



All-Party Parliamentary Group on
Domestic Violence and Abuse

women's aid
until women & children are safe

Minutes of the APPG on Domestic Violence and Abuse Meeting 'Should AI have a role in supporting survivors of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls?'

Tuesday 29th April 13:30 – 15:00

Hybrid Meeting

Chair: Baroness Gabby Bertin

AI technology is developing at a rapid pace and the Government has set out a clear objective to explore the options and uses of AI automation as a time and cost saving tool that could "turbocharge growth and improve living standards".

While AI presents opportunities for more efficient and joined up working in the context of responding to domestic abuse, there are limitations that must be considered in order to prioritise safeguarding, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups.

The APPG will meet ahead of the multi-year Spending Review to reflect on recent Government announcements on the plans for AI use and development, particularly in the context of new offenses relating to the creation of deepfakes, the recently published Pornography Review, and the potential uses of AI in the context of domestic abuse services and responses, to discuss how survivors safety can be prioritised.

The meeting was chaired by Baroness Gabby Bertin.

Links/citations to any research or briefings mentioned will be shared at the end of the minutes.

Baroness Gabby Bertin, Co-Chair of the APPG for Domestic Violence and Abuse

Baroness Gabby Bertin welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened the APPG with an overview of the role of the APPG to bring together professionals and survivors with policy makers. Baroness Bertin mentioned that the APPG has been a long-standing influencing group and that she hopes it will continue to be, especially across new areas such as on the topic of today's meeting, Artificial Intelligence technology (AI).

Baroness Bertin introduced the panel of speakers as well as herself, as Co-Chair of the APPG. She spoke of commitment to raising the issues of domestic abuse in Parliament and gave an overview of her recent work on the Pornography Review.

The panellists include:

- Stacey Kelly-Maher, Digital Platform Manager, Women's Aid
- Rani Govender, Policy and Regulatory Manager, NSPCC
- tèmítópé lasade-anderson, Executive Director, Glitch
- Eva Blum-Dumontet, Head of Movement Building and Policy, Chayn

Baroness Bertin outlined that the Pornography Review makes a total of 22 recommendations, which broadly speak to improving accountability, transparency and regulation of the development of AI technologies. She also highlighted that in the Review it was essential to discuss the opportunities for positives with the use of AI as well as the risks. Baroness Bertin reiterated the point from the Pornography Review, that we need all of government – across departments – to be learned on the duality of AI technologies and how to approach implementing them with safety first in mind.

Baroness Bertin explained that the APPG had invited Ministers from the Department of Science Innovation and Technology (DSIT) to this meeting but were unfortunately declined; she offered the speakers to share their thoughts in their remarks on this and what they would like Ministers and Civil Servants to hear from them so that the APPG can continue pursuing engagement after the meeting.

Baroness Bertin concluded her remarks by sharing her hope for the APPG to lead the conversation on AI in the context of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls (VAWG) before introducing Stacey Kelly-Maher as the first panellist.

Stacey Kelly-Maher, Digital Platform Manager, Women's Aid

Stacey introduced herself and her role at Women's Aid, as Digital Platforms Manager, and discussed her recent work to develop Women's Aid's position on the use of AI technologies.

She discussed that, through the Women's Aid Live Chat and other digital platforms, Women's Aid is learning every day about how tech impacts survivors' lives and she welcomed this APPG space to explore the impact of AI on survivors. Stacey explained that she has been approached by private companies to work on a chatbot to support survivors and is frequently asked if chatbots could be used to support the demand on the sector – Stacey's answer to these requests has consistently been no.

Stacey explained the concern that there remains a lot that we don't know about AI's effectiveness and the risks involved and that unsuccessful pilots are common. Stacey cited the Department of Science, Innovation and Technology's AI incubator which has worked with OpenAI, Google, and Microsoft, yet to date of the almost 60 ideas that have been tested only 11 of these have made it to alpha or beta testing stages. She warned that while technology development often has a test and learn approach, experimentation comes at a cost if these projects are deployed to survivors without proper safeguarding.

Stacey then explained how AI tools often amplify societal biases as they draw from datasets that reflect an existing unequal society. Stacey highlighted that this will impact marginalised communities the most. Stacey used the examples that globally, only 22% of AI professionals are women designing these technologies, and that there is a lack of intersectional data about the professionals working on AI. Stacey commented that right now, we're expecting a male-dominated industry to be capable of creating technology that understands women's complex and intersectional needs.

