FROM DATA TO ACTION:
ADDRESSING TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

SVRI FORUM '24

WORKSHOP
21 OCTOBER 2024

UN WOMEN

World Health Organization

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Photo | UN Women/Deepak Malik

OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

To share research and data demonstrating **the different forms of technology-facilitated gender-based violence**, how it manifests **across different regions and contexts**, the **consequences** it has for victim-survivors and the community at large, and **who** is most at risk.

Specific Objectives

1. Share **measures and methodologies currently used**, existing gaps in the evidence, measurement challenges, as well as global, regional, national and sub-national efforts and initiatives to advance in our understanding of TFGBV, as the first step to define policies and interventions to address it.
2. Share **resources and tools available for programming to address TFGBV**, including prevention, support to victim-survivors, laws and policies, and other programmes.
3. Address issues around **safety and protection of data** as well as ethics and safety in data collection on TFGBV.

SHORT ICE-BREAKER TO KNOW WHO'S IN THE ROOM

Let's split into **4 groups**
(10 participants in each group)

Get to know your peers:
Why did you decide to attend the workshop?
What background do you have on TFGBV?
What expectations do you have for this workshop?
(10 minutes for the group exchange)

Appoint one person to share in 1 minute the **key expectations** of the group

WHAT COMES TO YOUR MIND WHEN YOU HEAR THE TERM "TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE"?
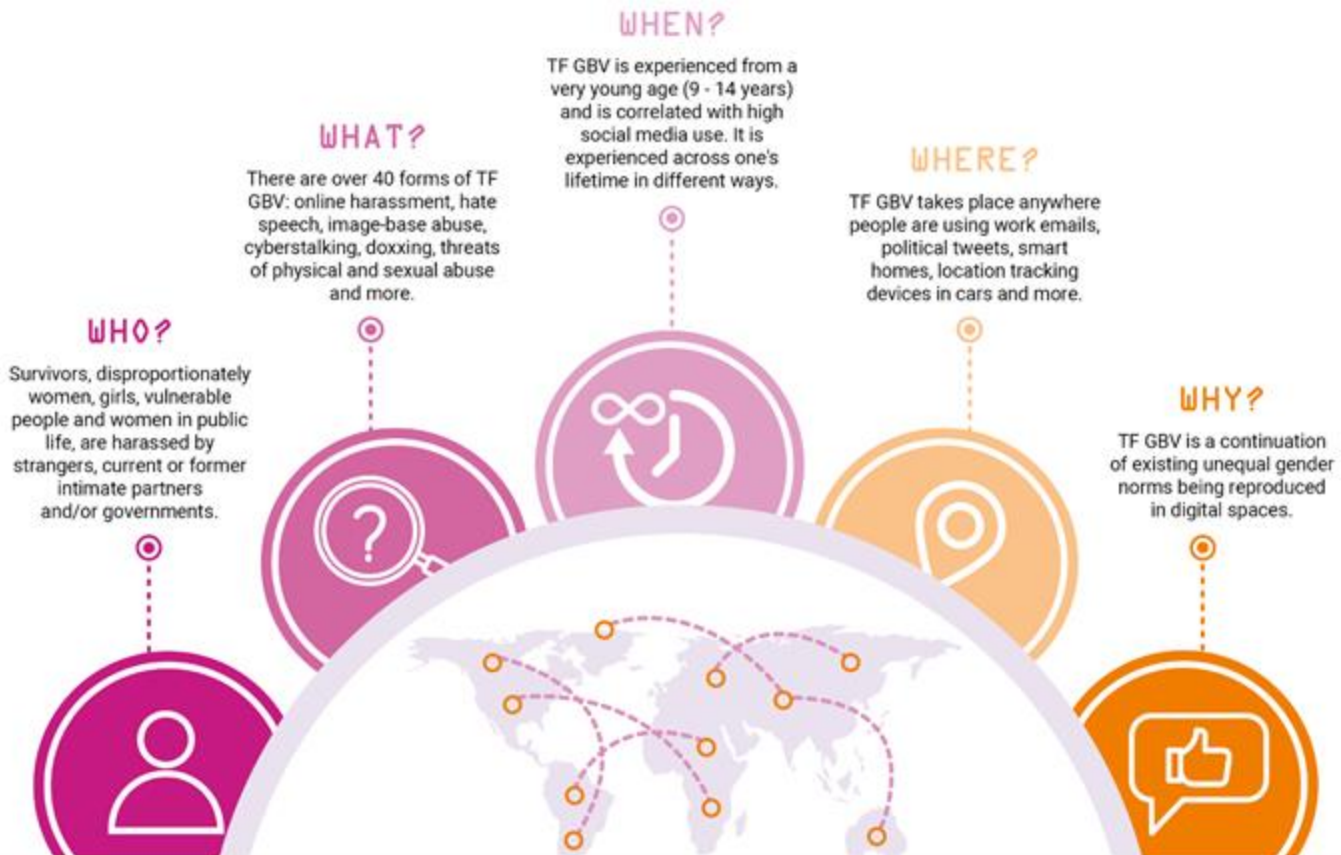
Scan the QR code
OR
Go to menti.com and enter the code
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A SNAPSHOT OF FORMS OF TFGBV

Astroturfing. Catfishing. Cross-platform harassment. Cyberbullying. Cyberflashing. Cyberstalking. Cyberobsessional pursuit. Deadnaming. Deepfakes. Defamation. Denial of access. Denial of service (DoS) attacks. Documenting or broadcasting sexual assault (rape videos). Doxxing. Electronically enabled financial abuse. False accusations of blasphemy. Flaming. (Gender or sexist) hate speech. Gender-trolling. Google bombing. Grooming (online). Hacking. Hashtag poisoning. Image-based abuse. Impersonation. In-real-life (IRL) attacks. Limiting or controlling use of technology. Mobbing or dogpiling. Online (gender) harassment. Recruitment. Retaliations against supporters of survivors. Sexting and abusive sexting. Sextortion. Shock and grief trolling. Slut-shaming online. Swatting. Synthetic sexual media. Technology-facilitated unwanted sexual experiences. Threats. Upskirting, creepshots and digital voyeurism. Zoom-bombing.

