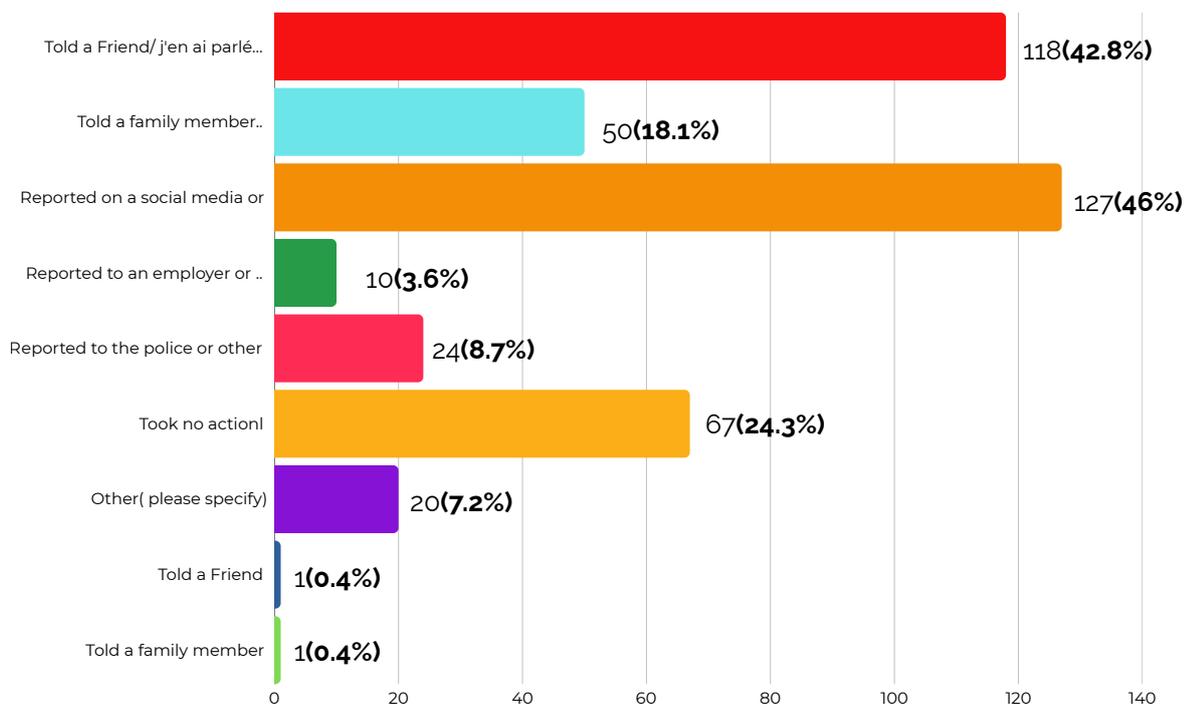
The survey findings reveal a range of responses by survivors when faced with Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV), reflecting both personal coping strategies and attempts to seek redress. Among the 276 respondents, 118 individuals (42.8%) reported that they told a friend about their experience, indicating the importance of informal support networks in mitigating the immediate emotional impact of abuse.

A slightly higher proportion, 127 respondents (46%), reported the incident on the social media platform where the abuse occurred, demonstrating some engagement with formal digital reporting mechanisms. However, only 24.3% (67 respondents) took no action at all, reflecting either fear, emotional exhaustion, or skepticism about the effectiveness of available channels. A small subset, 8.7%, reported the abuse to police or other authorities, highlighting the underutilization of formal and conventional legal avenues for protection and redress. Other responses included notifying family members or employers, as survivors often employ multiple strategies to manage the situation.

Survivor testimonies provide insight into these actions and their outcomes. Many relied on self-protective strategies, such as blocking offenders or temporarily leaving social media, with mixed results

### Did you take any action to response to the experience?/ Avez-vous pris des mesures à la suite de cette expérience ?

276 Responses





**CLICK THAT HURT .**  
An exploratory TFGBV study of  
CYBERSYING: A survivor narrates

## Awareness & Reporting

Asked if they are aware of any reporting platform. The survey reveals a significant knowledge gap among survivors regarding reporting mechanisms for Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV). Out of 276 respondents, 120 individuals indicated that they were unaware of any mechanisms available on digital platforms or through formal authorities, while 155 respondents reported being aware of some form of reporting system. This highlights a critical need for awareness-raising efforts, as many survivors may not know how to seek help or hold perpetrators accountable.