Stacey also highlighted that beyond the context of gendered violence, there are well-documented issues with the use of AI including data privacy and security, significant environmental impacts, and reliance on underpaid labour from workers in the Global South, all of which are feminist issues and should be considered in the adoption of AI tools by feminist sectors.

Stacey then explained that AI is already being deployed across more systems than most people may realise and shared some examples of how a survivor of domestic abuse might come into contact with AI today:

- Her partner might create synthetic intimate images of her, also known as deepfakes, and threaten to share them and shame her if she leaves. He won't need to be technically savvy; he can simply look it up on a search engine or download a nudification app.
- She can reach out to a chatbot for domestic abuse survivors, but it will likely be developed by a private company without input from any frontline practitioners. Even if there are no errors or immediate safety risks (which there might be), it cannot quite understand her experience.
- After they break up, her partner can use a freely available tool that takes an uploaded photo to find people's dating profiles. He can then monitor her presence through these apps.
- Depending on where she lives, if she goes to the police, they may train an AI risk assessment model based on her case. When those models go live, you can imagine which communities are likely to be considered low and high risk.

- If the perpetrator is ever subject to criminal justice proceedings, probation practitioners will use AI to identify licence conditions and potential interventions. This means the tool will estimate risk and decide on options such as whether or not they are allowed to contact the survivor and whether they go through an accredited programme.
- For a migrant survivor, her data will go through the Home Office's AI tool to recommend which immigration outcome she might receive: deportation, detention or monitoring. She will never know how the tool has been used.

Stacey then outlined her concerns around the Government's announced commitment to a £3.25 billion fund to finance un-proven technologies across frontline delivery, while concurrently the VAWG sector remains critically underfunded. Stacey shared Women's Aid's call for a minimum of £502 million to properly fund domestic abuse services annually, a figure which the government is falling short of by £307 million. Stacey shared that Women's Aid recommends a minimum total of £150 million should be ring fenced for specialist services led by and for Black and minoritised women, d/Deaf and disabled women, migrant women, and the LGBTQ+ community. She shared that, at present, many of Women's Aid member services are having to use organisational reserves to operate or they risk closure. Stacey highlighted that the call from Women's Aid is less than one fifth of this £3.25 allocated to AI development and growth.

Stacey concluded her remarks by reflecting on the term 'techno-solutionism', which means you assumes technology on its own can 'fix' society's problems. Stacey stated that this is a dangerous philosophy; technology is as flawed as the humans that make it, and complex societal issues require complex solutions. Stacey was clear that technology is not a silver bullet for a dangerously underfunded sector; and that the solution sits in a whole-system approach, where all departments are working together to end abuse.

Stacey handed back to Baroness Bertin.

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin thanked Stacey for her introduction to the topic and framing clearly the risks facing survivors, particularly in terms of the growth mindset on AI technologies.

Baroness Bertin introduced Rani Govender

Rani Govender, Policy and Regulatory Manger, NSPCC

Rani opened by introducing her role at NSPCC and by sharing that she would be talking about the way that children are being affected by AI technologies and that for the purposes of this talk she will be focussing on generative AI in particular (Gen AI).

Rani stated that children are frequently early adopters of new technologies and that NSPCC recognise this is no different for Gen AI. She cited Ofcom's Online National study in 2023, which found that teenagers and children in the UK were far more likely than adults to have embraced Gen AI. The Ofcom research found that around 8 in 10 online 13-17-year-olds use this technology, compared to 3 in 10 adult users.

Rani reflected that despite the disproportionate use of Gen AI tools by children and young people, these technologies are often not developed with child users in mind which puts them at significant risk of a wide range of harms.

Rani then outlined some research that the NSPCC published at the start of 2025, which examines the range of harms that children are exposed to and/or are experiencing which are driven or enabled by Gen AI. The harms identified included:

- Generating sexual abuse images of children.
- Enabling perpetrators to more effectively commit sexual extortion and grooming.
- Sexual harassment and bullying of children.
- Creating other forms of harmful content, from chatbots that encourage eating disorders to images glamourising self-harm.

