



TAKE BACK THE TECH!'S REPORT CARD ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

These grades are based on extensive research commissioned by Take Back the Tech!, including multi-country case studies, corporate policy studies and interviews with private sector actors. You can also look at other preliminary research findings. Final reports will be available as a follow-up to the campaign.



Report Card

	f	tw	YouTube
Transparency around reporting and redress	C	D	D
Simplified and easily accessible reporting mechanisms	C	C	C
Responsiveness to needs of non-US/European women	F	F	F
Engagement with stakeholder groups	B	C	F
Proactive steps to eradicate violence against women	C	F	F
Public commitment to human rights standards	F	F	F
Average	D+	F	F

RATING SYSTEM



A: Outstanding action with full commitment that can serve as a model for other intermediaries.



B: Good action but room for improvement; a genuine attempt to take major action with no backtracking and a commitment to explore alternatives in the face of unsuccessful attempts (e.g., weak results).



C: Previous commitment to taking action but lack of complete follow-through; trial action with results pending or minor action with promising results; some effective action alongside serious areas of inaction.



D: Reluctant attempts or minor action with no significant results.



F: Absolute failure to take any visible action.



HOW WE GRADED FACEBOOK

These findings come from research commissioned by Take Back the Tech! to be published later this year.

Transparency around reporting and redress processes

The primary challenge encountered by the researchers when conducting this study was lack of available information about the reporting and redress processes available to victims of technology-related violence. Facebook provides the most information online about its reporting processes, but there remain serious information gaps about how complaints are dealt with and tests/thresholds applied. There is no available data, disaggregated or otherwise, on the types or numbers of reports related to violence against women.

Simplified and easily accessible reporting mechanisms

Facebook has progressively simplified its reporting mechanisms, ensuring that content can be reported at its source rather than requiring users to go through lengthy reporting procedures. The platform also provides a dashboard that allows users to follow reporting progress and success or failure.

Reporting forms and instructions are available in a limited number of languages, and forms do not allow more than 500 characters. Facebook allows individuals without accounts to report online, but those who are not computer literate can only report through a third party. There is no alternative reporting mechanism for users who are unwilling to disclose their identifying information.

Responsiveness to needs of non-US/European women

Reporting processes do not appear to take into account the experiences of women outside of North America and Europe. Broad definitions of "hate speech", "offensive behaviour", "vulnerable individual", and "harassment" are employed in user policies without any attempt to elucidate their meaning in various social or cultural contexts.

Without information on the demographics and training of complaints handlers, it is difficult to know if there is any appreciation for cultural and international issues related to violence against women. Facebook's interaction with women's rights groups is limited primarily to North America and Europe.

Engagement with stakeholder groups

Whereas Facebook did not originally consult women's groups or other stakeholder groups in the design and reporting process, it does now consult such groups in an on-going effort to improve processes. This engagement is on an ad hoc basis, however, and is usually initiated by stakeholders.

Proactive steps to eradicate violence against women

Facebook worked with the National Network to End Domestic Violence on a privacy and safety guide for survivors. No other concrete or genuine steps were taken to promote women's rights and specifically address violence against women until public scandals and high-profile campaigns emerged.

Public commitment to human right standards

Facebook has not made a public commitment to human rights standards or to the promotion of rights, other than the encouragement of free speech. No available policies explicitly address gender-related violence or take a strong stance on respect for diversity or for women's rights.



HOW WE GRADED TWITTER

These findings come from research commissioned by Take Back the Tech! to be published later this year.

Transparency around reporting and redress processes

The primary challenge encountered by the researchers when conducting this study was lack of available information about the reporting and redress processes available to victims of technology-related violence. In Twitter's case, these include how reporting processes work, who processes reports and what training/support they receive and expected time limits for the reporting process. Twitter does not provide data, disaggregated or otherwise, on the types or numbers of reports related to violence against women. Twitter does share significant information about the circumstances of law enforcement cooperation.

