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**Stepping Up Action to Prevent and Respond to Online and ICT-Facilitated
Violence against Women and Girls**

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¹ The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

1. Introduction

The sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will explore “Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls” as its priority theme. The Internet and other forms of information and communication technology (ICT) offer significant potential to catalyze gender equality and women’s empowerment.¹ Online spaces provide women and girls who have access to the Internet important opportunities to share and access information, speak up, and raise awareness on several issues which affect the health, safety and wellbeing of women, youth, children, including human rights violations.²

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the importance of and dependence on ICT for work, education, and access to services, for social engagements and for public participation.³ However, there continues to be important gender gaps in access to the internet and other ICT. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) indicates that the majority of the estimated 2.9 billion people who remain unconnected are women and girls.⁴ Gender gaps in connectivity must also consider the nature of women’s connectivity. For example, research from Nigeria and South Africa reveals that women were less able to make use of the Internet and ICT for productive purposes during COVID-19.⁵ Also, those who experience multiple inequalities are the least likely to have access to the Internet.⁶ Closing the gender gap, particularly for women and girls in all their diversity, will require systemic efforts to address structural inequality that limits their potential to connect and benefit from the Internet and other forms of ICT.⁷ Unfortunately, for women and girls who can access the Internet and ICT, they can experience online forms of gender based violence (GBV), including sexual harassment.⁸

Online violence against women and girls (VAWG) is universal, a form of gender-based discrimination and a violation of human rights.⁹ It is driven by power imbalances, patriarchy, and misogyny,¹⁰ and occurs within a continuum of multiple, recurring, and interrelated forms of GBV.¹¹ Online and ICT facilitated VAWG also exacerbates existing forms of violence (e.g. sexual harassment and intimate partner violence) and includes new forms of violence (e.g. zoom bombing).

Since the onset of the COVID-19 in 2020, there is a global increase in various forms of VAWG, referred to as the ‘Shadow pandemic’,¹² including online and ICT-facilitated VAWG.¹³ For example, a study with women and non-binary people in the UK found that 46% of respondents experienced online abuse since the beginning of the pandemic.¹⁴ Data from India, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia showed a 168% increase in the volume of and engagement with misogynistic online posts and tweets, including likes, comments and shares during COVID-19 related lockdowns in 2020 from the same period in 2019.¹⁵ A study in the Arab States region published in 2021 found that 60% of women reported that they were exposed to online violence in the past year.¹⁶

This paper outlines important trends in knowledge and implementation gaps related to online and ICT-facilitated VAWG and highlights some promising practices. It draws on findings from: the Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences on Online Violence against women and girls from a human rights perspective (2018), a global landscape analysis conducted by UN Women (2021), and the Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women: Report of the Secretary-General (2022), and several other recent studies and papers on online VAWG to inform a set of proposed recommendations to address these gaps.

2. Online and ICT-facilitated VAWG

While there still is **no globally accepted definition of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG**, it can be understood as “any act of GBV against women that is committed, assisted or aggravated in part or fully by the use of ICT, such as mobile phones, the Internet, social media platforms or email, against a woman because she is a woman, or affects women disproportionately.”¹⁷ While men and boys can also experience violence online and through ICT, women are disproportionately affected by such violence¹⁸ and the violence they experience is more likely to be gender based.¹⁹ A global study found that 38% of women who are online reported having experienced some form of online violence, and 85% shared that they witnessed online violence being perpetrated against other women.²⁰

Online and ICT-facilitated VAWG can take many forms such as death threats and threats of GBV, online sexual harassment including unwelcome verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature as well as non-consensual intimate image sharing or using apps and devices that track and monitor someone else’s activities (stalking), economic VAWG, etc.²¹ Online and ICT-facilitated VAWG can also include efforts to silence and discredit women online,²² including threats and perpetration of offline violence.²³

