

UGANDA

Development of Standard Measures to Support Gender-Based Cyber Violence Prevention

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BACKGROUND

The growth of information and communication technologies (ICT) and social networking sites (SNS) has been an enormous boon for economic and social development. Yet, despite the opportunities afforded by ICT, the internet, social media platforms and smart phones have also generated new types of and venues for gender-based violence. The abuse that occurs on and through ICT and SNS represents the relatively nascent phenomenon of cyber violence; cyber violence that is based on socially ascribed gender differences is considered gender-based cyber violence (GBCV).

Worldwide, GBCV is emerging as a pressing public health and human rights issue that compromises the safety and well-being of women, girls, men, and boys. Yet, very little research exists on GBCV, particularly in low and middle income countries like Uganda where connectivity and internet usage are growing rapidly. Further, the ability to compare experiences of GBCV across settings and create scalable prevention interventions is impaired by a lack of common, standardized measures to capture the phenomenon.

OBJECTIVES

The International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) will implement an innovative formative research study that will contribute to the development of a set of standard measures that can be used to study GBCV across settings and populations and inform GBCV prevention interventions, particularly in low and middle income countries. The objectives of this study are:

1. To identify, catalogue, and consolidate definitions, forms, and methodologies for measuring GBCV.
2. To develop a draft set of quantitative GBCV measures.
3. To field-test quantitative measures aimed at capturing the different forms of GBCV in Uganda.
4. To disseminate a set of tested GBCV measures and to recommend next steps for advancing the field of GBCV research.

METHODS AND TIMEFRAME

This study will take place in three phases over 18 months. In Phase I, ICRW will conduct a desk review, key informant interviews, and consultation with a global GBCV Technical Advisory Group, and based on this process, will develop a draft set of quantitative GBCV measures. In Phase II, ICRW will field-test the draft measures through cognitive interviews in Uganda. In Phase III, ICRW will finalize and broadly disseminate the tested GBCV measures to its academic and practice networks. Additional recommendations for advancing GBCV research will also be offered.

IMPLICATIONS

This study will address an emerging phenomenon which is under-researched and poses an acute threat to public health and human rights. Findings will provide a first step towards creating a necessary evidence-base to inform emerging programs and policies that seek to prevent and respond to GBCV.