Even among those who were aware of reporting channels, utilization remains limited. Only 117 respondents had actually used available mechanisms to report incidents of TFGBV, revealing a gap between knowledge and action. Survivors cited various reasons for underutilization, including lack of confidence in the effectiveness of the mechanism, fear of retaliation, emotional exhaustion, or previous experiences of inaction by platforms and authorities.

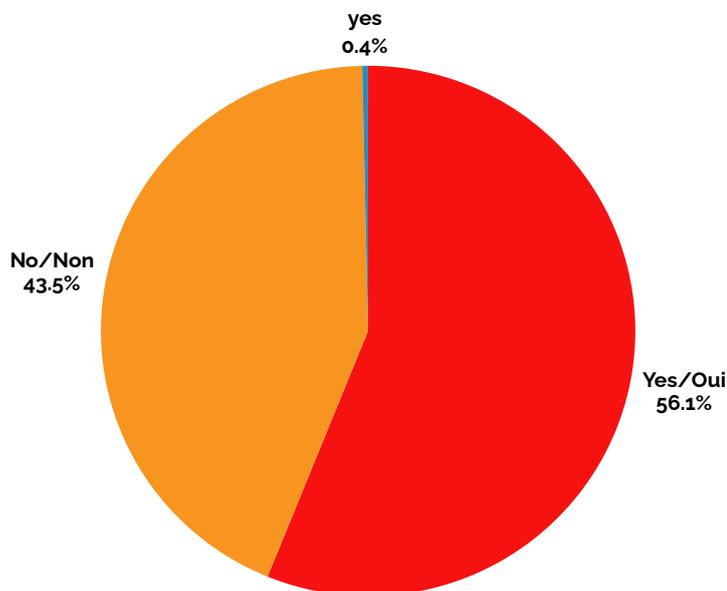
This gap between awareness and actual use of reporting systems is reflected in survivor testimonies. Respondent 108 shared

“The Nigerian intelligence agency arrested the man that made rape threats against me and he was made to apologise after they’d held him for a few days,”

Respondent 201 described a similar experience with limited platform response: “Facebook said they will get back to me,” while Respondent 210 noted that even when platforms took action, it was often partial, stating, “His account was disabled/restricted, but the harassment continued in other forms.”

### Are you aware of the reporting mechanism on the social media platform the TFGBV happened ?/Connaissez-vous le mécanisme de signa...rme de réseau social où s'est produit le TFGBV ?

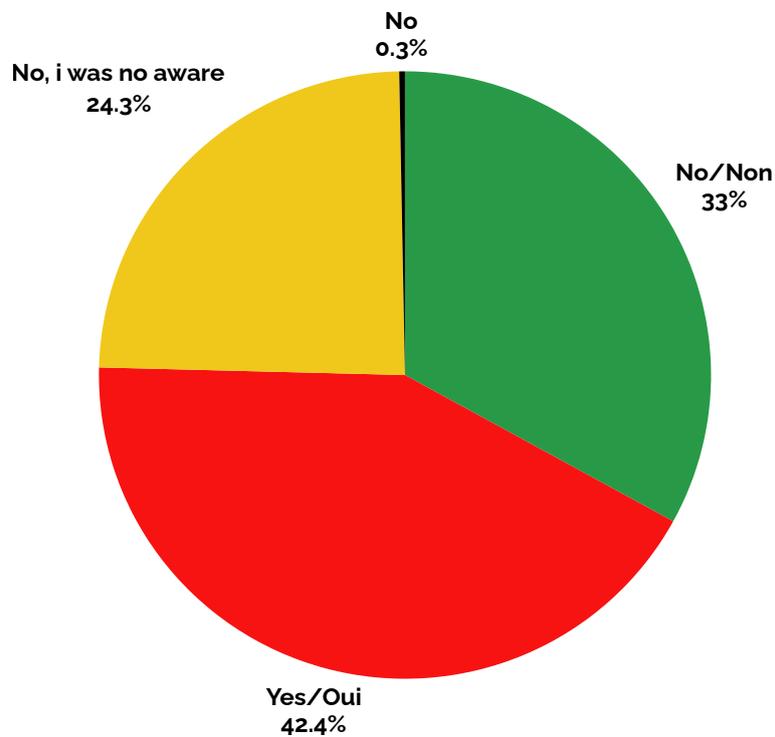
276 Responses



Following awareness of reporting mechanisms on social media platforms, respondents were asked whether they had actually used these tools to address incidents of TFGBV. Among the 276 respondents, 42.4% reported that they had used the reporting mechanisms. Conversely, 33% of respondents who were aware of the reporting mechanisms chose not to use them, often citing reasons such as skepticism about platform responsiveness, fear of retaliation, or emotional exhaustion. Additionally, 24.3% of respondents indicated that they were not aware of any reporting mechanism,

