FACEBOOK, TWITTER & YOUTUBE

WHAT ARE YOU DOING

ABOUT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN?

What is the issue?

Women visit social media sites more often than men and spend more time on them. Women send more tweets and share more posts. Women drive content, advertising and engagement, but by simply showing up on these platforms, they also face violence, with little support on the part of companies that profit from them.

> 63% think social media platforms should be responsible for intervening to stop harassment.

Although Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have made some effort to respond to user concerns, they do not do enough.

Violence online is just as real as violence offline. We strongly advocate that women's rights are human rights - offline and online. We consider online violence against women (VAW) to restrict women's freedom of expression. We refuse to consider that hate speech is free speech. We affirm that cyber harassment is violence.

> In more than 4,000 cases of cyber stalking reported to Halt Online Abuse since 2000, 70% of victims were female.

What does the campaign do?

Take Back the Tech! (TBTT) is a collaborative campaign to reclaim information and communication technologies (ICTs) to end violence against women. Launched in July 2014, the latest TBTT campaign targets the three biggest social media platforms to take a clear stand on violence against women in their terms of service, and to engage with diverse civil society to find solutions for safer platforms.

> 61% of internet-related VAW cases on Take back the Tech!'s map involve social media

We engage Facebook, Twitter and YouTube with questions and demands:

- What laws and norms do Facebook, Twitter and YouTube use to define violence?
- Who is reporting abuse? Who is committing abuse? Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have numbers and we want them.
- Why aren't they responsive to the needs of women in all the countries they serve?
- Why not develop policies that specifically address gender-based violence?
- International law requires them to respect human rights. Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube need to make a clear commitment.
- It is urgent that they take a stand on violence against women in their terms of service.
- It is critical for them to engage with civil society to find solutions for safer platforms.

Take Back the Tech! calls all users to join us in demanding change:

- **Ask:** "What are you doing about violence against women?" Users can use our questions to engage companies on Twitter with #WhatAreYouDoingAboutVAW
- **Rate:** Users can fill in our report card survey to rate social media on various aspects related to violence against women:
  - Transparency on procedures for reporting abuse
  - Ease of reporting abuse
  - Responsiveness to needs of non-US / European women
  - Overall approach to violence against women
  - Commitment to human rights, including women's rights.

We will compile all user report cards and share the results.

- **Share:** Users are called to tweet, film, post and blog their stories and to add them anonymously to our map of tech-related violence against women.
- **Demand:** Users are invited to tell these companies what they want and to share solutions.

Who experiences online VAW?

The APC Women's Rights Programme has worked for 20 years with networks of women from all over the world. This has made it a key point of reference for women experiencing online violence.

"Our research and our work with women around the world has shown us that many social media platforms do not respond adequately to women facing violence online. With this campaign, we want to amplify women's voices on this issue and find solutions that work," explains Sara Baker, Take Back the Tech! campaign coordinator.

The APC Women's Rights Programme encouraged people to map incidents and carried out research on internet intermediaries with respect to violence against women online. Cases from all over the world were collected, showing the continuum between offline and online violence against women, which is not being addressed informedly, consistently and seriously enough by these social media platforms.

Some of the real-life cases collected in our research speak for themselves:

A 16-year-old girl agreed to be photographed naked by her ex-boyfriend. A few days later, the pictures were published on his Facebook account and the news circulated in the community: everyone knew about it. His family told him to remove the photos, to which he replied saying he did not post the photos, and suspected that someone hacked his Facebook account. The girl believed that he was lying but could not prove it.

A student teacher was subjected to hacking and photomontage in a pornographic video labelled with her city and occupation. On two occasions, she was accosted by men on the street who said they had seen her naked. One of her friends contacted the porn website and had the video removed; however, there are still images of her circulating on similar web pages. The life of this 13-year-old girl was turned upside down when her older sister's boyfriend began to sexually harass her and threaten her by cell phone, ultimately abducting her. For three months, she was deprived of her liberty, beaten and sexually abused. When she was finally able to escape, she and her mother registered a complaint for kidnapping and corruption of a minor with the prosecution service. The latest news was that the aggressor had not been found.

The research on the big three internet intermediaries revealed that while approaches to VAW differ between the three companies, there are a number of overarching themes and trends, such as:

1. Reluctance to engage directly with technology-related violence against women, until it becomes a public relations issue.
2. Lack of transparency around reporting and redress processes.
3. Failure to engage with the perspectives of non-North American/European women.
4. No public commitment to human rights standards.

Resources for the media

- Research results about Facebook, Twitter and YouTube
- Report card
- Campaign kit
- Campaign flyer
- Articles on VAW and ICT
- Campaign graphics
- Digital story "It is 'only' love"
- Map of tech-related VAW

Use #WhatAreYouDoingAboutVAW and follow @takebackthetech for the continuing conversation.
If you want to interview some of our team members and partners or need more information please contact us at info@takebackthetech.net

About the Take Back the Tech! campaign
www.takebackthetech.net

About the Association for Progressive Communications
www.apc.org

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