

Global Call to Action to Address Technology-facilitated Gender-based Violence



“There is a critical need to support specific and actionable solutions today to address technology-facilitated gender-based violence which undermines human rights and threatens democracy. We need tangible and practical interventions to ensure that every woman in every space is safe.”

– Stephanie Copus-Campbell, Australia’s Ambassador for Gender Equality

This Global Call to Action reflects the collective insights, ideas and expertise shared during a Roundtable on technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TF GBV) organized alongside the 68th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The Roundtable brought together diverse stakeholders from intergovernmental organizations, government agencies, civil society and the technology sector, and gender policy specialists, researchers and academics.

This Global Call to Action aims to translate the insights, partnerships and initiatives shared into tangible interventions, guided by our mutual commitment to address TF GBV.¹ It calls for cross-sector collaboration to advance five key action areas: (1) Response mechanisms; (2) Safety, security and privacy by design and inclusion; (3) Prevention; (4) Funding mechanisms; and (5) Partnerships and collaboration. All elements of the Global Call to Action are intended to adhere to the overarching principles of TF GBV programming.

¹ Technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TF GBV) is any act that is committed, assisted, aggravated or amplified by the use of information and communications technologies 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.

Global Call to Action

We call on all stakeholders across governments, the private sector, United Nations, civil society, philanthropy and academia to proactively engage in the realization of this Global Call to Action. Achieving these goals requires commitment to the action areas outlined herein. Solutions to address TF GBV must be multilayered, intersectional and promote systemic change, which will be incremental. The present Call to Action establishes goals considering three distinct milestones:

- immediate action (within **one year**)
- short term (within **three years**)
- medium term (within **five years**)

Overarching principles of TF GBV programming²

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Human rights based● Do no harm● Victim/survivor-centred and participatory solutions● Leave no one behind/address intersectionality● Language and context inclusivity● Monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Multi-stakeholder partnerships³● Protection, safety and security of advocates and victims/survivors● Investment in internal organizational capacity● Streamlined coordination systems and structures● Gender-transformative approach |
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² These overarching principles of TF GBV programming have been identified within the forthcoming Programmatic Framework developed by UNFPA and Australia's eSafety Commissioner, and form the foundation of our Call to Action.

³ In this document, multi-stakeholder partnerships refer to collaborative work between governments, regulators, technology companies, civil society organizations, academia, women's rights organizations, digital rights organizations, activists, human rights defenders, technologists and gender-based violence experts.

1. Response mechanisms

TF GBV affects women and girls in all their diversity. Victims/survivors of TF GBV require immediate access to quality support services that are trauma-informed, gender-transformative and victim/survivor-centred, and respond to the unique needs of women facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. We call for committed efforts to achieve the following goals:

Within one year:⁴

- Advocate for increased development of **laws and policies** to respond to TF GBV, including considering options beyond criminalization and punitive measures.
- Strengthen **accountability mechanisms** through laws, policies and independent bodies.
- Provide model frameworks for **redress and reparation** to TF GBV victims/survivors.
- **Strengthen coordination** of response mechanisms across all stakeholders.
- Strengthen **TF GBV within existing GBV** case management systems and programming, particularly through capacity building and the integration of response tools.
- Ensure that all **data are protected** and that survivors or groups of survivors cannot be identified without their consent when developing TF GBV response mechanisms.
- Increase **awareness** of existing resources to support victims/survivors of TF GBV.
- Ensure that technology companies make accessible and understandable options regarding **content removal**, user suspension and other safety issues.

Within three years:

- Consolidate **TF GBV within existing GBV** case management systems and programming.
- Design, draft, enforce and strengthen legal and **accountability mechanisms** through laws, policies and independent bodies.
- Pilot or use existing **safe and ethical technology to support victims/survivors** and ensure all data use is verified to be safe and secure for women and girls.