Rani shared that we know that these are real harms that are presently happening to children because of contacts to Childline. Rani then shared one example of a contact from a girl aged 14 –

"I'm still so anxious about what happened at school last year. These boys made fake porn of loads of the girls, including me, and sent them to loads of group chats. They were excluded for a bit, and we had a big assembly about why it was wrong, but after that school told us to forget what happened. I can't forget though, people think that they saw me naked, and I have to see these boys every day"

Rani shared that while it is clear from this example and others that Gen AI technology is having deeply concerning ramifications for children's safety in their day to day lives, NSPCC research ('Viewing Generative AI and children's safety in the round') identified a possible 27 possible technical solutions that would address aspects of these harms. Rani stated that these solutions are available to be implemented now and covered four key stages of the life cycle of Gen AI development – development, release, maintenance and care.

Rani stated that it is important to tailor the solutions to the risks posed by individual platforms and that solutions must be built upon in the future – emphasising that solutions should not only be for existing tech/platforms but embedded into the design of any future developments. One of the key recommendations from the NSPCC's report is that companies need to adopt a duty of care towards children, and that Government

must place this duty of care on a statutory footing. A duty of care would mean that companies would have to prioritise the safety, protection, and rights of children in the design and development of their products and services.

Rani stated that if AI is going to be used in support services, and for other sensitive purposes, there must be appropriate safeguards in place – and if these cannot be delivered, the tool should not be rolled out. She then shared some ways of managing this, including by ensuring services have conducted ‘abusability’ studies, to see how children might use the service and where things could go wrong. Rani emphasised that any risk assessment should have a specific focus on children’s rights – considering key rights such as children’s safety, privacy, and access to information – and how this service might support or hinder these rights. Rani also highlighted the importance of transparency in data use and sharing.

Rani shared that the NSPCC hopes to see AI legislation brought forward with children’s safety as a core pillar of this, including by introducing a statutory duty of care and that cross-government join up on understanding the risks is crucial. Rani also expressed the NSPCC’s call that the upcoming Government’s VAWG Strategy must consider abuse and harm against girls online, as well as offline.

Rani concluded by stating that it is evident that AI technologies will be part of the future landscape and so children’s rights must be centred as we move forwards.

Rani handed back to Baroness Bertin

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin thanked Rani for her intervention and commented on the important figures that demonstrate children as active users of this technology.

Baroness Bertin introduced **tèmitópé lasade-anderson**

tèmitópé (temi) lasade-anderson, Executive Director, Glitch

tèmí began by introducing Glitch and the mission to ensure that internet technologies in the information technology ecosystem, do not replicate or cause further discrimination towards Black women and other marginalised people. tèmí shared that while Glitch began their work focused on online abuse, the key area of focus for them now, has become platform governance. Specifically, Glitch works on individual harms such as tech-facilitated gender-based violence and intimate image-based abuse, and societal and collective harms such as algorithmic injustice and broader AI governance concerns.

tèmí reflected on the Stop Image Abuse campaign, organised by Women’s rights organisations and victim-survivors, to get the Government to include “sharing or

threatening to share intimate photographs or film without consent” as a priority offence in the Online Safety Act 2023 punishable by up to two years in prison.

tèmí shared that as a result of this campaign while the Online Safety Act mandates platforms will have to remove this content and Ofcom will need to enforce this removal, the criminalising of intimate image-based abuse will not “stop” the issue nor even necessarily provide “justice” to victim-survivors.

tèmí shared the ambition to avoid expanding carceral systems - such as jails and the criminal justice system - as the primary method of “protection” for marginalised people. tèmí reflected that the UN has said there is systemic racism within the UK criminal justice system; historically and presently it has never concerned itself with protecting Black women and gender expansive people or people of colour who face oppression due to anti-Blackness and other forms of racism; and as such Glitch is clear that carceral systems are not the solution for justice for marginalised groups.

tèmí shared that Glitch’s priority is ensuring victim-survivors also have access to non-criminal forms of redress and outlined redress schemes as a way of providing compensation, counselling, support, an apology or other remedy. tèmí reflected that this approach is set up to make the process simpler and less challenging for applicants than bringing a civil claim for damages, meaning that more people could be more meaningfully supported when these crimes happen.

