

Make digital spaces safe for all Ugandans

AS Uganda joins the world in observing the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV), we are reminded that we still have a long journey to ending violence against women and girls.

Recent gender ministry findings show one in three female internet users faces online abuse, including harassment to non-consensual content sharing, exposing how digital spaces have become hostile terrains for women.

This reality needs to change because violence in any form violates fundamental human dignity. Digital rights are not gender-exclusive, but inherent for all in this dot.com era.

Attempts to restrict women's digital participation through cyberstalking, deepfakes or online exploitation constitute grave violations that must be condemned and punished.

The statistic that over 90% of respondents are unaware of protective laws shows the need for nationwide sensitisation. All stakeholders, including the Government,



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media houses, civil society and tech companies, must intensify digital rights education.

The media should spotlight survivor stories responsibly, while ministries, departments and agencies should ensure that policies are turned into accessible knowledge.

This growing violence threatening women's dignity and digital participation must be confronted.

Practical solutions include strengthening law enforcement capacities to investigate cybercrimes and creating user-friendly reporting mechanisms on social platforms. Schools can be intentional in integrating digital safety into curricula, while tech companies must enforce strict content moderation.

The Government's commitment to criminalising digital violence is commendable, but implementation needs multi-sectoral collaboration. All Ugandans, regardless of gender, are entitled to equal protection from all forms of harm.

Men and boys must be engaged as allies in the fight against online GBV.

We should also recognise that safe digital spaces benefit everyone's economic and social advancement.