

# Summary Report

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

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This report examines media coverage of femicide in Kenya during January 2024, highlighting trends, legal frameworks, and ethical considerations. Femicide, defined as the intentional killing of women because of their gender, has seen a disturbing rise in Kenya, with over 500 cases reported between 2016 and 2023. The report underscores the media's role in shaping public discourse, advocating for justice, and adhering to ethical standards while addressing systemic issues of gender-based violence.

### ### Key Findings:

#### 1 . **Rising Femicide Cases**:

- 1 January 2024 saw a surge in femicide cases, including high-profile murders like those of Scarlet Wahu and Rita Waeni.
- 1 Data from OdipoDev.com reveals recurring patterns, with stabbing, hacking, and strangulation as common methods.
- 1 Nairobi, Kiambu, and Nakuru counties reported the highest incidents, though underreporting in other regions remains a challenge.

#### 2. **Media Coverage Analysis**:

- 1 Broadcast and print media extensively covered femicide, with terms like "femicide" peaking in usage on January 17, 2024.
- 1 Media outlets like Citizen TV, NTV, and KTN hosted panel discussions with experts, amplifying voices from human rights groups, psychologists, and activists.
- 1 However, some outlets, including Anguo FM, Taifa Leo, and Kiss FM, were criticized for sensationalism, victim-blaming, and insensitive reporting.

#### 3. **Legal and Ethical Frameworks**:

- 1 Kenya's Constitution (Article 26) and international conventions like CEDAW and the Maputo Protocol protect women's rights and prohibit gender-based violence.
- 1 The Sexual Offences Act (2006) and Media Council Act (2013) provide guidelines for ethical reporting, though gaps in enforcement persist.

- 1 The media's adherence to the Code of Conduct for Journalism was inconsistent, with some outlets violating clauses on sensitivity, accuracy, and intrusion into grief.

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

- 1 Civil society organizations, including FIDA Kenya and Usikimye, condemned the rise in femicide and called for government action.
- 1 Religious leaders, such as Archbishop Jackson Ole Sapit, and women parliamentarians urged the declaration of femicide as a national disaster.
- 1 The Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife initiated measures to regulate short-term rental accommodations following femicide incidents in Airbnb properties.

#### 5. **\*\*Digital Media Trends\*\***:

- 1 Hashtags like #EndFemicideKE and #SilencingWomen trended on social media, reflecting public outrage and calls for justice.
- 1 Online platforms also highlighted patriarchal attitudes and the harassment of women who speak out against gender-based violence.

#### ### Challenges in Media Reporting:

- 1 **\*\*Sensationalism\*\***: Some media outlets prioritized sensational headlines over ethical reporting, exacerbating trauma for victims' families.
- 1 **\*\*Victim-Blaming\*\***: Discussions on social media influence and victim behavior were deemed unethical and counterproductive.
- 1 **\*\*Inconsistent Follow-Ups\*\***: While some outlets provided updates on investigations, others failed to sustain long-term coverage of femicide as a systemic issue.

#### ### Recommendations:

- 1 The media should prioritize ethical reporting, adhering to the Code of Conduct for Journalism to avoid sensationalism and victim-blaming.
- 1 Stakeholders, including the government and civil society, must collaborate to address root causes of femicide, such as toxic masculinity and gender inequality.
- 1 Enhanced data collection and reporting mechanisms are needed to provide a comprehensive understanding of femicide trends nationwide.

#### ### Conclusion:

The media played a pivotal role in raising awareness and advocating for justice in femicide cases. However, ethical lapses and sensationalism undermined its credibility. Moving forward, a balanced,

sensitive, and sustained approach to reporting is essential to combat femicide and promote gender equality in Kenya.

- 1 References: UN Women, UNODC, Kenya Constitution, Sexual Offences Act, and Media Council Act.\*