**If yes, did you use it?/Si oui, l'avez-vous utilisé ?**

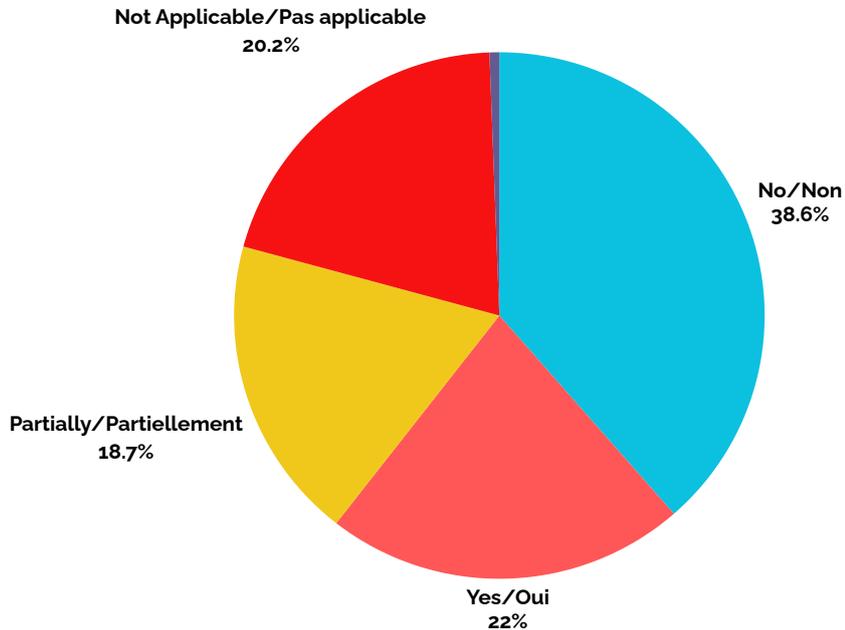
276 Responses



Respondents were asked whether they felt supported by the social media platforms where the TFGBV incidents occurred. The findings reveal significant gaps in platform responsiveness and survivor support. Only 22.1% of respondents reported feeling adequately supported, while 18.5% felt partially supported, indicating limited or conditional assistance. Alarming, 38.8% of respondents stated that they did not feel supported at all, underscoring a pervasive lack of confidence in platforms' ability to protect users from abuse. Many users feel their reports are ignored, delayed, or only partially addressed, leaving them vulnerable to continued harassment and emotional distress.

**Did you feel supported by the Platform(s) where the incident occurred?/Avez-vous été soutenu par les plateformes sur lesquelles l'incident s'est passé ?**

276 Responses



Lastly Respondents were asked whether they were aware of any laws or policies in their countries addressing Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV). The responses indicate a mixed level of awareness. Nearly half of respondents (47.5%) reported that they were aware of such legal frameworks, while 41.3% stated they were not aware, and 10.9% were unsure.

Even among those aware of laws or policies, practical access and enforcement remain concerns, as many respondents reported relying primarily on informal coping strategies or platform reporting mechanisms. For example, Respondent 220 shared,

“I had to take steps to report the accounts, restrict my privacy settings, and rely on a trusted support network to process the emotional impact,”

indicating that legal protections alone are often insufficient without accessible enforcement or guidance.



## Survivor agency and voice



The data on survivor actions, including inaction, highlights existing gaps in support systems and a lack of trust in formal mechanisms for addressing TFGBV. Of the 276 respondents who reported experiencing a violation, respondents preferred seeking informal, peer-based support over official institutional remedies. The most common actions included posting on social media (46%) and telling a friend (42.8%), indicating that survivors mainly rely on their immediate social networks and digital spaces where the harm occurred to seek validation, content removal, or emotional support. Telling a family member (18.1%) was also a common step. The low engagement with formal systems is concerning, with only 8.7% reporting to the police and just 3.6% reporting to an employer.

