TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (TFGBV)

A Webinar Conversation

7th August 2024| Presentation by theCollaborative

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Welcome
Karibu Sana
Webale
Murakaza neza

As we wait, Please write in the chat box the country where you are joining from.

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WEBINAR NORMS

We respect your time and availability in view of the WFH uncertainties

All attendees are on mute. If you wish to ask a question live, please raise your hand and the moderator will unmute your microphone

Type in your questions and comments in the Q&A box

WEBINAR NORMS

This will be a 90 minute session. We request all to observe allocated time during this session

Let’s be respectful of each other’s opinions. We are all knowers and keepers of information

Our hashtag for today is **#bbbb** please feel free to tag and cross tag in your social media platforms

TheCollaborative
Connecting FP/RH community

Purpose: To create a network of KM champions and stakeholders in East Africa and beyond to strengthen knowledge exchange and collaboration and support FP/RH programs

Membership: East Africa FP/RH professionals, technical advisors, program managers

Meetings: Monthly (Steer co), Quarterly (Members), online discussions on the platform

The Moderator

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Phidilliah Rose Mwaambi

Phidilia is a health consultant with a proven track record in strengthening health systems, advocating for policy change, and prioritizing community health services, including gender-based violence prevention.

As a skilled strategist, she has designed strategic frameworks and established multi-stakeholder partnerships in both public and private sectors.

Committed to sustainable change, she leverages open dialogue, active listening, and her expertise to drive impactful results in the health industry.

Webinar Objectives

- Shared learnings within the FP/RH community on the relationship and connections between SRH and TF-GBV
- Learn of the current ways that *theCollaborative* members interact with aspects of TF-GBV in their areas of operation and countries
- Understand the existing structures and actions around addressing GVB for instance through:
- Spotlight and encourage safer digital practices and tools-for personal and programmatic use, resulting in a reduced incidence of TFGBV and a more secure online environment for all.

Our Panelists

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Dr.Katanta Simwanza
Tanzania

Edith Atim
Uganda

Annonciata Mukayitete
Rwanda

Tonny Olela
Kenya

7 August 2024
14:00 - 16:00 EAT

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Webinar Speaker

Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TF-GBV) in East Africa

Edith Atim

Uganda

Atim Edith Labeja is a Human rights lawyer by profession, a women activist and the CEO of Edith foundation, which is aimed at promoting gender equality among women in Agago. She has over 5 years working experience in the field of human rights. She happens to be a writer too, poet and book reviewer.

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Webinar Speaker

Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TF-GBV) in East Africa

Dr.Katanta Simwanza

Tanzania

Katanta is a public health, gender equality, and social development expert with extensive experience in child safeguarding, HIV/TB, STIs, HPV, Family Planning, Marriage Counseling, and Parenting. He founded the Tanzania Boys & Mens Ambassadors (TBMA) platform and implemented the Male Engagement Program using the Men As Partners approach. Katanta collaborates with organizations like EngenderHealth, Plan International, and Deloitte, and is currently the Lead Manager for SRH, Gender, and Safeguarding at MDH. He has provided technical assistance to USAID, GAC, FCDO, and the World Bank, contributing to various government programs and initiatives.

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Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TF-GBV) in East Africa

Annonciata Mukayitete

Rwanda

Annonciata worked as a regional project coordinator of the Discriminatory Populations Support Project in the Great Lakes Region (PAFPD-GL): Rwanda-Burundi and DRC. She holds a Master's degree in International Development and coordinates the EU-funded project at HDI that focuses on capacity building for key populations in Rwanda. Annonciata likes working with HDI because she adheres to HDI's vision of promoting the health and rights of vulnerable people and marginalised groups for their well-being and self-promotion.

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Technology-Facilitated Gender Based Violence (TF-GBV) in East Africa

Tonny Olela

Kenya

Tonny is a development professional with over five years of experience in program development, partnership building, strategic communication, advocacy, and community projects focused on gender mainstreaming, SRHR, and policy. He is an advisory board member for G100 and a He for She champion. Notable achievements include training 30 young innovators for Kectil Community Kenya's program, leading to a team winning $1 million in the 2022 Hult Prize Challenge, and supporting over 8,522 marginalized individuals. He has collaborated with UNFPA Kenya, the Global Youth Consortium against FGM, and UNESCO Youth Kenya, and supports a homeless family of 35 in Nairobi through sustainable food donation partnerships.