WHEN?
TF GBV is experienced from a very young age (9 - 14 years) and is correlated with high social media use. It is experienced across one's lifetime in different ways.

WHAT?
There are over 40 forms of TF GBV: online harassment, hate speech, image-base abuse, cyberstalking, doxxing, threats of physical and sexual abuse and more.

WHERE?
TF GBV takes place anywhere people are using work emails, political tweets, smart homes, location tracking devices in cars and more.

WHO?
Survivors, disproportionately women, girls, vulnerable people and women in public life, are harassed by strangers, current or former intimate partners and/or governments.

WHY?
TF GBV is a continuation of existing unequal gender norms being reproduced in digital spaces.

HOW DOES TF GBV OCCUR? POORLY DESIGNED AND MANAGED TECHNOLOGY

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CURRENT STATE OF THE EVIDENCE

WHO EXPERIENCES IT?

At-risk groups of women and girls

Women and non-binary individuals are often targeted because of their **sex and gender identity.**

Specific groups of women experience **intersecting forms of discrimination**, exacerbated by certain digital-specific risk factors: adolescent girls, women and girls with disabilities, women in public and political life

WHO PERPETRATES IT?

Multiplicity of bad actors

Current and former intimate partners

Family or community members

Service providers

Organized groups, criminal networks, trolls

Security forces, non-state armed groups. State and government actors

HOW COMMON IS IT?

Almost 2 in 3 (59.9%) women globally have been subjected to at least one form of TFGBV

85 per cent of women globally reported witnessing online violence against another woman. Nearly all women (98%) have witnessed online violence in the Middle East, 9 in 10 in Latin America and Africa, 8 in 10 in Asia-Pacific, and over 7 in 10 in North America and Europe

WHAT ARE THE FORMS?

Sexual harassment and **stalking** are the most commonly reported forms of TFGBV, often perpetrated via **image-based abuse and unwanted messages, posts and phone calls**.

Almost 40% of women reported repeated unwanted sexual contact (CIGI, 2023)*

WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

Women were more likely to report experiencing violence on **social media** (71 percent). (CIGI, 2023)*
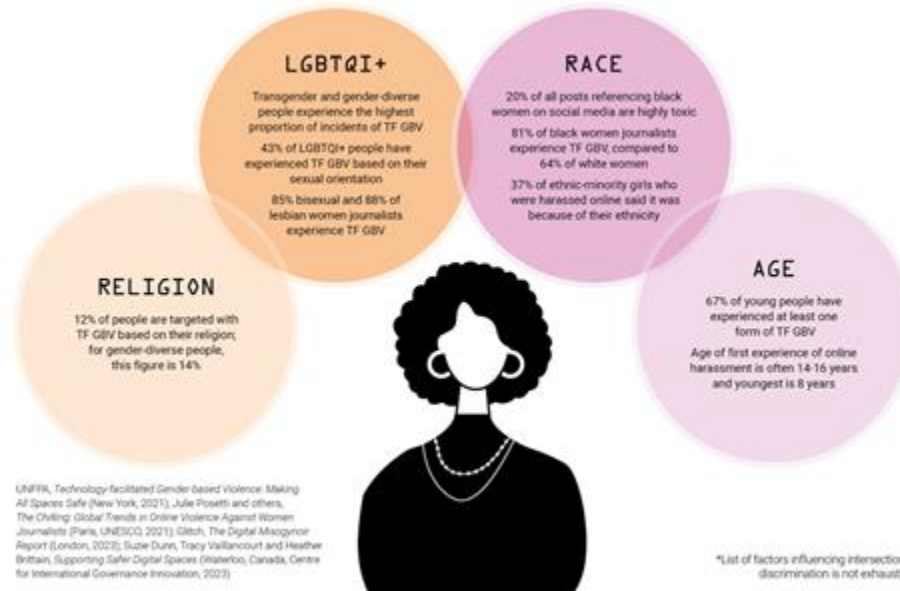
Facebook (by Meta) was consistently identified as the most common site.

TFGBV also takes place through text messages (55 percent) location tracking technology (11.3 percent); on pornography sites (10.1 percent); and smart home devices (7.6 percent).*

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Technology-facilitated violence disproportionately impacts women in all their diversity and gender non-conforming individuals

LGBTQI+

Transgender and gender-diverse people experience the highest proportion of incidents of TF GBV

43% of LGBTQI+ people have experienced TF GBV based on their sexual orientation

85% bisexual and 88% of lesbian women journalists experience TF GBV

RACE

20% of all posts referencing black women on social media are highly toxic

81% of black women journalists experience TF GBV, compared to 64% of white women

37% of ethnic-minority girls who were harassed online said it was because of their ethnicity

RELIGION

12% of people are targeted with TF GBV based on their religion; for gender-diverse people, this figure is 14%

AGE

67% of young people have experienced at least one form of TF GBV

Age of first experience of online harassment is often 14-16 years and youngest is 8 years

UNFPA, Technology-facilitated Gender-based Violence: Making All Spaces Safe (New York, 2021); Julie Posetti and others, The Chilling: Global Trends in Online Violence Against Women Journalists (Paris, UNESCO, 2021); Glitch, The Digital Misogynoir Report (London, 2023); Suzie Dunn, Tracy Vaillancourt and Heather Brittain, Supporting Safer Digital Spaces (Waterloo, Canada, Centre for International Governance Innovation, 2023)

*List of factors influencing intersectional discrimination is not exhaustive

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CHARACTERISTICS AND CONSEQUENCES OF TFGBV

Anonymity

Automation

Impunity

Perpetuity

Propagation

Poor mental health

Stigma

Deteriorated social life

Loss of education and job opportunities

Silencing

Risk of offline violence

Accessibility and affordability

Action at a distance

Normalization of violence

Collectivity

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WHY COLLECT DATA?