Perpetrators of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG may be current or former intimate partners, family members, state officials, friends, colleagues, or someone who is unknown to a victim/survivor.²⁴ For example, stalking, financial abuse and coercive control are forms of intimate partner violence that can occur offline and are often replicated and intensified online or using ICT.²⁵ Abusive partners and ex-partners can use digital tools to monitor, track, threaten and perpetrate violence including tracking devices or publishing private and identifying information.²⁶ There is also a growth in coordinated groups engaging in sexual harassment against women, including men’s rights activists, incels (involuntary celibates), and other groups engaging in the ‘manosphere’²⁷ and there is growing evidence of links to extremist groups.²⁸

As technology continues to evolve and innovate, different and emerging forms of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG do as well. There are also **unique features to online and digital spaces** that can increase women and girls’ risks to online violence. Scale, speed, and ease of Internet communication combined with anonymity, pseudonymity, affordability, impunity and limited liability, coupled with the lack of preventive and response measures²⁹ can facilitate the proliferation of hate and harassment against women and girls.³⁰

As with VAWG that occurs offline, **some women and girls face heightened risks to online and ICT-facilitated VAWG** such as young women and girls,³¹ women of color, LGBTQI+,³² women from ethnic or religious minorities,³³ indigenous women,³⁴ women with disabilities,³⁵ and poor women³⁶ due to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that they experience. For example, a study conducted by Amnesty International that analyzed messages received by women politicians and journalists in the US and UK, found that Black women were 84% more likely than White women to be mentioned in abusive or problematic tweets.³⁷ Women whose professions or activism require them to be more visible online also experience higher levels of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG, including women journalists, politicians, women’s rights activists and women’s human rights defenders.³⁸ A multi-country study in Asia conducted by UN Women revealed that women in the public eye such as politicians, journalists, and human rights defenders with intersecting identities are targeted online to silence them and “put them in their place”.³⁹

There are **several impacts of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG**. Victim/survivors can experience psychological, physical, sexual or economic harm or suffering,⁴⁰ and similar to other forms of VAWG, this form of violence can also lead to self-harm, depression, and suicide.⁴¹ Women and girls who experience

online VAWG can silence themselves, self-censor and halt their meaningful participation in public life.⁴² Online and ICT-facilitated VAWG can precede violence perpetrated against women and girls offline. For example, one in five women journalists reported that they have been abused and attacked offline in connection with online violence.⁴³ Women who are interested in politics may reconsider their political ambitions when they witness disinformation campaigns against other women⁴⁴ and young women and girls may be discouraged from engaging in political and social issues.⁴⁵ An economic assessment prepared for the European Parliamentary Research Service estimated the overall costs of cyber harassment and cyber stalking at between 49 and 89.3 billion euros per year.⁴⁶ At a global level, it has slowed global progress towards gender equality, sustainable development,⁴⁷ and the women, peace and security agenda.⁴⁸

Efforts have been made by States, private companies including Internet intermediaries, women’s rights organizations and other civil society organizations to document, prevent and respond to online and ICT-facilitated VAWG for many years. For example, the Internet Foundation for Electoral Systems develops tools to support the documentation of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG against women in politics, particularly on social media.⁴⁹ The Republic of Korea has established a Digital Sex Crimes Victim Support Centre that offers comprehensive support to survivors of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG, including psychological and legal support, and technological support to delete content.⁵⁰ Jigsaw, a subsidiary of Google, developed a tool called “Perspective API”⁵¹ that can be integrated to online spaces such as comments sections or online fora, to proactively identify “toxic” comments online, including sexual harassment and misogyny, using machine learning to flag potentially abusive comments to content moderators, commenters and readers.⁵² The Bangladesh Police launched an all-women special wing named ‘The Police Cyber Support for Women’ to tackle cyber harassment in the country.⁵³ The Feminist Tech eXchange (FTX) has developed a digital safety training curriculum, the Safety Reboot, for trainers who work with women’s rights and sexual rights activists.⁵⁴

To strengthen the evidence base on online and ICT facilitated VAWG there are **many knowledge and implementation gaps that need to be addressed.** While there is increased recognition that human rights must be upheld online,⁵⁵ **existing normative frameworks have not been explicitly developed to consider the unique contexts of violations which occur in online spaces.**⁵⁶ Normative standards are important for ensuring a common approach that upholds human rights, and up to present, it can be said that much of the work on online and ICT-facilitated has been fragmented and lacks coherence.

