

# 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, emphasizing the need for accurate, sensitive, and professional reporting.

### ### Key Findings:

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

- 1 The media played a pivotal role in setting the agenda on femicide, with sustained coverage of high-profile cases like Scarlet Wahu and Rita Waeni.
- 1 Broadcast and print media provided platforms for discussions, expert opinions, and calls for action, but some outlets were criticized for sensationalism, victim-blaming, and insensitive reporting.
- 1 Digital media amplified the issue through hashtags like #EndFemicideKE, fostering public discourse and advocacy.

#### 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 reinforce Kenya's obligations to protect women's rights.

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

- 1 Some media outlets breached ethical guidelines by publishing graphic details, victim-shaming, and using sensational headlines, violating the Code of Conduct for Kenyan journalists.
- 1 The Media Council called for adherence to professionalism, emphasizing sensitivity, accuracy, and respect for victims' dignity.

#### 4. **Institutional Responses**:

- 1 Organizations like FIDA Kenya, the National Gender and Equality Commission, and civil society groups condemned femicide and advocated for systemic changes.
- 1 The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife and Airbnb responded to security concerns in short-term rental accommodations, highlighting gaps in regulation and enforcement.

5. **Data and Trends**:

- 1 Femicide cases in Kenya reveal systemic issues, with intimate partner violence and stranger killings being predominant. Methods include stabbing, strangulation, and extreme acts like beheading.
- 1 Nairobi, Kiambu, and Nakuru counties reported the highest incidences, though data limitations suggest underreporting in other regions.

### Conclusion:

The media's role in reporting femicide has been both impactful and contentious. While it has raised awareness and pressured authorities to act, ethical lapses and sensationalism have undermined its credibility. The report calls for improved adherence to journalistic standards, sustained advocacy, and stronger government action to address the root causes of femicide and protect women's rights.

This analysis serves as a guide for media stakeholders, policymakers, and civil society to enhance reporting practices and combat gender-based violence effectively.