There is clear international evidence that TF GBV is both common and harmful. However, further evidence is required to:

- Understand **trends** in this emerging form of gender-based violence.
- Understand the **effectiveness** of programming and systems of accountability.
- Use in **advocacy** in support of survivors, victims and targets of TF GBV through laws, policies, programmes and investment.

A PROPOSED COMMON CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION

Result of a multistakeholder expert group meeting convened in November 2022

Technology-facilitated violence against women ("TF VAW") is any act that is committed, assisted, aggravated, or amplified by the use of information communication 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.

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE DEFINITION

Technology-facilitated

- refers to act committed through technology rather than solely on online spaces
- time-invariant to hold true despite evolving circumstances

Continuum online-offline and offline-online

- *committed, assisted, aggravated or amplified*
- also includes situations where domestic violence is aggravated through the use of geolocation tools or cyber stalking

Violence

- without examples of current manifestations of TF VAW
- Broad enough to encapsulate the full spectrum of TF VAW

PATH TOWARDS COMMON METHODOLOGIES FOR TF VAW MEASUREMENT

Definition Research

Definition Expert Group Meeting

1st Global Symposium

Scoping reviews on evidence and data collection

2nd Global Symposium

Global Shared Research Agenda

2021   **2022**   **2023** Feb - March   **2024** Feb - March

Common methodologies for TF VAW measurement

UN Statistical Commission, 54th session

Commission on the Status of Women, 67th session

UN Statistical Commission, 55th session

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PATH TOWARDS COMMON METHODOLOGIES FOR TF VAW MEASUREMENT

- UN StatCom, CSW, Regional Commissions
- UN Agencies (UN Women, WHO, UNFPA, others)
- Global Partnership for Action on Gender Based Online Harassment and Abuse

International community

NSOs and other actors in NSSs

- NSOs of Finland, Mexico, Morocco, Uganda, UK, US, etc.
- National women's machineries
- Ministry of ICT and other MDAs

TF VAW measurement

- Sexual Violence Research Initiative
- Association of Progressive Communications

Research and Digital Rights groups

Other actors in the broader data ecosystem

- CSOs
- NGOs
- Private sector

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DISCUSSION

Let's split into **8 groups**
(5 participants in each group)

What differences have you observed between your research/practice and the forms of TFGBV presented?

Are there any forms of TFGBV specific to your context?

(10 minutes for the group exchange)
Appoint one person to share in 1 minute the **key messages** of the group

15 MINUTES BREAK

SUMMARY OF METHODS AND DATA SOURCES ON VAW

Prevalence surveys

Generate data on magnitude, nature , risk factors and trends on VAW that are representative of the population.

Powerful advocacy tool making a case for services and policy

TFAVW survey measures still nascent and methodological and testing required to adequately measure TFVAW and avoid underestimation

Harder to capture rapidly emerging forms of TFVAW and technology

Surveys already lengthy so cannot include too many questions so may miss some forms of TFVAW

Qualitative data

Captures rich and in-depth descriptions of womens/girls experiences of TFGBV and the temporality and interactions between online and offline abuse

Evidences in greater detail how and why survivors respond or seek help

Can be used to inform the development of survey and other quantitative measures of TFGBV

Cannot the measure the extent or magnitude of TFAW

Cannot generalize findings to the wider population

Admin/service data

Evidences the number and profile of who accesses specialist services, health, legal and other services for TFGBV

Service data can documents referral pathways for specialist support for TFGBV

Catalogues tech companies response types and speed

Can capture service providers knowledge and capacities to support TFGBV survivors

Makes a case for TFGBV services

Under-estimates the magnitude/prevalence of TFGBV as only captures those who seek services or report TFGBV