While some States have introduced or amended laws and legislative frameworks to address online and ICT-facilitated VAWG (e.g. Japan,⁵⁷ Ghana,⁵⁸ Mexico⁵⁹), many countries still lack clear and consistent definitions and have not been able to keep up with the rapid evolution of ICT and emerging forms of VAWG facilitated by it, and which occurs online.⁶⁰

Addressing online VAWG is particularly challenging because often it involves multiple victims, multiple perpetrators and platforms across different jurisdictions. Furthermore, **there may be a lack of capacity to implement laws and legislation on online and ICT-facilitated VAWG.**⁶¹ As legal frameworks are developed, States must find the right balance at the intersections of the rights of women and girls to freedom of expression, access to information, to privacy and data protection, and the right to a life free from violence.⁶²

There is a **lack of a common global definition of ICT-facilitated VAWG⁶³ and a lack of comprehensive and accurate data collection,** including standardized concepts, operational definitions and measures,⁶⁴ contributes to the current context of fragmented approaches, including a lack of comparable and reliable data.⁶⁵ As a result, there are significant knowledge gaps about the extent and nature including impacts and

drivers of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG,⁶⁶ It is also important to recognize that similar to other forms of VAWG, online and ICT-facilitated VAWG is often underreported.⁶⁷

Comprehensive approaches require prevention and response efforts to be strengthened simultaneously, by addressing current gaps on specific drivers, risk and protective factors related to online and ICT facilitated VAWG in the evidence based on what works.⁶⁸ There is also a need to better understand the consequences of such violence to inform specific prevention and response efforts related to women’s political participation, women’s rights activism, conflict dynamics, etc.

Finally, there is a significant underrepresentation of women in the technology sector,⁶⁹ which results in the maintenance and reproduction of discrimination and inequalities and building in gender bias into new technologies.⁷⁰ **When women and girls do have access to online spaces and ICT, they may lack the knowledge and digital skills⁷¹ to know how to safely access these spaces or how to report VAWG.** For example, one global survey found that 78% of women who are online reported that they were unaware that there are options to report harmful online behaviors. Where reporting channels are available, they can be incomplete or non-responsive. The lack of inclusive design, adequate content moderation, availability of multiple reporting mechanisms, and the detection of abuse is a barrier to women’s free and safe use of the Internet and other forms of ICT.

3. Recommendations

To address the main gap areas highlighted above and as part of supporting the identification, development, and implementation of comprehensive evidence-based approaches to prevent and respond to online and ICT facilitated VAWG and building to scale, the following recommendations⁷² can be considered.

1. Address gaps in normative frameworks on online and ICT facilitated VAWG

While it is agreed that a “recognition of the principle that human rights protected offline should also be protected online”,⁷³ there is a lack of agreed upon normative frameworks for addressing online and ICT-facilitated VAWG, and there are no normative frameworks that explicitly consider the unique and dynamic specificities of ICT and online spaces.⁷⁴

States are urged to recognize VAWG in digital contexts as a human rights violation and form of gender-based violence against women and girls.⁷⁵ States should also recall and reinforce the importance of existing international policy instruments across sectors and ensure their uptake. UN Agencies can support this process by developing guidance for applying normative frameworks in online spaces.

Private companies, including Internet intermediaries, are subject to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. These consist of guidelines for States and companies to prevent, address and remedy human rights abuses committed in business operations.⁷⁶

Private companies are urged to work proactively to consider how to apply these guidelines to their existing platforms and technology, including in the new technology that they are developing and in their ongoing upgrades.

The UN system can work with private companies and civil society to develop guidelines of minimum standards for ICT and online platforms that uphold women’s and girls’ rights online, including clear accountability mechanisms and sanctions.

2. Strengthen the development and implementation of comprehensive laws and legislation on online and ICT Facilitated VAWG

Global legal definitions and standards to address online and ICT-facilitated VAWG can be developed to support governments to develop laws and policies to address the issue. Such standards must apply a human rights framework and address the structural discrimination, inequalities, and violence that women experience in their everyday lives.⁷⁷

Laws and policies must also consider the evolving nature of ICT and build minimum standards for transnational cooperation to address online and ICT-facilitated VAWG,⁷⁸ which can easily transcend borders. These standards would include common definitions and guidance for developing laws and legal frameworks that can be adopted at national levels.

