

# Summary Report

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

The Media Council of Kenya's report provides a comprehensive analysis of femicide reporting in Kenya during January 2024, highlighting the media's role in addressing the rising cases of gender-based violence. Femicide, defined as the intentional killing of women because of their gender, has become a critical issue in Kenya, with over 500 cases recorded between 2016 and 2023. The report examines media coverage, legal frameworks, and ethical considerations in reporting femicide.

### ### Key Findings:

#### 1. **Media Coverage**:

- 1 The media played a pivotal role in raising awareness and setting the agenda on femicide, with extensive coverage of high-profile cases such as the murders of Scarlet Wahu and Rita Waeni.
- 1 Broadcast and digital media platforms facilitated public discourse, hosting panel discussions with experts, activists, and religious leaders to address root causes and advocate for systemic change.
- 1 However, some outlets, including Anguo FM, Taifa Leo, and Kiss FM, were criticized for sensational, inaccurate, and insensitive reporting, often victim-blaming or violating ethical guidelines.

#### 2. **Legal Framework**:

- 1 Kenya's Constitution and various laws, including the Sexual Offences Act and the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act, provide a robust legal framework to combat gender-based violence.
- 1 International conventions such as CEDAW and the Maputo Protocol further obligate Kenya to protect women's rights and address femicide.

#### 3. **Ethical Concerns**:

- 1 While many media outlets adhered to the Code of Conduct for Journalism, some breached ethical standards by publishing graphic details, intruding on victims' privacy, and failing to maintain sensitivity in reporting.
- 1 The Media Council emphasized the need for professionalism, urging media houses to avoid sensationalism and prioritize ethical reporting.

#### 4. **Public and Institutional Response**:

- 1 Civil society organizations, women's rights groups, and religious leaders condemned the rise in femicide, calling for urgent government action.
- 1 The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife and the Ministry of Interior took steps to enhance safety regulations in short-term rental accommodations following femicide cases linked to Airbnb stays.

5. **Trends and Patterns**:

- 1 Data revealed that intimate partner violence and stranger killings were the most common forms of femicide, with stabbing, hacking, and strangulation as prevalent methods.
- 1 Nairobi, Kiambu, and Nakuru counties reported the highest number of cases, though underreporting in other regions suggests a nationwide issue.

### Conclusion:

The media's role in reporting femicide was largely commendable, with consistent coverage and efforts to educate the public. However, ethical lapses and sensationalism in some outlets underscored the need for stricter adherence to journalistic standards. The report calls for sustained media engagement, government action, and public awareness to combat femicide effectively.

### Recommendations:

- 1 Media outlets should prioritize ethical reporting, avoiding sensationalism and respecting victims' dignity.
- 1 The government must enforce existing laws, expedite investigations, and implement preventive measures to address femicide.
- 1 Stakeholders, including civil society and religious institutions, should continue advocating for gender equality and systemic change to eradicate gender-based violence.

This report serves as a critical resource for understanding femicide trends, media accountability, and the collective effort required to protect women's rights in Kenya.