Law and Policy Data

Can analyse the regulatory framework and responses across levels
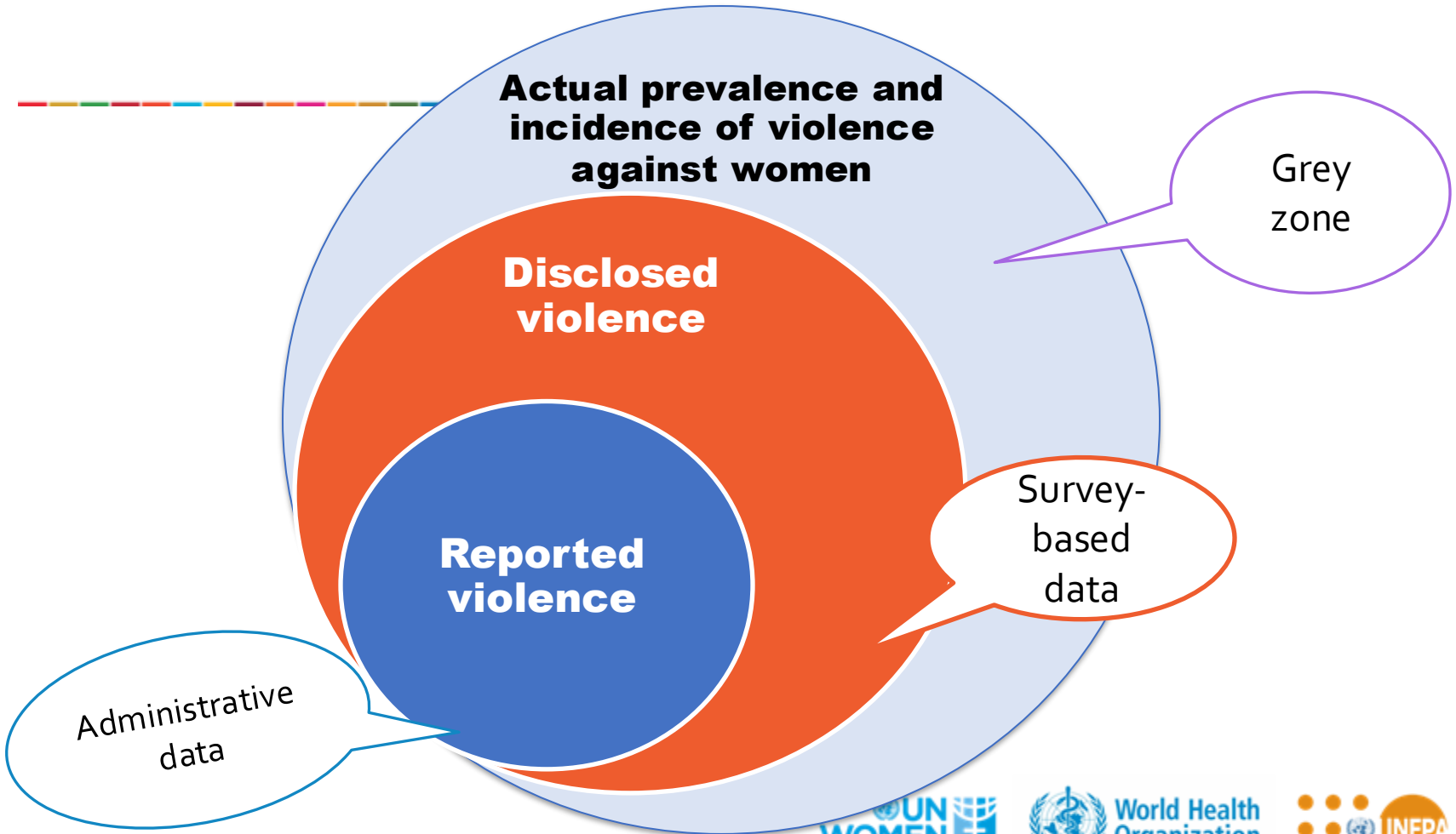
Catologues policies and practices of technology and data storage companies

Identifies who makes and enforces TFGBV legislation and regulations

Outlines needs for institutional attention to training TFGBV service providers

Clarifies how laws reflect in business practices and identifies gaps

Does not evidence implementation challenges

SOURCES AND INFORMATION FROM SURVEY DATA

Sources of survey data on violence against women

- Violence against women dedicated surveys (E.g. WHO Multi-Country Surveys; EU-Wide Fundamental Rights Agency surveys, ENDIREH from Mexico)

- Modules on violence against women in wider surveys (Demographic and Health Surveys)

- Crime victimization surveys (largely skewed towards high-income countries)

Key data obtained

- Prevalence and patterns of various forms of intimate partner and non-partner violence.

- Risk factors for intimate partner violence.

- Association between intimate partner violence and a wide range of health outcomes.

- Women's coping strategies including retaliation, help seeking, reporting.

Exercise 1: Your survey team has been asked to develop a set of no more than 5-6 questions on technology-facilitated violence in a violence against women survey that you are going to conduct next year. Based on your experience which questions/types of TFVAW do you think it is important and feasible to measure in an existing survey on violence against women.

Guiding questions have been provided in your Exercise Kit

Intimate Partner: Controlling Behaviours

a) Try to stop you from seeing female friends?

b) Try to restrict your contact with your family of birth?

c) Insist on knowing where you (are/were) at all times in a way that (makes/made) you feel controlled?

d) Stop you from seeking health care for yourself?

e) Get jealous or angry with you if you (speak/spoke) with another man?

f) Wrongly accuse you of being unfaithful?

g) **Use mobile technology to check where you (are/were) in a way that (makes/made) you feel controlled?**

He (uses/used) mobile technology to check where you (are/were) or track you via GPS in a way that (makes/made) you feel controlled?

insist on knowing where you are in a controlling way or tracking you via GPS, phone, social network, etc.?

followed or spied on you remotely, such as installing a tracking app on your phone, using a GPS device or accessing your mobile phone's location data

Restricted your access to phone media and other social media sites

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Sexual Harassment

At any place you ever worked, have you ever experienced unwanted sexual advances or behaviours that made you feel uncomfortable or afraid?

Has anyone ever sent you unwanted personal electronic messages with sexual content such as remarks, invitations, or pictures that were hurtful to you or made you feel uncomfortable? For example, via Facebook, cell phone, e-mail. Not including spam.

…inappropriate advances on social networking websites?

. . . . inappropriate sexually explicit emails or text messages?

Shared sexual photos or videos of you via the internet, mobile phones, text messages (SMS), instant messages, or social media without your consent

Have you ever been harassed/blackmailed with sexual content (your personal messages/audio clips/video clips/pictures, etc.) via mobile phones/internet?

