

FIRN research thematic areas: Proposed research questions/areas

The following are identified themes for research projects through APC WRP's context mapping study on the area of technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV)/online gender-based violence (OGBV). Please note that applications are not limited to the specific questions outlined below. We recognise and value your knowledge and experience in the field, and welcome research questions and projects that go beyond the identified research questions within the thematic area. However, research projects should fall within TFGBV/OGBV as priority thematic areas of research.

Here, TFGBV refers to the same set of phenomena as OGBV, and the terms may be used interchangeably. Broadly, TFGBV/OGBV refers to acts of gender-based violence that are committed, abetted or aggravated, in part or fully, by the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs), such as phones, the internet, social media platforms and email. We strongly believe that with rapid changes in technology, the social and cultural realities and experiences of technology-facilitated violence are becoming extremely sophisticated and demand expanded forms of understanding and conceptualisation of TFGBV/OGBV.

Potential suggestions for research questions/areas:

1. Conceptualisations of harm and rights online and offline/on-ground, especially for women; intersectional feminist definitions and understandings of technology-facilitated violence.
2. TFGBV/OGBV in relation to specific communities, groups or vulnerable people on account of race, caste, sexuality, gender and gender expression, etc. – including for gender-diverse people, Black women, Dalit women, Muslim women speaking about sexuality and against tradition, women challenging nationalism, lesbian, trans*, bisexual and queer women.
3. The connection between TFGBV/OGBV and nationalist sentiments, state hegemony, civil war, masculinity, state feminism, and the impact on the formation of communities and networks that engage in online violence and hate speech towards women.

4. TFGBV/OGBV in the context of journalism, human rights defenders and activists.
5. TFGBV/OGBV in relation to elections and political processes.
6. Deep fake "pornography" and other tech tools that are used in TFGBV/OGBV, particularly to smear and discredit women and/or gender non-conforming people.
7. Disinformation and misinformation in relation to gender, gender expression and sexuality.
8. Broad-based monitoring and gathering of evidence and data on TFGBV/OGBV to support policy processes at national levels to feed into a global response, including variables such as intersectional identities and structural injustices.
9. Policy frameworks and changes that should be made by the state or international bodies, and anticipated impacts these can have; how accessible are they to people affected?
10. The role of pleasure and safe spaces – How do you think about security from the point of view of pleasure? – and the ways in which online violence and harassment limit forms of expression for women and other marginalised groups (for instance, through self-censorship).
11. Questions of accountability, responsibility, liability for corporations and internet intermediaries to address TFGBV/OGBV at the international, regional and national level.
12. Critical review of proposed impacts of potential/actual technological and corporate solutions towards addressing TFGBV/OGBV.
13. Digital security and safety in relation to TFGBV/OGBV, including security measures like encryption and anonymity.
14. TFGBV/OGBV and techno-feminist resistance.
15. Feminist approaches to AI and algorithmic decision making in relation to TFGBV/OGBV.