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Uganda

Share in the chat your own understanding or description of TF-GBV

Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV)

TFGBV includes violence that occurs in online spaces and violence perpetrated offline through technological means.

- online harassment
- non-consensual sharing of intimate images
- sextortion
- stalking, misogynistic hate speech, and threats made through digital channels

TFGBV can exacerbate offline forms of violence including sexual harassment, stalking, IPV, trafficking, and sexual exploitation—through the use of digital tools like mobile phones, GPS and tracking devices.

UNFPA: Glossary of Digital Violence Terms: https://www.unfpa.org/thevirtualisreal-background#glossary

Contextualization of TF-GBV

What/How does TF-GBV Look like in East Africa?

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Rwanda

Overview of Rwanda's Digital Landscape: Rwanda has seen a significant increase in internet and mobile phone usage. As of 2023, over 7 million Rwandans use the internet, with high social media engagement.

Gender Dynamics: Rwanda has made strides in gender equality, ranking highly in gender parity indices. However, socio-cultural norms still pose challenges for women and gender minorities, making them vulnerable to TF-GBV.

Forms of TF - GBV In Rwanda

Online Harassment: Includes abusive messages, threats, and derogatory comments. Studies show that 35% of Rwandan women have experienced online harassment.

Cyberstalking: Persistent and intrusive monitoring of victims online. According to research, ex-partners frequently use social media to track and harass their victims**.**

Non-consensual Sharing of Intimate Images. Also known as revenge porn, where private images are shared without consent. Victims often face severe emotional and social repercussions.

Doxing : The release of personal information online with malicious intent. This can lead to physical harm, social ostracism, and economic losses.

Persistent Challenges

- **Underreporting and Limited Recognition:** TFGBV is not widely recognized or systematically addressed as a form of GBV. Victims often do not report incidents due to fear of not being taken seriously, lack of awareness about digital rights, and mistrust in the legal system(Decoding-TFGBV-Report-2024).

- **Online-Offline Continuum:** Online violence often spills over into offline violence, causing physical, emotional, and economic harm. This continuum makes it difficult to contain and address TFGBV solely through digital measures(Decoding-TFGBV-Report-2024).

Persistent Challenges

- **Patriarchal Norms and Social Morality:** Deeply ingrained patriarchal norms and societal ideas of morality amplify TFGBV. These norms influence both the perpetration of and responses to TFGBV, often leading to victim-blaming and inadequate support systems for survivors(Decoding-TFGBV-Report-2024).

- **Ineffective Reporting Mechanisms:** The mechanisms for reporting TFGBV are often ineffective and disadvantageous for survivors. Complex, burdensome reporting processes and a lack of trust in authorities discourage victims from coming forward(Decoding-TFGBV-Report-2024).

Persistent Challenges

- **Conflicting Legislation:** Existing laws aimed at protecting individuals from TFGBV sometimes conflict with other laws, resulting in a "legal double-edged sword" where victims might be criminalized for reporting incidents(Decoding-TFGBV-Report-2024).

Experiences within East Africa

Program and Interventions experiences in EA

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Experiences 1:

In a report conducted by the Feminist Internet Research Network, 2 participants reported having had pictures taken and nonconsensual shared online where they received a lot of backlash from the community. One said that she had experienced non-consensual sharing of images and that this led to harassment online when giving an interview to journalists: “Some journalists [...] took my pictures and they put them on Instagram. People shared it on other social media.” While another participant, said that “it was my queer friends. They took the photos and uploaded them [online],” and the photographs drew the attention of “many people in the community as a means of ridiculing the victims.

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Experiences 2:

In August 2022, a Rwandan was jailed after others posted an image of her dressed “inappropriately” to social media. The attention drawn to the post resulted in her being arrested for indecent dress. An event such as someone being jailed for expressing themselves through dress may result in self-censorship of other women and TNBGD people both online and offline, out of fear of similar actions being taken against them.