Someone offered me money or gifts in return for sexual images or videos

Now I want to ask you about your experiences using technology including the internet, mobile phones, text messages (SMS), instant messages, social media or any other technology platforms (e.g. Facebook, What'sApp, Twitter...).

1   Have you ever had the following experience:

2   How often did this happen during the last 12 months: often, only sometimes, or not at all?

		EVER			OFTEN	SOME-TIMES	NOT IN LAST 12 MONTHS
a)	Someone tried to publicly humiliate you on the internet, mobile phones, text messages (SMS), instant messages, or social media	YES NO	1 2 ↓	→	1	2	3
b)	Someone sent you threatening messages via the internet, mobile phones, text messages (SMS), instant messages, or social media	YES NO	1 2 ↓	→	1	2	3
c)	Someone shared sexual photos or videos of you via the internet, mobile phones, text messages (SMS), instant messages, or social media without your consent	YES NO	1 2 ↓	→	1	2	3
d)	Someone sent you sexual photos, videos, or messages the internet, mobile phones, text messages (SMS), instant messages, or social media without your consent	YES NO	1 2 ↓	→	1	2	3

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Acts of TF GBV measured in Vanuatu 2024

Intimate partner violence (s717)

- **Restricted your access** to your phone, internet or social media sites
- Asked you to perform any sexual acts on the phone or another device
- Sent you messages or images, or made you watch something of a sexual nature
- Send messages or images of a sexual nature that you did not want
- Threatened or actually did share private or sexual images
- **Monitored your phone or other devices to track your** movements, who you talk to, or where you go

Non-partner violence by men (N11)

- Asked you to perform any sexual acts on the phone or another device
- Sent you messages or images, or made you watch something of a sexual nature
- Send messages or images of a sexual nature that you did not want
- Threatened or actually did share private or sexual images

Intimate partner violence
- Controlling behaviour
- Psychological IPV
- Physical IPV
- Sexual IPV
- Economic Abuse

