

# Summary Report

## Summary: Analytical Overview of Femicide Reporting in Kenya (January 1–31, 2024)

1 Published by the Media Council of Kenya, Research Planning and Strategy Department.\*

This report examines media coverage of femicide in Kenya during January 2024, focusing on the role of the media in addressing gender-based violence. Femicide, defined as the intentional killing of women because of their gender, has seen a significant rise in Kenya, with over 500 cases reported between 2016 and 2023. The report highlights the media's critical role in raising awareness, setting the agenda, and pressuring authorities to act, while also critiquing instances of unprofessional reporting.

### ### Key Findings:

#### 1 . **\*\*Media Coverage and Agenda Setting\*\***:

- 1 The media played a pivotal role in bringing femicide to public attention, with sustained coverage of high-profile cases like Scarlet Wahu and Rita Waeni.
- 1 Broadcast and digital media platforms facilitated discussions, panel interviews, and expert opinions, amplifying calls for action.
- 1 However, some outlets, such as Anguo FM, Taifa Leo, and Kiss FM, were criticized for sensationalism, victim-blaming, and insensitive reporting.

#### 2. **\*\*Legal and Ethical Framework\*\***:

- 1 Kenya's Constitution and international conventions, such as CEDAW and the Maputo Protocol, provide a robust legal framework to combat gender-based violence.
- 1 Despite this, gaps in enforcement and slow legal processes hinder justice for victims.
- 1 The Media Council's Code of Conduct emphasizes ethical reporting, but breaches were observed, including intrusive coverage of victims' families and graphic details.

#### 3. **\*\*Patterns and Trends\*\***:

- 1 Data from OdipoDev.com revealed recurring patterns in femicide cases, with stabbing, hacking, and strangulation as common methods.
- 1 Nairobi, Kiambu, and Nakuru counties reported the highest incidents, though underreporting in other regions suggests a larger, systemic issue.

- 1 Intimate partner violence and stranger killings were predominant, with firearms often used by perpetrators linked to law enforcement.

#### 4. **\*\*Media Content Analysis\*\***:

- 1 Broadcast media provided platforms for human rights groups, activists, and experts to condemn femicide and advocate for systemic change.
- 1 Print and digital media, however, often used sensational headlines and explicit details, violating ethical guidelines on grief and shock.
- 1 Social media campaigns, such as #EndFemicideKE, highlighted public outrage and the need for gender equality.

#### 5. **\*\*Institutional Responses\*\***:

- 1 Organizations like FIDA Kenya and the National Gender and Equality Commission condemned the rise in femicide and called for government action.
- 1 The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife addressed security concerns in short-term rental accommodations following Airbnb-related murders.

#### ### Conclusion:

The media's role in reporting femicide was largely commendable, with accurate and balanced coverage driving public discourse. However, ethical lapses, including sensationalism and insensitivity, underscore the need for stricter adherence to professional standards. The report calls for continued media engagement, improved legal enforcement, and collaborative efforts to address the root causes of femicide in Kenya.

#### 1 References:\*

The report cites international conventions, Kenyan laws, and scholarly research on femicide, emphasizing the need for a multi-stakeholder approach to combat gender-based violence.