

Transforming how sexual violence is reported in Kenya

Sexual violence is notoriously difficult to investigate and prosecute, especially in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) such as Kenya, where an estimated 1-million cases occur annually¹. Virtually no cases make it through the criminal justice system and most survivors receive little support. This project hopes to significantly increase access to justice and reduce incidents using an innovative technological solution to support people through documenting, reporting, and tracking new sexual violence cases, increasing the evidence base to drive even greater change.

The Wangu Kanja Foundation (WKF) is a survivor-led NGO that, since 2005, provides survivors with comprehensive support and encourages decision makers to change how sexual violence is reported and managed on a country-wide level. Through support from the Institute for Global Innovation (IG) at the University of Birmingham, the WKF and researchers have developed 'MobApp', piloting it in all 47 counties of Kenya.

The project shows what can be achieved when the UK research community collaborates with

local partners in LMICs. The project is gathering testimony from over 1,000 survivors, providing country-wide data about sexual violence to policy makers and law enforcement to help focus resources on areas that require more attention. Equally, by providing a wider picture of sexual violence characteristics, MobApp can potentially reduce incidents, whether by improving security measures at crime hotspots, or helping police—who have limited resources—prioritise cases by identifying serial perpetrators.

“Across the stakeholders we talked to, there is a definite appetite for change. There is a desire to shift the culture and stigma that surround sexual violence in Kenya. To this end, stakeholders such as the WKF said that data on the nature of sexual violence in Kenya would be key for both the protection of survivors and the development of effective prevention and response strategies.”

Dr Heather Flowe

¹ DHS 2014 prevalence rate – in last 12 months for 15 – 49 years of age is 7.8% and population demographics for that age group



COUNTRY: Kenya

TITLE: Transforming how sexual violence is reported in Kenya

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INTERNATIONAL LEAD: Wangu Kanja Foundation (WKF) and The Survivors of Sexual Violence in Kenya Network

KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

The Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Interior, and the coordination of the National Government, the Judiciary, National Council of Administration of Justice, the Internal Affairs Unit, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the National Police Service/Directorate of criminal investigations, the Government Chemist, among others.

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