States are urged to introduce effective laws, policies and regulatory frameworks in line with existing international human rights instruments to criminalize and prohibit all forms of violence in digital contexts and strengthen capacities of law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute crimes effectively.⁷⁹ It is imperative that adequate resources for implementation of laws and policies to address online and ICT-facilitated VAWG be allocated. This includes resources for strengthening the capacity of law enforcement and the justice system to understand the scope and limitations of the law and how to implement it. Alternative reporting mechanisms should also be considered in helping to increase access to justice and providing victim/survivors with multiple reporting options in line with good practice. Finally, given the transnational nature of the Internet and online spaces, legal frameworks should encompass a global scope to effectively deal with online and ICT-facilitated VAWG.⁸⁰

Implementation should be accompanied with internal and external protocols and codes of conduct for addressing online and ICT-facilitated VAWG that are survivor-centred, gender responsive and that uphold human rights.⁸¹ Existing guidance, such as the Handbook on gender-responsive police services for women and girls subject to violence,⁸² can inform these efforts and be adapted to online and ICT-facilitated VAWG.

Resources must also be allocated for monitoring the implementation of the laws and legal frameworks with provisions built into the law to regularly update it to respond to emerging issues (e.g. metaverse, use of artificial intelligence-AI), which is necessary given the constant and rapid evolution of ICT. Finally, resources must be put into place to ensure that women and girls are aware of their rights and know how to report online and ICT-facilitated VAWG. Grassroots groups, women’s rights organizations, youth and other civil society organizations can play important roles in raising awareness about the laws among groups of women and girls who may experience heightened risks to online and ICT-facilitated VAWG.

3. Close persistent data gaps

Closing the data gap requires multisectoral collaboration. There is a need to develop international methodological guidance for collecting qualitative and quantitative data on online and ICT-facilitated VAWG. Such guidance should include provisions around data ownership and access, including guidance on the governance of data.

States can work to strengthen the evidence base by investing in generating both qualitative and quantitative data on the different forms of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG, with minimum disaggregation categories. Data on needs and vulnerabilities of marginalized groups of women and girls must be prioritized. In addition to data disaggregated by sex, simultaneous disaggregation by multiple dimensions, including by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, disability, geographic location, and other characteristics relevant to national context are also required to identify those most impacted by online and ICT-facilitated VAWG and to inform prevention and response efforts. Research has shown that intersectional inequalities need to be properly understood (e.g. gender, age, urban/rural) to inform strategic policy interventions to close gaps in terms of access and safe use of Internet and ICT.⁸³

Private companies, such as Internet intermediaries can strengthen their efforts in data collection to inform their evidence-based policies and demonstrate their accountability by sharing data about the nature and extent of different forms of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG experienced on their digital platforms, disaggregated by sex and by form of violence. Private companies are also encouraged to share how they have responded to incidences.⁸⁴

UN Women is convening a multisectoral and multistakeholder expert group meeting in collaboration with UN partners to develop a conceptual definition of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG, including a focus on operational definitions (November 15-16, 2022). The UN Statistical Commission, in collaboration with UN Women and UN Statistics Division, among other partners, can further advance common frameworks by looking into internationally agreed standards and methodologies for measuring online and ICT-facilitated VAWG.⁸⁵ There is also a recognized need for an internationally coordinated approach to data collection, and innovation in data collection including through big data, AI and through the invaluable data collection and research that civil society organizations also conduct.⁸⁶

4. Strengthen prevention and response efforts

As with offline VAWG, preventing online and ICT-facilitated VAWG requires comprehensive and long-term action to transform harmful behaviours, social norms and gender stereotypes at a broader societal level.⁸⁷ Efforts must be guided by a human rights and evidence-based approach and consider the needs and experiences of diverse women and be informed by survivors of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG.⁸⁸ Initiatives to prevent online and ICT-facilitated VAWG must include interventions aimed at transformative change and engaging men and boys alongside other multi-sectoral partners in efforts to change harmful attitudes, perceptions and behaviours which is critical for achieving gender equality and ending all forms of VAWG.⁸⁹ Women and girls must also be involved as agents of change in leading the implementation of prevention and response efforts.⁹⁰