Non-partner sexual violence
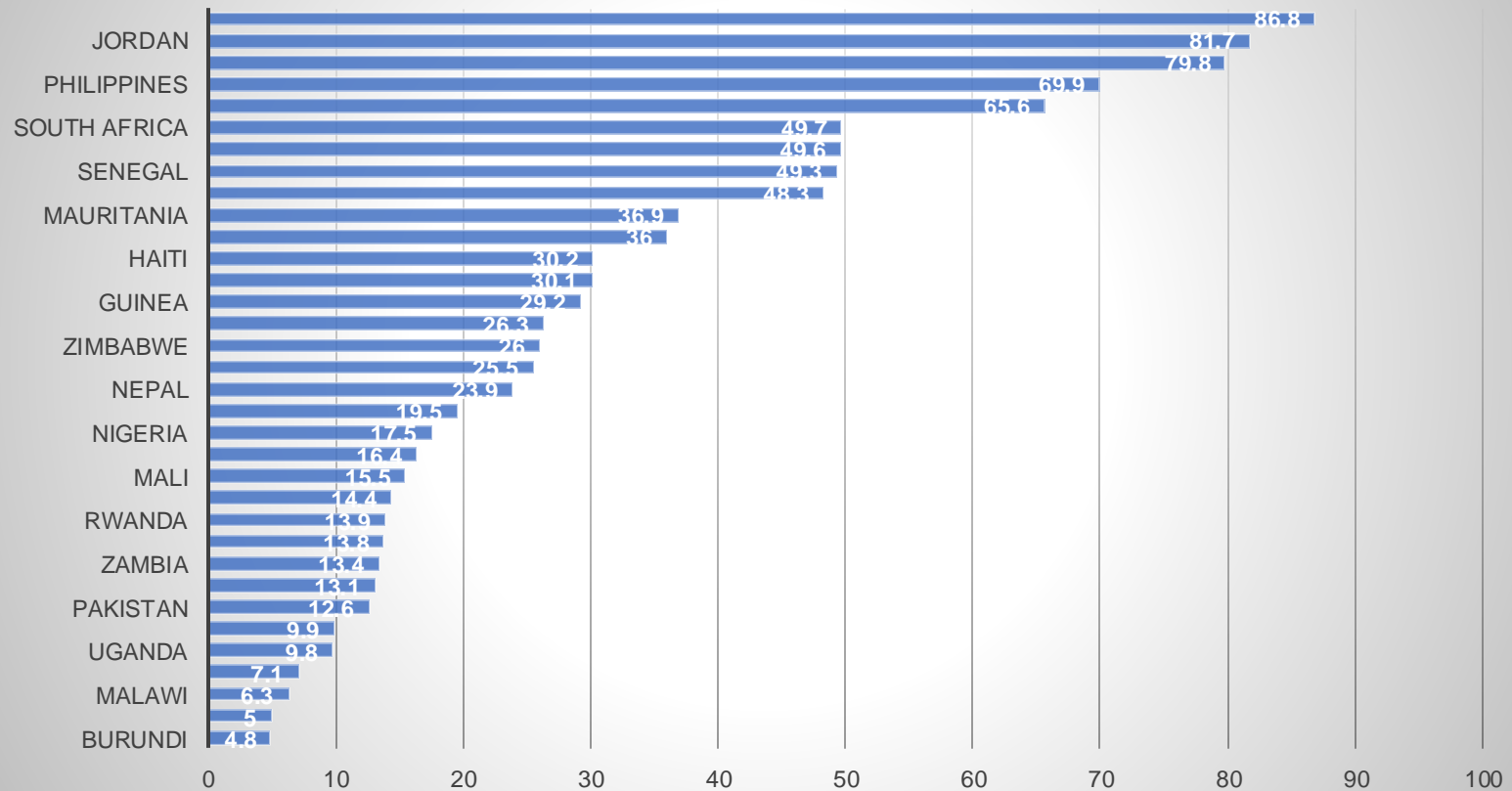
Sexual harassment
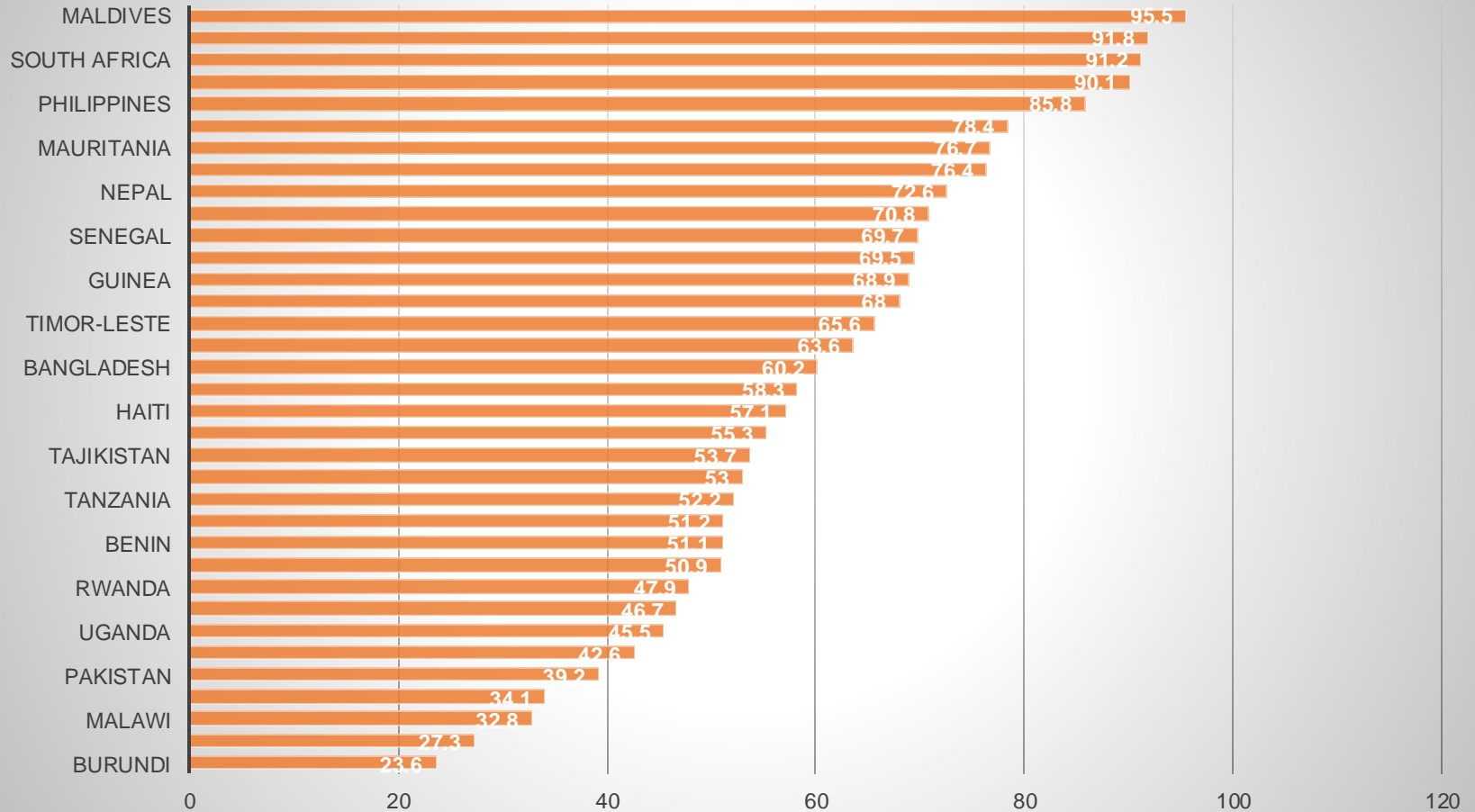- School
- Workplace
- Public spaces

MEASUREMENT CONSIDERATIONS IMPACTING PREVALENCE OF TFVAW

- Denominators – which group of women are we including/excluding when measuring TFVAW

- Types of acts included and measured and what 'constructs' forms of violence are these measured as

- Balance between standardization and capturing country contexts

- Perpetrators – how do we capture and analyse known, unknown and secondary perpetrators

- Time frames – past 12 months, lifetime, other

- Reporting practices – combined prevalence or reporting prevalence of TFVAW separately

Women who ever used the internet

Country	Value
	86.8
JORDAN	81.7
	79.8
PHILIPPINES	69.9
	65.6
SOUTH AFRICA	49.7
	49.6
SENEGAL	49.3
	48.3
MAURITANIA	36.9
	36
HAITI	30.2
	30.1
GUINEA	29.2
	26.3
ZIMBABWE	26
	25.5
NEPAL	23.9
	19.5
NIGERIA	17.5
	16.4
MALI	15.5
	14.4
RWANDA	13.9
	13.8
ZAMBIA	13.4
	13.1
PAKISTAN	12.6
	9.9
UGANDA	9.8
	7.1
MALAWI	6.3
	5
BURUNDI	4.8

Women who own a mobile phone

Country	Value
MALDIVES	95.5
	91.8
SOUTH AFRICA	91.2
	90.1
PHILIPPINES	85.8
	78.4
MAURITANIA	76.7
	76.4
NEPAL	72.6
	70.8
SENEGAL	69.7
	69.5
GUINEA	68.9
	68
TIMOR-LESTE	65.6
	63.6
BANGLADESH	60.2
	58.3
HAITI	57.1
	55.3
TAJIKISTAN	53.7
	53
TANZANIA	52.2
	51.2
BENIN	51.1
	50.9
RWANDA	47.9
	46.7
UGANDA	45.5
	42.6
PAKISTAN	39.2
	34.1
MALAWI	32.8
	27.3
BURUNDI	23.6

MEASUREMENT CONSIDERATIONS IMPACTING ON TFVAW

Population-based prevalence surveys are the source of nationally representative prevalence data on violence against women with good practices like the WHO Multi-country survey.