Within five years:

- Scale up widespread **adaptation and implementation of case management systems** and TF GBV programming response.
- Strengthen cross-border **coordination** and action for all stakeholders to respond to TF GBV.
- Strengthen and evaluate **accountability mechanisms** through building **capacity of legal and security actors** in charge of TF GBV legal processes and ensuring implementation and measurement of **laws and policies** that address TF GBV.
- Create **funding mechanisms** that address TF GBV and technological safety at both national and local levels.
- Develop appropriate **indicators** to monitor the success of the measures adopted.

⁴ It is expected that the goals achieved within one year will continue to be met for the next three and five years, and beyond.

2. Safety, security and privacy by design and inclusion

Addressing TF GBV effectively requires technological, digital and online platforms, services and products that, by design, promote the safety, security and privacy of women and girls, in all their diversity. We call for committed efforts to achieve the following goals:

Within one year:

- Develop **norms and standards** around measures of safety, security and privacy by design principles within technology, at both technical and organizational levels, aimed at risk assessment and minimizing threats to women in all their diversity, including their freedom online, data protection and privacy.
- Develop structured and coordinated **frameworks** that can assist in identifying harms to women and girls as a result of technology.
- Study the **intersection of user verification and anonymity online** to identify opportunities and limitations.
- **Strengthen partnerships** between survivor advocates, women's rights organizations, digital rights and privacy specialists and technology companies to bring in the voices of diverse women.
- Encourage, develop and map **technology and data use** that follows safe and ethical **best practices** for the safety and empowerment of women and girls.
- Advocate for **accountability and transparency** of technology companies' internal decision-making processes about their products, services and particularly their TF GBV case response.

Within three years:

- **Collectively develop** strong data protection and privacy law **frameworks** that protect women and girls online and offline.
- **Establish tools and resources** for implementing safety, security and privacy by design principles that can be easily applied to technology products.
- **Fund local and global groups** to advocate for the implementation of safety, security and privacy by design principles.
- Strengthen technology industry **standards and government laws and policies** on TF GBV by conducting gender analysis of impact assessments to inform an evidence base.
- Increase **coordination** with the technology industry to develop gender and **TF GBV training** for software engineers, data scientists, technical product managers and user-experience designers.

Within five years:

- Increase **accountability** by establishing mandated standards of **safety, security and privacy by design principles** for the technology industry that can be monitored and enforced with financial penalties for companies.
- Develop **funding mechanisms** for TF GBV programming through negative externality taxes and fines.
- Develop an environment within the **technology industry where women feel welcome** and safe, particularly within engineering, design and technical product management, with access to promotions, decision-making and opportunities for funding their products and ideas.

3. Prevention

Preventive action is a vital component to effective global efforts against TF GBV, and the ultimate means by which it can be eradicated. We call for committed efforts to achieve the following goals:

Within one year:

- **Strengthen existing GBV prevention programmes** by including digital literacy and pilot innovative TF GBV prevention programmes with robust evaluation frameworks.
- Commit to **coordination** with open, ongoing knowledge exchange and adaptive strategies to stay effective and safe in the evolving landscapes of technology and GBV.
- Commit to multi-year **investments** in TF GBV prevention strategies, with earmarked resources for evaluation, innovation and adaptation.
- Work towards closing the **gender digital divide**, recognizing the differentiated impact that information and communications technology has on the lives of women and girls, in all their diversity.⁵

Within three years:

- Work with feminist, digital rights civil society organizations (CSOs) and survivor advocates to shape the ecosystem of national and international **regulations to increase accountability**, including through gender equality mechanisms and observatories.
- Evaluate and invest in evidence-based adaptation and scaling up of **GBV and TF GBV prevention programmes** for gender-transformative impacts, including programming related to social norms.
- Build on existing TF GBV **research** to close key knowledge and context gaps to inform evidence-driven prevention policies and programming.
- Develop and implement **social norms** programming, such as existing sexual and reproductive health programmes, for safe and healthy online interactions.

Within five years:

- Explore and **research** alternative business models for technology that minimize harm potential and re-evaluate engagement-driven and content-neutral approaches that are shaped by behaviours.
- Integrate digital literacy training and positive **social norms** training for safe and respectful relationships into **formal educational curricula**, with relevant age and cultural adaptations.