Much work has been done to develop the evidence base about what works to prevent violence against children (including online)⁹¹ and VAWG, and the RESPECT framework was developed to inform and guide prevention efforts.⁹² This, in addition to other guidance and global frameworks (e.g. Guidance produced on Mapping Access to and Use of Mobile Phones to Document, Prevent, and Respond to Sexual Violence against Women and Girls in Urban Public Spaces, as part of the Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Global Initiative), provide an important starting point for informing the development of prevention strategies for specifically addressing online and ICT-facilitated VAWG.

Prevention efforts must be adapted to local contexts and evaluated over time as part of the development of the evidence base. Efforts that increase awareness about what online and ICT-facilitated VAWG are also

important. For example, men and boys who reshare non-consensual intimate images may not be aware that this action makes them secondary perpetrators and may not be aware of the consequences of their actions.⁹³

As there are more efforts dedicated to raise awareness about online and ICT-facilitated VAWG and encourage women and girls to come forward to report their experiences, it is critical that adequate services are put in place to support survivors and respond to their needs. Much has been done to understand how to best support survivors of VAWG more broadly, and important tools have been developed to support these efforts, including the Essential services package for women and girls subject to violence.⁹⁴ This can be an important basis for informing the development of adapted support and response mechanisms for victims/survivors of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG. It is important to support the ongoing and sustained support to survivors.⁹⁵ Technology platforms are called to respond quickly to reports of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG on their platforms and that content is removed quickly and permanently, and that they are transparent about these processes, as well as the extent of the problem and actions taken in response.⁹⁶

States are urged to increase collaboration with private companies including Internet intermediaries together with civil society, women's rights organisations, and human rights institutions to strengthen prevention and response to online and ICT-facilitated VAWG.⁹⁷ When violence does occur, private companies are strongly encouraged to provide quick and effective survivor-centred responses.⁹⁸

More work is also needed to better understand who is perpetrating online VAWG, what the motivations and drivers are and for states and technology companies to take proactive approaches to detecting perpetrators of online VAWG as well as to monitor and take prompt action against organized groups of radical and extremist groups.

As ICT is increasingly being used to enable victims/survivors to report, access information, or essential services for survivors, those who produce, use, and/or rely on digital products and services must ensure that the design enables women to gain access safely and easily to accessible reporting pathways, and that information shared is up to date, accurate and accessible to women who seek additional support.

Finally, states are encouraged to invest in the monitoring and evaluation of measures aimed at preventing and responding to online and ICT-facilitated VAWG from an intersectional perspective to inform the evidence base.⁹⁹ States are encouraged to share examples of promising and good practices to prevent and respond to online and ICT-facilitated VAWG with multiple stakeholders, including the UN system, women's rights organization, youth groups, and private companies including Internet intermediaries, to inform efforts to strengthen prevention and response mechanisms.¹⁰⁰

5. Empower women and girls to participate in the technology sector to inform the design and use of safe online spaces and ICT free of violence

It is essential to continue to scale up efforts to encourage more women and girls to enter STEM fields¹⁰¹, This includes the participation of women in creating and shaping ICT and online spaces, making more visible their strong contributions in STEM fields and supporting their efforts to mentor other young women.

Private companies including Internet intermediaries are urged to adopt a gender responsive approach in the design and development of technology¹⁰² including the participation of women in the technology sector and through partnerships with women's rights and other civil society organizations.¹⁰³ Private companies should also increase funding for the development of women's innovative ideas for new or improved technologies and online platforms.

