

21/05/2026

## **PRESS STATEMENT**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE ESCALATING CRISIS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE IN KENYA**

The Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK) expresses its deepest condemnation regarding the alarming surge of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and femicide across the country.

Our mothers, sisters, daughters, children and colleagues are being murdered, assaulted, abused and silenced in their homes, in their communities, and in spaces that should offer safety. We are no longer dealing with isolated incidents of domestic disputes but a full-blown national security and public health crisis where women are systematically targeted simply for being women.

Data indicates an unacceptable number of women and girls murdered in recent years, with the grim momentum carrying directly into 2026. On average, the media reports numerous femicide cases every single week across various counties, painting a terrifying picture of the reality Kenyan women face daily.

We refuse to let the names of our sisters be reduced to passing social media trends or cold statistics. We remember and demand justice for victims like Davine Kwamboka in Migori County, a mother of two whose brutal murder was captured on CCTV as her husband and accomplices attempted to dispose of her body. We mourn Anita in Nakuru County, who was brutally murdered by her partner in front of their young child, and Naneu Muthoni Muturi, who was found bludgeoned to death in Lang'ata by a partner she trusted.

Over 70 percent of these murders occur in private, domestic spaces, the very places meant to guarantee safety. Our daughters, mothers, and sisters are being hunted down by intimate partners, ex-partners, and people they know, leaving families broken and children permanently traumatized.

AMWIK strongly reminds the Government of Kenya of its primary constitutional obligation. According to Article 26, every person has the right to life. The State shall not deprive a person of life intentionally, except in exceptional circumstances. Every Kenyan woman killed by GBV is a state failure.

Article 28 notes that every person has inherent dignity, and the right to have that dignity respected and protected. GBV is an attack on the fundamental dignity of womanhood. Article 29 says that every person has the right to freedom and security, including the right not to be subjected to any form of violence from either public or private sources.

We demand that the government immediately declare Gender-Based Violence and femicide a national crisis. Furthermore, Parliament must fast-track legislation to define femicide as a distinct criminal offense separate from general homicide, ensuring stricter bail terms and harsher sentences.

The state must also operationalize a digitized, transparent national database to track serial offenders, improve police response times, and allocate adequate funding for state-run safe shelters, forensic investigation capacity, and free psychosocial and legal aid for survivors.

As an organization representing media professionals, AMWIK turns the mirror onto our own industry. The media holds great power to shape public perception, and with that power comes immense responsibility. We have watched with growing disappointment as sections of the media resort to sensationalism, victim-blaming, and click-bait headlines when reporting on GBV. Digging into a deceased woman's private life, her past choices, or what she wore to justify or rationalize her murder is a violation of journalistic ethics and a secondary assault on the victim's dignity.

AMWIK calls upon all editors, journalists, bloggers, and content creators to exercise utmost gender sensitivity. Media professionals must frame stories around the criminality of the perpetrator and the systemic failures of protection, rather than hyper-focusing on the lifestyle of the victim. We must stop normalizing misogyny by banning the use of graphic language designed to generate clicks at the expense of human dignity.

We call upon all civil society organisations, faith leaders, community elders and youth champions to actively work toward dismantling the cultural attitudes that enable GBV. We call upon Kenyan men, fathers, brothers, colleagues and neighbours to be allies in the protection of women's lives. Speak out against GBV in your homes and communities.

We urge international partners to maintain and increase their financial and technical support for GBV prevention and response programmes in Kenya, particularly at a time when domestic funding is being cut and key international aid has been withdrawn.

AMWIK pledges to use every platform available to us to keep the spotlight on GBV and femicide until every perpetrator is brought to justice, every survivor is supported, and every woman in Kenya can live free from fear.

**END**

### **About the Association of Media Women in Kenya**

The Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK) is a National Media Association established in 1982 and registered under the Societies Act as a non-profit membership organization for women journalists from the print, electronic media and other areas of communication. AMWIK's vision is a just society in which the media embraces and promotes equitable development and human rights. AMWIK's mission is to use the media to promote an informed and gender-responsive society through professional and transformative media.