Survey measurement of TFVAW is very nascent and there are many unknowns.

To develop and strengthen the survey measurement of TFVAW it is **important to draw on and apply existing knowledge and good practice from longstanding, well-established, standardized prevalence surveys** for measuring VAW including…

Building on cross-learnings and field experiences from diverse settings
- Use qualitative measures to inform development of survey items
- Cognitively test questions including wording, placement, time frames etc
- Pilot test questions and instruments
- Test the questions in local languages as translation key to reliable, valid and standardized measure
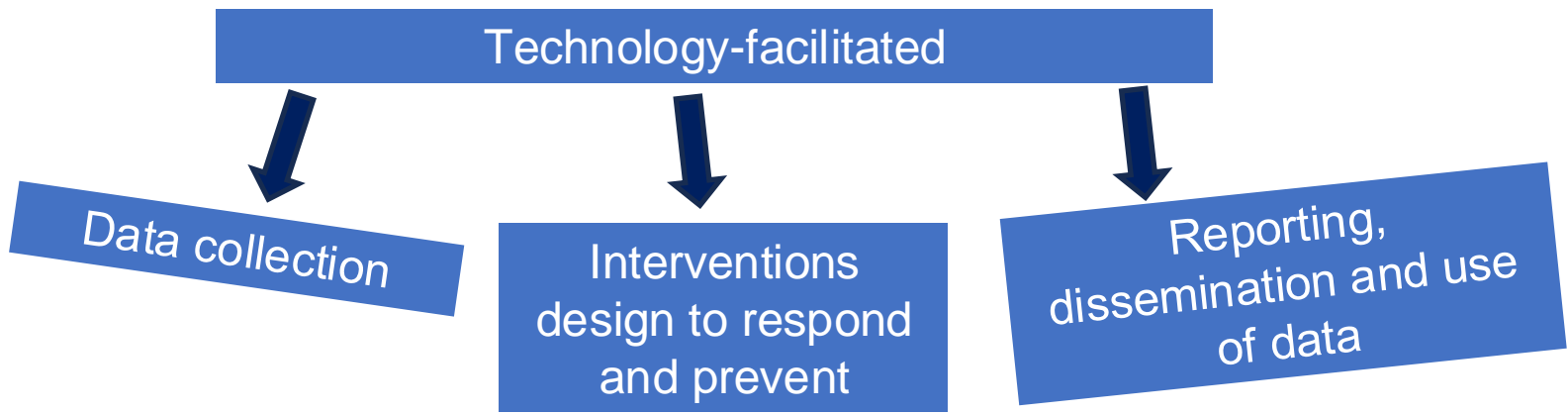- Ensure methodological and ethical rigor

Ethical and Safety guidelines

★ Safety of respondents and survey/research team is paramount

★ Methodologically sound and build on current research experience

★ Protecting confidentiality is essential

★ Careful selection and training of research team

★ Minimise distress to participants and researchers

★ Ethical obligation to ensure findings are properly interpreted to advance policy and intervention

★ Violence questions should be incorporated *only* when ethical and methodological requirements are met

Studies need to be methodologically sound and build upon current research experience

Technology-facilitated

Data collection

Interventions design to respond and prevent

Reporting, dissemination and use of data

IMPORTANT: Keep updated and invest in technological and methodological advancements and lessons from the field

The safety of respondents and the research team is paramount and should guide all project decisions

Technology and technology-facilitated methods can compromise the safety of participants and users