tèmí noted that carceral systems are founded in historical and social contexts of systemic oppression and as such, they do not address the social and economic deprivations that drive societal harms and often exacerbate the very harms they are meant to address. She added that the carceral responses to gender based violence seem to benefit only those who are seen as “good victims” - whereby being Black, undocumented, poor, transgender, queer, disabled, women or girls of colour, in the sex industry, or having a past criminal record, can be reason enough for someone not to be supported, or even believed, as a victim-survivor.

tèmí reflected that the AI Opportunities Plan (Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, 2025) set out by the Prime Minister invokes the common language and benefits of ‘technosolutionism’ such as ‘innovation’ and ‘efficiency’ for tackling tasks and automating decision making through the use of machine learning and other AI products and services. tèmí added that when it comes to using AI in domestic abuse settings, the problem arises that there is no way to ensure accurate interpretation, by the tool, of the data available to train them. Data related to victim-survivors and domestic abuse would largely be sensitive, qualitative information and with survivors disclosing information in

varying degrees and with inconsistent language that reflects their personal circumstances; an 'efficiency' mindset to sorting this data will likely risk misinterpreting essential information that could put survivors at risk. The risk of missing crucial information can be dire for victim-survivors.

tè mí shared that last week, she spoke to a prior case worker from a large national domestic abuse organisation, who shared that the types of data they have on victim-survivors are complex, nuanced and not suitable for AI tools, because they do not have the capacity to understand context of the data being used, which can be interpreted in multiple ways and which caseworkers are trained to assess with their clients. tè mí reflected that while some tools could theoretically help with identifying 'high-risk' victims, the automating of information gathered to determine this will not be inclusive of the fact that some victims, particularly racialised women, are unaware, unwilling or unprepared to disclose that they are victims of sexual abuse, for example.

tè mí added that other available tools, such as AI chatbots, can be useful in helping victim-survivors locate and identify the correct information to access support, however, these tools must be culturally sensitive, trauma-informed and consistently updated to ensure they are providing accurate, up-to-date information. tè mí cited Professor Mirca Madianou from her book *'Technocolonialism': when AI chatbots are piloted in situations that are highly complex and changing, providing incorrect information can have dire and deadly consequences.*

tè mí concluded her remarks with reflections on what she, and Glitch, would like to see in the upcoming VAWG Strategy and with communications with DSIT. She argues that there is a necessity to ensure that domestic violence grassroots organisations and victim-survivors are centred and central in the development of the Government's response and engagement to the strategy, and that these groups have decision-making powers in informing regulatory approaches. She emphasised that these organisations and people have the best understanding of how technology is reshaping their experiences of individual harm. tè mí warned that internet technologies are an accelerator of existing social justice issues like racism, misogyny, white supremacy, dis/ability and economic injustice by reconstituting and reconfiguring the ways these issues are experienced, enacted and resisted; however, tè mí noted that these technologies are rarely the originator of these problems.

tè mí passed back to Baroness Bertin

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin thanked tèmí for her intervention and reflected on the need for caution when going down this path particularly in light of data biases.

Baroness Bertin introduced Eva Blum-Demontet

Eva Blum-Demontet, Head of Movement Building and Policy, Chayn

Eva thanked Baroness Bertin for chairing the discussion and began by outlining Chayn. She explained that Chayn is an organisation that provides online resources to survivors of gender-based violence globally to support them on their healing journey. Eva shared that in the past Chayn has partnered with tech companies, like dating app Bumble to ensure that their services reach a wide range of survivors and that Chayn has developed resources specifically for survivors of tech-facilitated gender-based violence and image-based abuse in particular.

Eva stated that as a result, Chayn is uniquely positioned to understand the two sides of technology: understanding the harm it can cause, but also believing that, built the right way, technology can be part of the solution to heal and be a space for hope. Eva shared that it is this nuanced understanding of technology that she hopes to bring to the discussion today and in the broader discussion on the uses of AI.

Eva discussed how Chayn has been working on this subject for many years and in 2017 launched Little Window, a chatbot meant to help survivors quickly find the resources they need. After three years of testing Little Window, Chayn made the decision to cease access to the chatbot and discontinue its development. Eva shared that despite the best efforts of the team working on developing the tool, Chayn feared the tool was bringing more frustration and potential harm than good. Chayn explained that even though access to the tool was prefaced with clear warnings to explain the chat wasn't staffed by humans and should not be used as a helpline, Chayn could not accept the potential risks to survivors that use of the tool still produced.