Simplified and easily accessible reporting mechanisms

Twitter has progressively simplified its reporting mechanisms, ensuring that content can be reported at its source rather than requiring users to go through lengthy reporting procedures.

Twitter does not allow users to track the reporting process through a dashboard or other mechanism, and reporting forms and instructions are available in a limited number of languages. There is no alternative reporting mechanism for individuals who are not computer literate or who are unwilling to disclose their identifying information.

Responsiveness to needs of non-US/European women

Reporting processes do not appear to take into account the experiences of women outside of North America and Europe. Broad definitions of "hate speech", "offensive behaviour", "vulnerable individual", and "harassment" are employed in user policies without any attempt to elucidate their meaning in various social or cultural contexts.

With no information on the demographics and training of complaints handlers, it is difficult to know if there is any appreciation for cultural and international issues related to violence against women. There is no evidence that Twitter has any dialogue with women's rights groups, including those outside of North America and Europe.

Engagement with stakeholder groups

In response to the summer 2013 outrage against inaction in the face of violence against women, Twitter expressed interest in receiving the input of stakeholder groups and opening a dialogue with women's rights communities. It is unclear whether these initiatives have been pursued. There is no indication that Twitter consulted women's groups or activists in the design of its grievance mechanism, nor is there any provision for feedback from the public and civil society on processes or mechanisms.

Proactive steps to eradicate violence against women

No concrete or genuine steps were taken to promote women's rights and specifically address violence against women until public scandals and high-profile campaigns emerged.

Public commitment to human right standards

Twitter has not made a public commitment to human rights standards or to the promotion of rights, other than the encouragement of free speech. No available policies explicitly address gender-related violence or take a strong stance on respect for diversity or for women's rights.

HOW WE GRADED YOUTUBE

These findings come from research commissioned by Take Back the Tech! to be published later this year.

Transparency around reporting and redress processes

YouTube was the most willing to publicly engage with the research, being the only company out of the three to agree to an interview with the researchers. This interview revealed that reports are sorted via an algorithm and high-profile or extremely sensitive reports go to a team of individuals from policy, legal and PR departments, including those with gender expertise. Additionally, no records are kept on the person making the complaint.

In the interview and elsewhere, YouTube shared no additional information on how reporting processes work, who processes reports and what training/support they receive, expected time limits for the reporting process and circumstances under which they work with law enforcement. There is no available data, disaggregated or otherwise, on the types or numbers of reports related to violence against women.

Simplified and easily accessible reporting mechanisms

YouTube has progressively simplified its reporting mechanisms, ensuring that content can be reported at its source rather than requiring users to go through lengthy reporting procedures. Reporting forms are available in all of the languages in which the platform is offered.

YouTube does not allow users to track the reporting process through a dashboard or other mechanism, and reports are limited to 500 characters. There is no alternative reporting mechanism for individuals who do not have an account, are not computer literate or are unwilling to disclose their identifying information.

Responsiveness to needs of non-US/European women

Reporting processes do not appear to take into account the experiences of women outside of North America and Europe. Broad definitions of "hate speech", "offensive behaviour", "vulnerable individual", and "harassment" are employed in user policies without any attempt to elucidate their meaning in various social or cultural contexts. Without information on the demographics and training of complaints handlers, it is difficult to know if there is any appreciation for cultural and international issues related to violence against women.

Engagement with stakeholder groups

There are no indications that YouTube has sought the input of stakeholders or community groups or commissioned studies or due diligence surveys in this regard. YouTube has made no public effort to solicit feedback from the women's rights community as to the effectiveness of its responses to violence against women.

Proactive steps to eradicate violence against women

YouTube has yet to take a direct public stance on this issue. It is trialling the Deputy Program, which gives more robust flagging tools to users with a history of accurate reporting, and has invited organisations to trial the system. There is a possibility of opening it up to women's organisations.

Public commitment to human right standards

YouTube has not made a public commitment to human rights standards or to the promotion of rights, other than the encouragement of free speech. No available policies explicitly address gender-related violence nor take a strong stance on respect for diversity or for women's rights.