The findings indicate that, in some cases, survivors lose confidence and suppress their desire to express themselves online, as evidenced by one respondent who stated, "I started self-censoring to avoid the violence that comes with being a loud feminist voice." This clearly illustrates the negative impact of TFGBV, which restricts survivors' freedom of expression and leaves them without a platform to share their views openly. Some survivors responded by deleting their accounts and creating new ones to avoid perpetrators. Others reported that they used blocking as a way to protect themselves, with some blocking perpetrators they knew personally. Some survivors faced the situation directly by confronting the perpetrators. One explained, "I called the person to order and warned him because it was someone known to me." This comment shows the harsh reality: perpetrators are not always strangers; sometimes they are people we know. Another survivor shared,

"I've asked nicely for it to stop. I try to discuss it to explain that it is not appropriate. It doesn't always work, but sometimes it does. Sometimes I just ignore it. And often I block the person."

## Applying a Victim/Survivor - Centred Approach

To better address access to justice for victims and survivors, interventions by States, the private sector and any other individuals or entities handling these cases should be trauma-informed and victim-centred. Gender Safe advances three main areas where this approach addresses the needs of those affected by gender based violence:

1. **Protection.** Any measures to protect victims or survivors should aim at ensuring that potential victims and survivors don't suffer any (further) harm, in the form of retaliation, social exclusion or other.<sup>15</sup>
2. **Prosecution.** In law enforcement and prosecuting gender-based violence, investigative actions, disciplinary procedures and sanctions for perpetrators must be mainstreamed with a victim-centred, trauma-informed and gender-responsive approach.<sup>16</sup>
3. **Provision of Services.** Service staff who interface with victims and survivors should be trained and qualified professionals, able to offer support and guidance and respond to the needs of survivors with sensitivity and understanding, demonstrating being trauma-informed and victim-centred.<sup>17</sup>

The above approach also applies to handling TFGBV, which may be complex for government and private sector actors with limited understanding of technology and trauma. To better apply a victim/survivor-centred approach, it is essential to ensure that victims are protected, incorporating a 'do-no-harm' approach to receiving complaints at both police and private sector platform levels. This approach aims to avoid re-traumatising and retriggering victims, while guaranteeing anonymity to the extent that is practical and relevant in investigations, safeguarding their rights.

Furthermore, both government agencies and the private sector should ensure they research the ever-evolving forms of TFGBV, train their personnel on TFGBV and trauma, consult with victims, survivors or their representatives to ensure interventions are responsive to lived experiences and ensure that measures taken to address TFGBV meet the physical and psychological needs of victims and survivors. This also necessitates training of personnel handling TFGBV cases to better understand trauma and its impact on the brain, on memory and the reporting of abuse.<sup>18</sup> Understanding the effects of TFGBV on victims and survivors helps avoid, for instance, a police officer turning away a victim for reporting the non-consensual sharing of intimate images on the basis that it is her partner who posted the content online, so there is no crime.

<sup>15</sup> <https://gendersafe.eu/pledge/adopting-a-victim-centred-trauma-informed-approach/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://gendersafe.eu/pledge/adopting-a-victim-centred-trauma-informed-approach/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://gendersafe.eu/pledge/adopting-a-victim-centnon-consensualunderstand.ed-trauma-informed-approach/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://gendersafe.eu/pledge/adopting-a-victim-centnon-consensualunderstand.ed-trauma-informed-approach/>

## Human Rights-Based Approach



The basis of addressing TFGBV is rooted in the promotion of human rights, as enshrined in treaties to which the six countries represented in this research are signatory states. In addition, several soft law guidelines have provided critical recommendations for addressing the harms identified in the findings presented in this report, informing the recommendations that follow.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,<sup>19</sup> in Article 9, guarantees that everyone has the right to the liberty and security of a person. According to General Comment No. 35, Article 9 (Liberty and Security of Person), the right to security of a person in the ICCPR encompasses the right to personal security. The right to personal security also obliges States parties to respond to patterns of violence against categories of victims, such as intimidation of human rights defenders and journalists, retaliation against witnesses, violence against women, including domestic violence, violence against persons based on their sexual orientation or gender identity,<sup>20</sup> among others. The same right is enshrined in Article 6 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-ri-ghts>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-ri-ghts>

Article 3 of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)<sup>21</sup> calls on State Parties to take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men. Article 4 of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol)<sup>22</sup> calls on States to eliminate all forms of violence against women, to identify the causes and consequences of violence against women and take appropriate measures to prevent and eliminate such violence and to punish the perpetrators of violence against women and implement programmes for the rehabilitation of women victims.