Eva shared that there were many learnings that could be taken away from the survivors interactions with Little Window; for example, by looking at the interactions Chayn were able to identify that the variations in the way survivors express themselves was a key challenge for the chatbot to accurately process. Eva used the examples of phrases like "my husband makes me have sex" not being accurately interpreted as rape; nor would it understand that the question "how to make my husband love me again" could indicate a situation of abuse.

Eva expressed as well as these learnings, much has moved on in technological advancement since 2017 and these technologies continue to become more and more

sophisticated. Eva shared that Chayn is back to designing a new AI, recognising that although there are risks, AI is here to stay and it is important to be at the forefront of embedding feminist principles into AI as it develops, that answers the needs of the users.

Eva stated clearly that it is key to be aware of the limitations of AI and that it will never be a replacement for human interaction, in providing psychological support and a sense of safety and care to survivors. Only other humans can do this safely. Eva also shared that through their learnings Chayn also has a good sense of what AI is good at and gave the examples of processing text, transferring disorganised and emotional language into a well-written letter that relies on company policies and laws that companies and law enforcement agencies can easily use, for instance.

Eva shared that, based on these learnings, Chayn is about to launch a new AI tool that will create letters for survivors of image-based abuse who have failed to get their content taken down from tech platforms. The AI will use trauma-informed language to gather the details of their experience and write letters targeted at the tech companies for them to remove the content. Some of this content will have been AI generated and Eva expressed that she and her colleagues are proud to use AI to fix the harm caused by AI.

Eva shared that the new tool was developed in consultation with survivors and that their main areas of concern are in data privacy. She shared that the key to mitigating the risks to privacy will be through strong and enforced regulation and she hopes to see this brought forward as the discussion on AI continues.

Eva passed back to Baroness Bertin

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin thanked Eva for her contribution and agreed with the call for strong regulation.

Baroness Bertin thanked the panellists and commented that AI could not have provided the thoughtful and complex analysis that the panellists today have shared with the group.

Baroness Bertin then posed a question to the panellists, asking how they are finding engagement with the government on this issue and what they each would like to see come forwards as this discussion develops.

Rani Govender

Rani expressed that it is important that the Government does not turn away from the risks posed by AI and that these remain forefront of the discussions around development.

She shared that when speaking with colleagues in the Home Office, particularly on the matter of the use of AI in creating child sexual abuse images, there is a clear and real understanding of the urgency to learn and put safeguarding measures into practice on this issue.

Rani added that the Government's focus on growth, which AI will be a powerful tool for, should not overshadow the risks of harm and that it is at this stage that regulation can play an important and essential role

Rani added that news around a proposed AI Bill have fluctuated, and it is unclear when this Bill might be introduced. Rani shared concerns that the urgency to bring this Bill forwards reflects a lack of a drive for change. Rani reflected on how, although the Online Safety Act was a very welcome intervention, it came at a time when social media was already 'out of control', whereas there is an opportunity now, with AI, to legislate regulation into the design stage to mitigate as much harm as possible.

tèmítópé (temi) lasade-anderson

tèmí agreed with Rani that now is the time to legislate around AI and added that at present the legislative context seems split across several areas of government, but they are not connected with each other, and a holistic response is missing.

tèmí cited current Bills such as the Data Use & Access Bill and the Crime and Policing Bill, as areas that are relevant to AI. She reflected on the need for an AI Bill specifically as a comprehensive place that brings together these fragments of work and ensures that they all work together.

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin agreed with the speakers on a need for the whole of government to come together on a comprehensive piece of legislation that will streamline existing work on this issue.

Baroness Bertin also agreed with the need to simplify communication across departments so that learnings can be effectively shared and easily findable for any new projects in the design stages.

Baroness Bertin then opened the Question and Answer session, taking questions from the online audience. The first question asked the panel what they thought of AI's capacity to understand/determine individual risk and protective factors, particularly in terms of generating appropriate support.

Stacey Kelly-Maher

Stacey responded to the question that AI cannot sufficiently understand the risks of a situation and cannot do the same work as a highly trained support worker and critically cannot be situationally adaptable as could be needed in high-risk situations. Stacey shared some examples such as an AI not being able to infer from tone whether or not a perpetrator may be in the room with the survivor.

