

Media roundtable addresses online gender-based violence

Inter Press Service (IPS) Africa and APC Women are co-hosting a media roundtable entitled 'Click against violence: taking 16 days of activism online', to discuss online gender-based violence and resources available to cover the issue. The event takes place today, Wednesday 17 November 2010 in Johannesburg, South Africa.



Victims predominantly female

According to IPS Africa, the United Nations estimates 95% of aggressive behaviour, harassment, abusive language and denigrating images in online spaces are aimed at women and come from partners or former male partners. Other surveys show that the victims of cyber-stalking are predominantly female.

Many popular social networking websites include personal information such as email addresses, phone numbers, birthdays, names of family members, and even minute-to-minute updates on a person's location which is useful to friends but could also act as a source of information for perpetrators of violence.

"Ahead of '16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children', IPS Africa is seeking to ensure that tools are available to assist reporters in covering the issue more holistically and well after the official campaign has ended," said IPS regional director Paula Fray.

Toolkits distributed to journalists

The programme includes a keynote presentation by the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) on 'Protecting women's rights online', findings uncovered by Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) on 'What is not covered in media' and distribution of gender reporting toolkits by IPS Africa.

In 2009 IPS launched '[Communicating for change: getting voice, visibility and impact for gender equality](#)' with support from the Dutch MDG3 Fund, and embarked on a programme to promote the voice and visibility of women. IPS activities included hosting capacity building workshops, the creation of journalism tools and the production editorial content to raise awareness about the third Millennium Development Goal (MDG) priorities aimed at reducing violence against women, enhancing women's economic independence and increasing participation and representation of women in politics and public administration.

At the same time, the APC is implementing the MDG3 project '[Take back the tech to end violence against women](#)', that includes a collaborative campaign to reclaim information and communication technologies (ICT) to end violence against women.