The ACHPR 2019 Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa<sup>23</sup> highlights in Principle 42(6) that the harmful sharing of personal information, such as child sexual abuse or the non-consensual sharing of intimate images,

shall be established as offences punishable by law. In the context of this study, laws need to guarantee victims of non-consensual sharing of intimate images of recourse through the law. In 2022, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) progressively addressed TFGBV against Women through Resolution 522 on the Protection of Women Against Digital Violence in Africa<sup>24</sup> which guides African States on legal reforms and the victim/survivor-centred approach.

Resolution 522 is progressive and followed in 2024 by the ACHPR Resolution 591 on the need to undertake a study on digital violence against Women's Rights in Africa<sup>25</sup> that tasked the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa and the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa to undertake the study on digital violence against women in Africa. This report provides insights that can be leveraged by the ACHPR in unpacking underlying causes, manifestations, and impacts of digital violence against women in Africa in compliance with the appeal in Resolution 591 to all stakeholders to cooperate with the Special Rapporteurs to support their study.

The African recently in passed the African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and which enshrines protection of women from violence in the cyberspace. Article 5 calls on States to enact and enforce laws that fight all forms of violence against women and girls in the private and public spheres, and in cyberspace, to ensure that the criminal justice system is designed to provide effective forensic, case management, prosecutorial, and legal services to victims, among others while Article 6(b) provides that States should prioritise a victim-centred approach in ensuring access to justice,

preventive and protective support services and the provision of comprehensive healthcare, legal, educational, and other services. This provides adequate guidelines for ensuring both physical and psychosocial support for victims and survivors of TFGBV. Article 6(c) also highlights the need for multistakeholder and bottom-up approaches to prevent and effectively address the causes of violence against women and girls, and to develop sustainable and inclusive solutions that empower and protect women and girls.

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The above-mentioned treaties and soft law provisions lay sufficient grounds to address TFGBV in Africa. There is a need for development of guidelines to better tackle TFGBV not only for women but various groups affected.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>

<sup>22</sup> [https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/37077-treaty-charter\\_on\\_rights\\_of\\_women\\_in\\_africa.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/37077-treaty-charter_on_rights_of_women_in_africa.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> <https://achprau.int/en/node/902>

<sup>24</sup> <https://achprau.int/en/adopted-resolutions/522-resolution-protection-women-against-digital-violence-africa-achpr>

<sup>25</sup> <https://achprau.int/en/adopted-resolutions/achpres591-lxxx-2024-study-digital-violence-against-womens-rights-achpres591>

# Recommendations

The findings from this multi-country study highlight apparent gaps in prevention, response, redress and survivor support in the digital sphere. Addressing TFGBV requires coordinated action from governments, technology companies, civil society, and research institutions.

## 1. To National Governments:

- Identify the causes and consequences of TFGBV regularly and take appropriate measures to prevent and eliminate them.
- Review or adopt laws that address TFGBV, combating all forms of digital violence, and expanding the definition of gender-based violence to include digital violence against women including cyber-harassment, cyberstalking, sexist hate speech amongst other ICT-related violations.<sup>27</sup>
- Develop victim/survivor-centred procedures for reporting and investigation, including specialized TFGBV Victim-Friendly Units within law enforcement agencies that record complaints and investigate TFGBV cases.
- Undertake mandatory and continuous training for practitioners and professionals dealing with victims of digital violence including law enforcement authorities, social and child healthcare staff, criminal justice actors and members of the Judiciary;
- Punish the perpetrators of TFGBV and implement programmes for the rehabilitation of victims
- Ensure and facilitate effective cooperation between law enforcement authorities and service providers with regards to the identification of perpetrators and gathering of evidence, which should be in full compliance with fundamental rights and freedoms and data protection rules.
- Ensure accountability and transparency by requiring annual public reporting on TFGBV cases, prosecution rates, and institutional performance.
- Establish clear regulations for technology platforms to be responsive to TFGBV through their content regulation practices, with due regard for human rights, providing transparency reports and clear notices to users of their redress and appeal mechanisms
- Finance and implement digital literacy and public awareness campaigns to bridge the significant knowledge gaps identified in the study, especially among young people and marginalised groups
- Provide gateways to psychosocial support for victims of TFGBV.

