

Summary Report

The Media Council of Kenya's report on femicide in January 2024 highlights a concerning rise in gender-based killings, with 10 cases reported in the first month alone, following 150 cases in 2023. Nairobi, Kiambu, and Nakuru were the most affected areas, though underreporting in other regions distorts the full picture. Patriarchal norms and gender inequality are identified as key drivers of femicide.

Media coverage varied across platforms: broadcast media focused on high-profile cases but faced criticism for sensationalism; print media sometimes breached ethical guidelines with explicit details; and digital media amplified advocacy through trending hashtags like #EndFemicideKE. While Kenya has strong legal protections against gender-based violence, enforcement is weak, and media ethics violations persist.

Public and institutional responses included calls to declare femicide a national disaster and regulatory measures for short-term rentals linked to some cases. Challenges in reporting include sensationalism, victim-blaming, and insufficient expert engagement.

The report concludes that while the media has been instrumental in raising awareness, ethical lapses and systemic issues must be addressed. Recommendations include enforcing media ethics, improving collaboration, and enhancing data collection to combat femicide effectively.