Eva Blum-Dumontet

Eva agreed with Stacey and added to this that we can all relate to the experience of feeling frustrated when faced with people reading a script on customer service support and that this is a reflection of what is not helpful and cannot be helpful for situations of higher risk and sensitivity. Eva added that when people are vulnerable it's not helpful for them to be faced with someone who cannot understand what they are going through and that it is disrespectful to their experiences to try to box them in.

tèmítópe (temi) lasade-anderson

tèmí agreed with the comments made and added that there is no transparency in how the AI is using the data it receives to make decisions on whether a situation is high or low risk. tèmí stated that we need to understand how the tool is making decisions but this can be challenging with machine learning as the tool essentially teaches itself.

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin thanked the speakers for their reflections and shared the group consensus that AI cannot replace people.

Baroness Bertin reflected on how in the same way the inaccessibility of GP practitioners can put people off seeking help, the inaccessibility of support workers could also put survivors off reaching out.

Stacey Kelly-Maher

Stacey added that in Spain, the police widely use an AI tool to assign risk levels to cases of domestic abuse and that failings of this tool have resulted in several cases of domestic homicide.

Stacey added that in the UK there is already discrepancy in whether you are likely to be seen as high or low risk depending on ethnicity, faith, sexuality and other factors and that there is a very real risk that AI would exacerbate these existing biases.

Baroness Bertin asked Stacey if Women's Aid have received pressure as a provider of services to work on AI tools

Stacey responded her experience is that funders do prioritise what they see as innovation, which presently includes AI, and that because of this, organisations that are experts in the field with decades of experience are losing interest from funders. Stacey shared that she would emphasise to these funders that not every piece of tech is the right piece of tech.

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin thanked Stacey for sharing her experience with the funding landscape and added that while writing the Pornography Review she reflected that in previous years when people spoke about regulation and caution they were viewed as being 'anti-development', whereas the same people can say now with evidence that it is essential we exercise caution with funding. Baroness Bertin added that there should be known and agreed red lines on technological funding, and consultation with the sector must occur if challenging them.

Baroness Bertin then introduced the next question from the online chat: "What does the panel think about victim blaming and the relentless targeted hate crime used? I experienced hackers weaponised with money and technology back in 2001 police and support agencies never believed me."

Stacey Kelly-Maher

Stacey thanked the attendee for her question and reflected that victim blaming is very much a problem both online and offline and that survivors will often report to Women's Aid experiences of being ignored or dismissed.

Rani Govender

Rani agreed that victim blaming is an essential area to look at with online harms. She reflected that in the past children, typically girls, will have been told 'you shouldn't have shared that image in the first place'; whereas with new Gen AI technologies this is not the case and an often very normal/innocent image has been manipulated without their consent.

Rani added that to support with this, children need to have support in education around relationships, open conversations about consent and that RHSE guidance should reflect this.

Rani cited a report by the Children's Commissioner for England on nudification apps, in which young girls shared their stories of self-censoring what they share online. Rani noted that while online safety literacy is important it should be up to the providers to embed safeguarding rather than on young children to censor themselves and that young girls should be able to feel as welcome and receive the same positives from online communities as young boys do.

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin agreed with Rani's comments and added that she would call for a complete ban on nudification apps, she reflected that this ban was in the pre-election Labour manifesto but she has not heard any developments on this since.

The panellists concurred that they would welcome a ban on all nudification apps.

Eva Blum-Dumontet

Eva reflected back on the earlier conversation on victim blaming and police response adding that for decades now the sector has been calling for better police training and that this is more important than ever with the development of AI tools and how police will be expected to be educated on them. Eva emphasised the critical need for police responses to be trauma informed.

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin responded to this adding that the police response to VAWG across the UK is patchy and that while there are some areas doing good work, overall there are cultural problems in the police force that must be addressed. Baroness Bertin added that police officers need to be educated on tech harm and agreed that police training will be essential.

Baroness Bertin added that the earlier conversation on simplifying all the strands of legislation that are coming through will also be helpful for supporting a consistent police response, but agreed with temi's earlier remarks that law enforcement cannot always be the only answer to these crimes, particularly in relation to tackling the cultural understanding of the harms caused.