⁵ According to the International Telecommunication Union there are four main issues when addressing the gender digital divide: 1) a gap in access to and use of the Internet; 2) a gap in digital skills and the use of digital tools; 3) a participation gap in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields; and 4) a gap in leadership in public decision-making spaces in technology and entrepreneurship in the technology sector.

4. Funding mechanisms

Initiatives to prevent and counter TF GBV require funding that prioritizes projects with intersectional, decolonial and gender-transformative perspectives. We call for committed efforts to achieve the following goals:

Within one year:

- Establish the TF GBV **Civil Society Fund** to be incubated within the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-based Online Harassment and Abuse.
 - Adapt existing partnerships to develop a consortium of partners who will conceptualize, develop and operationalize the TF GBV Civil Society Fund.
 - Conceptualize the strategy for the Civil Society Fund, which will focus on research, prevention and response.
 - Identify ambassadors who will bring attention to the Civil Society Fund.
 - Launch a consortium and strategy for the Civil Society Fund in Q3 of 2024.
 - Host a roundtable discussion at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2024.
- **Build partnerships** with diverse stakeholders while mapping funding needs, gaps and opportunities.
 - Increase engagement with technology companies of various sizes and along the chain.
 - Map and attend technology conferences to build a mutual understanding of the issue and pique technology companies' interest in the topic.
 - Explore opportunities to ensure consistency in government funding, regardless of changes in administration.
 - Identify private sector funders.

Within three years:

- Roll out and operationalize the **TF GBV Civil Society Fund**, and set up feedback loops to ensure real-time knowledge sharing.
- **Build partnerships and coordination** across regions to ensure consistent government funding, and develop a shared value proposition for private sector stakeholders.
 - Strengthen partnerships among regions.
 - Implement a plan to ensure consistency in government funding, regardless of changes in administration.

Within five years:

- Strengthen **multisector funding mechanisms** for TF GBV prevention and response.
- Increase the inclusion of **diverse voices** and invest to advance research and programming in underrepresented regions and contexts.

5. Partnerships and collaboration

Measures against TF GBV require multilayered coordination that is global, regional and national, as well as intersectional and multi-actor, to be effective. Only through partnerships and collaborations will such coordination be successful in shaping a world where women in all their diversity can fully exercise their rights and freedoms in participating in the digital realm. We call for committed efforts to achieve the following goals:

Within one year:

- Amplify **diverse voices** within feminist, GBV, digital rights, civil society and grass-roots organizations to ensure their concerns and needs regarding TF GBV are brought to state and international priorities.
- Identify **current multisectoral partnerships**, networks and movements that address issues around TF GBV, and **promote their formation** where they are missing.
- Create **infrastructure** for transparent, safe and ethical **data sharing and knowledge management** among actors working on TF GBV.
- Strengthen **knowledge management** and consolidate information about promising practices to address TF GBV among members of the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-based Online Harassment and Abuse and share these widely.
- Take steps to make **information accessible** and multilingual, and support widespread awareness of the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-based Online Harassment and Abuse.

Within three years:

- Strengthen **existing collaborations**, such as the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-based Online Harassment and Abuse, the Action Coalitions on Gender-based Violence and Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality and other networks led by CSOs, and support **cross-coalition/network coordination**.
- Promote **funding and spaces for knowledge exchange and innovation** among CSOs and grass-roots organizations to amplify **diverse voices**.
- **Research**, explore needs, facilitate discussions and find solutions to **emerging challenges** around work to prevent, combat and eradicate TF GBV, including anti-gender movements.
- Advocate for **multi-stakeholder campaigns to raise awareness** of TF GBV globally.

Within five years:

- Establish clear, **coordinated mechanisms** across government, private sector and philanthropic foundations for streamlined and complementary programming.
- Collectively build upon existing TF GBV **research** and bridge gaps in evidence, particularly in underrepresented regions and contexts.
- **Advocate** for global partnerships and networks to **equally include non-governmental stakeholders**, particularly civil society, within the decision-making groups.
- Facilitate **knowledge management** through multilevel sharing of skills, lessons, resources and best practices among actors working against TF GBV across world regions.