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TF-GBV and SRH

Connecting the Dots

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Links Between TFGBV and SRH

- Survivors of TFGBV can experience emotional, psychological, and social harms
- TFGBV is linked with in-person GBV and may exacerbate harmful Sexual Reproductive Health consequences
- TFGBV can inhibit women and girls from using technology, potentially reducing their access to SRHR information and services
- TFGBV is used as a tactic to silence and shut down organizations and individuals promoting SRHR
- TFGBV reinforces harmful gender norms linked to poor SRHR outcomes.

Image credit: UN Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia

Link to blog

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Innovations and Solutions

TANZANIA..

Like other East Africa Countries Tanzania is blessed with capacity to turn ideas into tech initiatives which if supported and integrated then interventions to address GBV can be amplified.

Technology can be a integrated in a wider mechanism to address GBV.

1.Technology for prevention/Mitigation: Tech solutions can raise awareness, mitigate and promote institutional reforms such as such as LEAP (IVR –pre recorded response technology). As well as tools that engage women in law and policy making processes such as online forums with MPs

2. Tech as a peer: We have seen an AI -powered Chatbots used. In Tanzania, AINO Chatbot technology is available and can be used.

Technology can be a integrated in a wider mechanism to address GBV.

3.Tech as a safe space: Virtual safe space (VSS) facilitate access to information and services in a way that is safe, culturally appropriate and accessible to users, even when physical service is limited.

4. Tech as a safeguard: Integrating discreet gender-based violence information and referral details to those seeking help or disclosing risk or violence. GBV Taarifa App (TZ)

5. Tech as guide: *Sheria Kiganjani* Enables an individual or a group of people to access legal information as well as materials to address gender-based violence.

Technology can be a integrated in a wider mechanism to address GBV.

6. Tech as a response mechanism: *GBV Taarifa* coordinated with Wildaf for Reporting GBV cases and digital information resource center on gender issues. *AINO*-AI -powered Chatbot; Crowd2Map -open street map thats facilitate reformation of GBV laws

Area of focus

- Tools that invest in changing mindset and practices
- Tools that strengthen institutions
- Prevention through Gender -Equitable Norms and Attitudes
- Quality Essential Services
- Quality Data

Addressing GBV

Education

Promotion of children and Girls right

working on Policies and Legislations

Economic and Political leadership

Mainstream the Marginalized

Promotion of Access to Justice

Bridging Gender Digital Divide

Health

Promoting innovation and technology for civic and gender

Key TakeAways

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Recommendations for SRH Practitioners

- Build awareness on TFGBV among SRH services and users
- Integrate TFGBV prevention and response into SRH programming
- Build privacy and safety by design into digital SRH services and innovations to safeguard against TFGBV.
- Advocate with donors to invest in and partner on research on the intersection between TFGBV and SRHR.
- Partner with allies working in women's and digital rights
- Redouble efforts to promote gender equality and healthy social norms to help prevent all forms of GBV and support positive SRH outcomes.

Link to blog

Additional tips

1. **Don't agree** to post sexualized messages and material for it can be used against you.
2. **Delete** unused accounts
3. **Avoid** public Wi-Fi networks such as malls and coffee shops and always use a VPN when connecting to public Wi-Fi.
4. **Create** strong password
5. **Block** strangers trying to reach you online

TheCollaborative

Are you a member of the largest FP/RH Community of Practice? If not please join using this link:

https://icd.amref.org/thecollaborative/cop.html

Upcoming Events

Join our Knowledge Champions in a four part series dubbed **“Lunch, Learn and Chat”** where they shall be sharing their experiences in implementing FP/SRH initiatives

Additional Resources

- Orbits: A global field guide to advance intersectional, survivor-centred, and trauma-informed interventions to TGBV (2021)
- UNFPA. Measuring technology-facilitated gender-based violence. A discussion paper (2023)
- UNFPA. Guidance on the Safe and Ethical Use of Technology to Address Gender-based Violence and Harmful Practices: Implementation Summary (2023)
- ESafety Commission. Online safety planning toolkit (2023)
- CIGI. Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence: An Overview (2020)

THANK YOU.

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