Baroness Bertin asked the panellists what needs to be done in terms of public awareness, who do they think should be the people communicating the information

and who are the priority audiences? Baroness Bertin highlighted, in particular, the need for men and boys to be actively involved in tackling VAWG.

Rani Govender

Rani stated that children should have access to support from online services which is safe for them to use. Rani also emphasised that it can't be left for teachers and parents to keep abreast of the entire range of online environments and risks that children may be exposed to; while they can support with putting principles in place for children, there should be a responsibility on the providers to provide safe environments and make support accessible to any young person using their platform.

Rani added that the NSPCC would also like to see online literacy in relationship, health and sex education (RHSE) lessons with strong guidance on how to develop critical thinking skills around what we see online and how children can challenge what they see and seek support.

Stacey Kelly-Maher

Stacey agreed with Rani's points on where the responsibility lies, referencing earlier discussions on how the onus should not be solely on the victims. Stacey added that this applies not only to the criminal justice system but all areas of society and referenced Women's Aids 'Come Together to End Abuse' and 'Influencers and Attitudes' reports – which showed that many people still see abuse as an isolated incident rather than an ongoing pattern, and not all abuses are seen as equally harmful. Stacey stated that we still have a long way to go in taking collective responsibility and action on ending abuse.

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin introduced the next question from the online audience which asked the panel how effectively they think AI can replicate the emotional support needed to flee abuse.

tèmítópe (temi) lasade-anderson

tèmi stated that she felt it important to state that she does not believe that AI could help anyone to escape abuse.

She added that it would be inappropriate for any AI provider to claim that it could help with this.

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin agreed that it would be problematic to imply AI could help anyone escape abuse.

Baroness Bertin asked the panellists what opportunities they think there are in the Crime and Policing Bill and in the upcoming Victims, Courts and Public Protections Bill so ensure survivors protected from AI facilitated harms.

Rani Govender

Rani welcomed the Crime and Policing Bills' introduction of new offences around the creation of child sexual abuse images and materials; however, she reflected that she does not feel that the Bill goes far enough to address the regulation needed on tools that are not designed with the intent to create illegal content, but are still being used to do so. Rani stated NSPCC's position that if a tool is being used to facilitate illegal activity, intended or not, there should be regulations in place to hold the provider accountable to address these issues.

tèmítópé (temi) lasade-anderson

tèmí reflected that in the upcoming Victims, Courts and Public Protections Bill she would like there to be consideration of the support available to survivors both with and without prosecution. For many survivors of tech-facilitated harm the perpetrator is never identified but victims should still receive compensation for the harm caused that could have been mitigated.

tèmí added that even when a prosecution is possible, this often does not lead to justice for the victim-survivor who will still have to face the emotional and economic implications of abuse.

tèmí reiterated Glitch's call for a government redress scheme for survivors of tech-facilitated harm; she added that there are many examples where these schemes already exist for and provide good examples of how the government can support survivors. tèmí added that the government has stated that VAWG is an epidemic and so has already justified the appropriateness of a redress scheme.

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin agreed that the low prosecution rates for this crime are incredibly worrying. She added that she is keen to bring parity between online and offline laws around pornography and agrees that it should be across all areas where there is a risk of harm both online and offline.

Baroness Bertin then introduced another question from the online audience on what measures the panel think that workplaces/employers should consider when adopting AI

tools into their workplaces, in particular when there are vulnerable groups likely to be using this technology.

Stacey Kelly-Maher

Stacey referred to the recommendations that she set out in Women's Aid position paper on AI and highlighted the important onus on tech companies to risk assess the possibility of the product coming into contact with vulnerable groups including survivors of domestic abuse.

Stacey added that if employers are encouraging the use of AI in the workplace then she would encourage that they have appropriate governance in place and regular training on the impacts and risks of AI, particularly around privacy.

Eva Blum-Dumontet

Eva agreed with Stacey and added that tech companies should also be responsible for consulting with groups that may be impacted by the product they are developing in the design stage.

Eva added that Chayn developed some of its best and most creative ideas from these consultation steps and that survivors themselves know best what they would find helpful and how to express their own experiences.