## 2. To Technology Companies

- Establish stronger and more transparent reporting systems that include multilingual support, survivor-friendly reporting workflows, and human-led review processes for high-risk cases such as threats, sexualized abuse, and image-based violence.
- Improve detection technologies for non-consensual intimate images, impersonation, doxxing, and other high-prevalence abuses reported across the six countries.
- Provide timely communication to users regarding the status of their reports, reasons for platform decisions, and available remedies, addressing the widespread dissatisfaction and non-responsiveness reported by survivors.
- Expand trust and safety partnerships with African NGOs, fact-checkers, and feminist digital rights groups to better contextualise harms and help refine local moderation guidelines.
- Design platform features adopting "safety-by-default" principles, especially on high-risk platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp, where the majority of TFGBV incidents occurred.

<sup>27</sup> <https://achpr.au.int/en/adopted-resolutions/522-resolution-protection-women-against-digital-violence-africa>

### 3. To Civil Society, Feminist Movements, and Community Organizations:

- Strengthen digital safety support systems, including helplines<sup>28</sup>, rapid response teams, and referral networks for psychosocial, legal, and digital security assistance.
- Establish and provide community-based reporting alternatives, allowing survivors who fear retaliation or distrust platform mechanisms to seek support through trusted intermediaries.
- Increase advocacy initiatives for accountability, pressing governments and technology platforms to prioritise digital safety as an essential component of gender equality and human rights.
- Provide culturally relevant digital literacy programs, especially for young women who are disproportionately targeted and for communities reporting low awareness of reporting mechanisms
- Document cases and trends to fill existing data gaps and build evidence that can shape national and continental policy reform.

### 4. To Researchers and Academic Institutions

- Conduct longitudinal studies to trace the long-term impacts of TFGBV on mental health, political engagement, education, and economic participation.
- Develop survivor-centered research methodologies that avoid retraumatization and ensure the voices of marginalised communities.
- Collaborate with regional bodies, such as the AU Commission and national human rights institutions, to inform continental guidelines and policy harmonization.

### 5. The African Union and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to develop a continental framework on TFGBV, providing definitions, minimum standards for platform accountability, and clear expectations for member states.

- Support cross-border cooperation on cyber investigations, data sharing, and prosecution of perpetrators whose actions transcend national boundaries.
- Strengthen monitoring and reporting mechanisms to track member-state progress towards addressing TFGBV.s.
- Making concluding observations to African States submitting reports on compliance with Article 16(2) of the Maputo Protocol call to eliminate all forms of TFGBV.

<sup>28</sup> The [Community of Feminist Helplines](#) presents the [Feminist Helplines Index \(FHI\)](#), a resource to help women and LGBTQIA+ people and their organizations find the support they need when facing Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV).

## Conclusion

The clicks that comprise the regular living online using technology have adverse gendered impacts as unravelled by the findings in this report. Young people and women bear the brunt the most of TFGBV in Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The levels of harm cut across physical and psychological harm that calls for a cautious handling of TFGBV at all stages of access to justice beginning with complaints handling processes, investigation, prosecution, adjudication, remedial action and online existence to ensure victims and survivors are not retraumatised but ably supported. The holistic support envisaged should be psychosocial, compensatory and empowering for victims and survivors to enjoy the online space and not be expelled by the hurt that arises as a result of their online presence. TFGBV can foster digital exclusion where self-censorship forces victims to withdraw from an online presence. This report centres voices from the margins of technology, as respondents echoed their views of what the digital space has created, a jungle where survival is not guaranteed. A multistakeholder approach is required to tackle the lived realities and bring sanity to digital spaces where everyone can engage without fear of TFGBV.

# Annex

## About **RIPOTI**



Ripoti is a comprehensive digital rights reporting platform that empowers individuals to document, track, and seek redress for a wide spectrum of online harms. It provides a secure and user-friendly space for reporting incidents such as cybercrime, privacy violations, online censorship and internet shutdowns, digital identity misuse, misinformation, unlawful arrest based on freedom of expression, and other infringements of digital rights.

Among its key functions, Ripoti also supports the reporting of Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV), including online harassment, cyberstalking, non-consensual image sharing, impersonation, and other gendered forms of digital abuse. Its survivor-centered design prioritizes confidentiality, safety, and ease of use, ensuring that those affected can document incidents without pressure to take immediate legal action.

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Ripoti plays an important role not only as a reporting tool but also as a centralized repository of anonymized data. This aggregated information contributes to evidence-building and supports researchers, advocates, and policymakers in understanding emerging patterns, assessing risks, and shaping more effective responses to digital rights violations and TFGBV.



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