Recommendations and considerations

- Consider carefully the type of method and technology and risk assessment

- Consider the risks and mitigation strategies from the outset of the project/survey/study planning
    - Obtaining valid informed consent in a safe way (e.g. consideration of 'gatekeepers')
    - Establishing privacy at the start of the interview
    - Preparing for interruptions (e.g. use of 'safe words')
    - Ongoing consent and monitoring of safety and security
    - Plan for ending the interview promptly if needed (e.g. violence or privacy breaches)
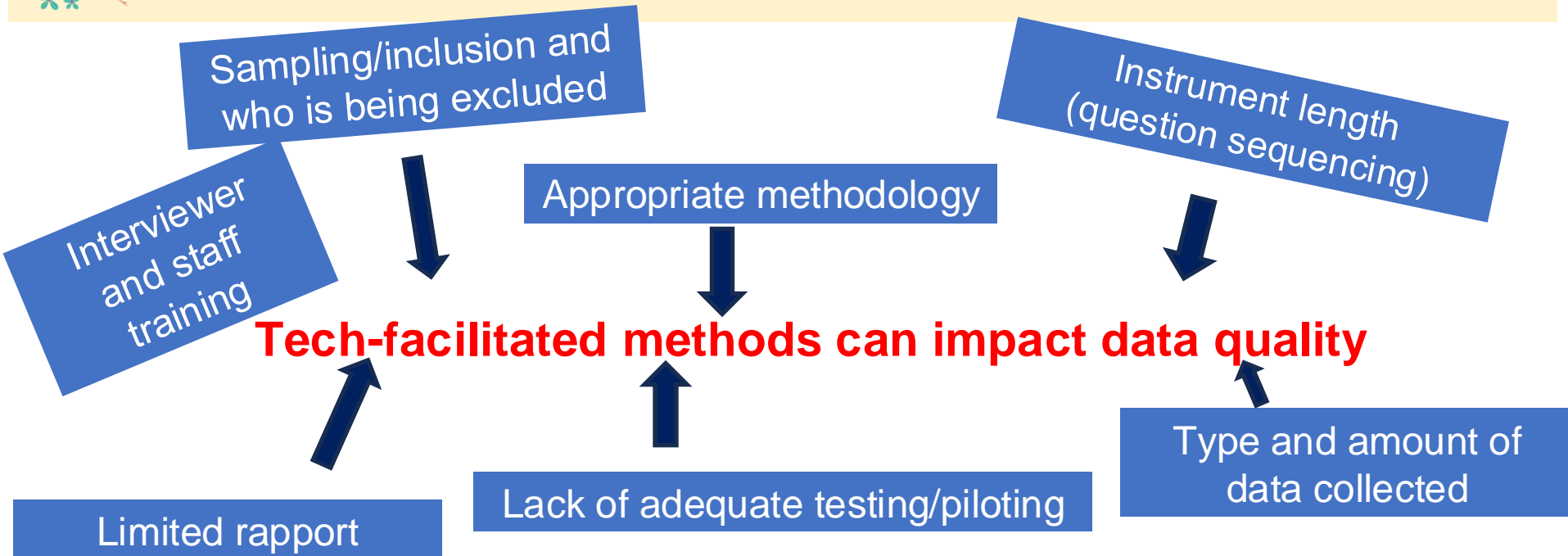
Protecting confidentiality is essential to ensure both women's and researcher's and service provider safety and data quality

Maintaining confidentiality is affected by technology

- Ensuring interviewer/researcher/service provider - privacy
- Access to appropriate technology and training for the research/service team,
- Safe data storage, transfer and communications transfer
- Managing recording of disclosures
- Ensuring anonymity in reporting and dissemination of findings

Studies need to be methodologically sound and build upon current research experience

Sampling/inclusion and who is being excluded

Instrument length (question sequencing)

Interviewer and staff training

Appropriate methodology

Tech-facilitated methods can impact data quality

Limited rapport

Lack of adequate testing/piloting

Type and amount of data collected

IMPORTANT: Keep updated and invest in technological and methodological advancements and lessons from the field

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Researchers have an ethical obligation to ensure their findings are properly interpreted and used to advance policy and intervention development

- Clear communication of scope and limitations imposed by remote methods

    - Representativeness

    - Non-response and non-completion rates

    - Accessibility and gatekeeper impacts

- Transparent discussion of any data quality issues and lessons learned

- Careful consideration of reporting and communication of findings and key messages to avoid mis-interpretation and stigmatization of any group or sub-population

- Ensuring that fully anonymized data be available for local researchers and secondary analyses to inform policy and programming

Conclusions

- Choose the appropriate methods and data for your research question

- Draw strength from complimentary methods and data sources

- Invest in methodological and measurement work to more adequately capture the magnitude, extent, contexts and risks of TFVAW and the populations most affected

- Balance comparability of measures over time with measuring emerging forms of TFVAW

- Balance standardization and context specific measures

- Fundamental to safely field test methods and interventions in diverse settings

- Safety and privacy are paramount! Do no harm! Ethical and robust methods are key to valid data

IMPORTANT: DRAW FROM AND EXPAND LONG-STANDING EVIDENCE IN THE MEASUREMENT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

USING DATA FOR EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMING
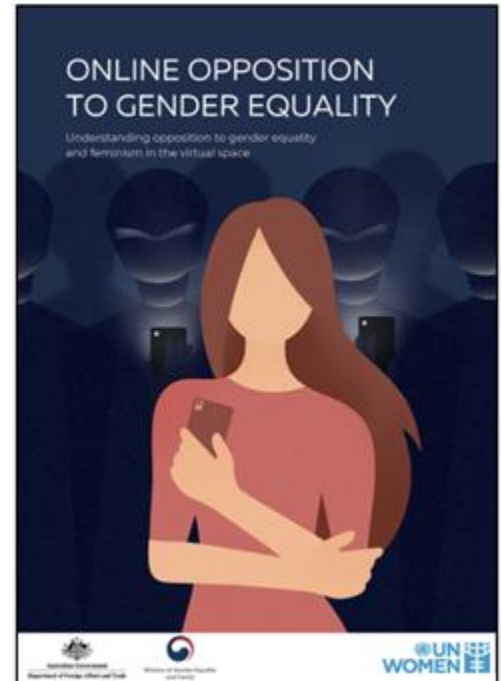
TFGBV Programming Framework

- Joint UNFPA and eSafety Commissioner with the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-based Online Harassment and Abuse

- Developed through: mixed-methods research, including:
  - literature review.
  - Total of 116 initiatives were mapped and interviewed across 15 countries

The framework outlines the elements of TFGBV programs to inform design of new programs and integration of TFGBV into existing practices, and to support infomed funding decisions.

USING DATA FOR EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMING

Small scale quantitative and qualitative research studies

1. What has worked well in your efforts to prevent or respond to Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence?

2. How can technology companies make their platforms safer for women and girls, what is needed to advocate further for 'safety by design'?

3. What connections and challenges do you see in addressing technology-facilitated violence against women and children? What is needed to address both in a coordinated manner?

4. What are the key gaps in current TFGBV prevention and response efforts, and what more is needed to fill them?

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