Eva shared an example from the consultation process they held for Chayn's forthcoming AI tool, stating that this idea was developed directly from engagement with survivors. She shared an example from the consultation, during which survivors express the desire to have their experience validated by an AI, they said it would have helped them to have an AI which gave them the specific name of the abuse they had experience - as many of them struggle to recognise the criminal nature of their experience - and share for instance statistics about the number of cases for such type of abuse.

tèmítópe (temi) lasade-anderson

tèmí added that she would like to see any private companies implementing AI tools to think deeply about GDPR and how they will ensure compliance; and about embedding support services for their staff, especially if they have staff that has disclosed that they are survivors.

tèmí added that private companies should thoroughly read the privacy policies and think about the overlaps and where/how the data that they would be inputting into the AI will be being used.

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin agreed that the cultural drive for data gathering is something to consider deeply and to be aware of the access that is granted to tech companies when we use their products.

Baroness Bertin asked the panellists how they feel generally about the landscape of AI at the moment and if they feel positively about the future or are more concerned?

tèmítópe (temi) lasade-anderson

tèmí reflected that she feels that this moment, of being on the cusp of a new technology becoming mainstream, is not a new phenomena; particularly she highlighted the push to use and create video content stressed that we are only seeing now how that has impacted the landscape in particular the news landscape.

tèmí added that there is presently a lot of chatter and 'hype' around AI and, similarly to other technologies, she doesn't see the hype lasting, but that people's lives will be impacted in an artificial way and we will only see how people are affected once it happens.

tèmí added that she thinks, as with other technologies, we will still be having similar conversations on the risks and impacts in another ten years; but we will have more case studies and incidences of harm to reflect on.

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin reflected on the notion that there are 'waves' of technology – and public interest in them - and asked the panel, in particular the NSPCC (Rani), what they thought about the proposals for stronger regulation on smart phones and social media.

Rani Govender

Rani added that the NSPCC are concerned about the potential effects of a blanket ban on smart phones and social media for young people and would recognise that there are many benefits to being online for young people as well as risks. Rani added that it's important that children can be online safely and that a ban could impact on children's rights as well as have unintended consequences for their safety.

Rani added that an area that we have not interrogated fully is the issue of age and age banding; adding that there is nothing in place to enforce providers to tailor content for age groups, to regulate access by age or to prove that they can justify an age banding they have proposed and protect people above that age band.

Stacey Kelly-Maher

Stacey agreed with Rani and added that the issue of age limits needs to be properly interrogated in terms of content access and that a ban on young people's use of social media would potentially limit their access to online support and community. She added that turning 18 does not automatically mean that people are not susceptible to online harms anymore and focusing on social media bans for young people could take the focus away from making technology platforms safe for all users.

Stacey added that media literacy is important and should be focussed on, but regulation is key.

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin agreed and added that the immense amount of information that young people are exposed to through smart phones is another thing to consider as well as the subject of the content itself; thinking about how to manage and process that amount of information critically.

Baroness Bertin introduced a final question from the online audience asking the panel about what choices domestic abuse survivors have over the data being used to train AI and what they would recommend for individuals looking to protect their privacy.

tèmítópe (temi) lasade-anderson

tèmí answered that it will be varied and depends on the context of where this person is using a tool but that broadly speaking, there is currently not a comprehensive Bill that provides protections against AI. tèmí added that the best current legislation would be UK GDPR law and the Data Use and Access Bill which is currently progressing through Parliament.

tèmí added that she would encourage any person, particularly victim-survivors to look at the privacy policy of a tool before using it and familiarise yourself with how to request your data from the platform if you would like to.

Stacey Kelly-Maher

Stacey agreed with temi and added that Women's Aid has published the Cover Your Tracks Online guide to support survivors to navigate online safety and privacy settings across platforms.

Stacey also added that as the group have discussed today, the onus should not be on survivors and we need to push for a duty of care on tech companies.

Baroness Gabby Bertin

Baroness Bertin thanked the panel for their contributions to the meeting and thanked attendees both online and in the room.

Baroness Bertin expressed that it has been impressed on her the urgent need to keep abreast of the conversation surrounding AI, particularly as the legislation develops. She also encouraged the use of the APPG as a forum to share information and talk about how the landscape is changing.

Baroness Bertin commented that the government is at a cross-roads with this issue and she feels there is a real opportunity to influence the road ahead.

Baroness Bertin closed the meeting.

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