It is crucial that women's rights and other civil society organizations be supported, through increased and flexible funding, to scale up their efforts to inform decision-making and policy on online and ICT-facilitated VAWG.¹⁰⁴ Technology intermediaries should ensure that the design features of technology enable women's safety online and accessible reporting options as well as access to support.¹⁰⁵ Private sector companies can draw upon available global guidance on ending VAWG in the world of work,¹⁰⁶ and consider committing to the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace, and community, to ensure that women recruited into these positions can work in a safe and empowering workplace¹⁰⁷

Minimum common standards for content moderation that detect and respond to more subtle forms of online VAWG should be developed to inform the development of intersectional feminist content moderation guidelines.¹⁰⁸ These should inform the local adaptation by the private sector, media and others who maintain online platforms and spaces, and be informed by the voices of survivors and developed in collaboration with women's rights organizations.

Women and girls who use ICT and online spaces should continue to receive information on how to ensure their safety online, including through strengthening their digital literacy skills,¹⁰⁹ and informing them about existing safety protocols. They should also be given opportunities to provide input and feedback into the proposed design and upgrades of technology, to include perspectives on safety. Private companies with digital platforms (e.g. social media companies) are called to ensure that safety protocols are clear, transparent, easy to understand and that there are clear sanctions for online VAWG.¹¹⁰ The design of online platforms should be done to easily provide women and girls with informed choices over greater options including more control over settings.¹¹¹ Education campaigns can be useful for raising awareness about online and ICT-facilitated VAWG and what to do if you witness or experience it.¹¹²

Conclusion

This paper has highlighted the important knowledge and implementation gaps areas in addressing online and ICT-facilitated VAWG and has provided recommendations along five areas to address them including: normative frameworks, laws and legislation, data, prevention and response, and empowering women and girls to participate in the technology sector and to be safe online.

UN Women, with its partners, has supported a range of action to address online sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women in the past years, from global, to regional and at country levels to better understand and address this important issue. For example, we produced a policy brief on “Online and ICT-facilitated violence against women and girls during COVID-19”¹¹³ with clear recommendations to governments, women's rights and other civil society organizations as well as technology intermediaries on how best to address online sexual harassment and other forms of VAWG.

During the early phases of the COVID-19 pandemic, UN Women has supported remote service delivery mechanisms such as helplines where legal services, online counselling and referral to other service providers can take place. Some examples of innovative practices include in Argentina and Chile and the partnership between WhatsApp, national governments and civil society to upgrade existing national helplines so that they can be accessible for women who may be in lockdown with their abuser, with limited opportunity to seek help. The WhatsApp service, which is encrypted, allows a survivor to discreetly access the services, using the chat function and emojis as to flag attention.

UN Women Regional offices in Asia-Pacific and the Arab States, and offices in countries such as Chile, Turkey and Georgia have been collecting data to better understand the issue of online and ICT facilitated VAWGs. Offices in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Arab States have been supporting the development of legislation, laws and policies, have focused on prevention, advocacy and awareness-raising efforts.

There is a pressing need for common guidance and strategies on how normative frameworks can be adapted to uphold human rights online, and to support countries to develop laws and policies to address online and ICT-facilitated VAWG. There is a critical need to develop a standard definition for measurement, to produce quantitative and qualitative data to understand the prevalence, nature, and consequences of online and ICT-facilitated VAWG, using disaggregation categories and to develop new and innovative approaches to data collection to better inform prevention and response.

While much work has been done to develop an evidence base of what works to prevent other forms of VAWG and survivors/victims have shared how response services can better respond to their needs and uphold their dignity, there is a need to understand how these approaches can be adapted to the specificities of online spaces. Identifying emerging good practices and defining a shared research agenda will be an important part of strengthening an evidence base that can support multisectoral partners in their individual and joint efforts to address and end online and ICT-facilitated VAWG, especially given its quick and evolving forms. Strengthening support of women in all their diversity to produce, develop and implement new and existing technologies can work to close the gender gaps in work in the ICT sector, and address the built-in gender bias in emerging technology.

¹ OHCHR (2022) Interlinkages between women’s rights and digital technologies, civic space, data and privacy, and freedom of expression. UN Women CSW 67 Expert Group Paper

² A/76/258; Council of Europe (2022) “[No space for violence against women and girls in the digital world](#)”.

³ A/77/302, para 6; UN Women (2020) “[Online and ICT-facilitated violence against women and girls during COVID-19](#)”.

⁴ ITU (n.d.) “[Bridging the gender divide](#)”, accessed 15 September 2022

⁵ Alison Gillwald & Andrew Partridge (2022) Gendered Nature of Digital Inequality: evidence for policy considerations, p.30. UN Women CSW 67 Expert Group Paper

⁶ Alison Gillwald & Andrew Partridge (2022) Gendered Nature of Digital Inequality: evidence for policy considerations, p.4. UN Women CSW 67 Expert Group Paper

⁷ Alison Gillwald & Andrew Partridge (2022) Gendered Nature of Digital Inequality: evidence for policy considerations, p.4. UN Women CSW 67 Expert Group Paper

⁸ A/HRC/38/47

⁹ UN Women (2020) “[Online and ICT-facilitated violence against women and girls during COVID-19](#)”.

¹⁰ WP3057 (2022) Report: Building a shared agenda on the evidence base for Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse, Wednesday 17- Friday 19 August 2022, in association with the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), and the Home Office

¹¹ A/HRC/38/47

¹² UN Women (2021) “[Measuring the Shadow Pandemic](#)”.

¹³ A/77/302; WP3057 (2022) Report: Building a shared agenda on the evidence base for Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse, Wednesday 17- Friday 19 August 2022, in association with the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), and the Home Office

¹⁴ Glitch UK and End Violence Against Women Coalition (2020) [The Ripple Effect: COVID-19 and the Epidemic of Online Abuse](#), p.7

¹⁵ UN Women APRO (2020) [Social Media Monitoring on COVID-19 and Misogyny in Asia and the Pacific](#).

¹⁶ UN Women ROAS (2021) “[Violence against women in the online space: insights from a multicountry study](#)”.

¹⁷ A/HRC/38/47, para 23

¹⁸ Council of Europe (2022) “[No space for violence against women and girls in the digital world](#)”.

¹⁹ A/77/302

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- ²⁰ The Economist Intelligence Unit (2021) “[Measuring the prevalence of online violence against women](#)”.
- ²¹ Council of Europe (2022) “[No space for violence against women and girls in the digital world](#)”.
- ²² Dhanaraj Thakur and Asha Allen (2022) The impacts of online GBV and disinformation on women politicians in representative democracies. UN Women CSW 67 Expert Group Paper
- ²³ A/77/302, p. 4-5
- ²⁴ Alison J. Marganski and Lisa A. Melander (2021) “Technology-Facilitated Violence Against Women and Girls in Public and Private Spheres: Moving from Enemy to Ally”, Chapter 37 in The Emerald International Handbook of Technology-Facilitated Violence and Abuse, p.626
- ²⁵ A/77/302, p. 4-5
- ²⁶ A/77/302, p. 4-5
- ²⁷ The Manosphere can be understood as “a network of online men’s communities against the empowerment of women and who promote anti-feminist and sexist beliefs. They blame women and feminists for all sorts of problems in society. Many of these communities encourage resentment, or even hatred, towards women and girls”, excerpt from: Jessica Aiston (2021) “What is the manosphere and why is it a concern?”, available at: <https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/news-blogs/what-is-the-manosphere-and-why-is-it-a-concern/>
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- ²⁹ A/RES/75/161
- ³⁰ UN Women ESAR (2019) “[Background Paper: Safe Digital Spaces: Protection of Women and Girls from Technological Violence](#)”, p.10.
- ³¹ A/77/302; Council of Europe (2022) “[No space for violence against women and girls in the digital world](#)”; Pew Research Centre (2014) “[Online Harassment](#)”; Plan International (2020) [State of the World’s Girls Report: Free to be online? Girls and young women’s experiences of online harassment](#); Web Foundation (2020) “[The online crisis facing women and girls threatens global progress on gender equality](#)”, published 12 March 2020.
- ³² A/HRC/38/47, para 28; SVRI (2020) [Online safety in a changing world – COVID-19 and cyber violence](#), published 16 April 2020; Plan International (2020) [State of the World’s Girls Report: Free to be online? Girls and young women’s experiences of online harassment](#)
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