

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Lintle Ramatla, a radio presenter at Thaha-Khube FM in Maseru, Lesotho, in 2014.

Photo: Mpho Mankimane

"We have had local police, officers from gender organisations and willing real life survivors to relate their stories on air and be advised on potential solutions to their situations. Now, I can boldly say as Thaha-Khube FM that we understand better the dynamics of gender inequalities and its complexities in society. It is for this reason that we are committed to ensuring that gender is mainstreamed in our radio programming."

*Lintle Ramatla, Radio Presenter at Thaha-Khube FM, Lesotho*

There has been a negligible increase in the proportion of women sources in the news since the 2010 *Gender and Media Progress Study* (GMPS). Gender censorship remains a glaring reality in Southern Africa, with women's voices making up just one-fifth (20%) of those whose views and voices citizens hear in the news media - up just a percentage point from the 19% recorded in 2010.

Women's voices have increased by a paltry three percentage points since the landmark 2003 *Gender and Media Baseline Study* (GMBS). The GMBS served as the first comprehensive study on gender in the media, followed by the 2010 GMPS.

The picture remains as grim on the global front. The 2015 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) shows that the proportion of women sources sits stagnant at 24% - the same as in the last GMMP in 2010.

This study, however, found those media houses that have participated in the Centres of Excellence (COE) for gender in the media project more likely to access women's voices compared to non-COEs. Women make up 22% of those speaking in COEs compared to 19% in non-COEs.

Researchers found that Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) has yet to become an issue of relevance despite rampant discrimination in the region. This topic constitutes less than 1% of stories in the period under review. Where SOGI is covered, it is highly sensationalised.

While women constitute 61% of journalism and media studies students in institutions of higher learning, they only comprise 40% of the workforce in the media, and 34% in management positions. The latter constitutes an increase compared with 27% in management in the 2009 Glass Ceiling study, yet the former indicator has fallen one percentage point from 41% of women in the industry overall in 2009.

These comprise just a handful of the findings in this 2015 *Gender and Media Progress Study* (GMPS). Covering 27,045 news items, this study monitored news content in 14 SADC countries over one month (slightly fewer than the 33 400 covered in the 2010 GMPS).

## Background



This study is significant in that it took place at a time when civil society, gender, and media activists in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) had paused to take stock of progress made since the signing of the landmark SADC Protocol on Gender and Development that set targets related to gender equality in and through the media by 2015.

The expiry date on both the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development approached as the GMPS monitors gathered their data. Meanwhile, members of the SADC Gender Protocol Alliance began work to design a Post-2015 Protocol. The original SADC Gender Protocol had one time-bound media target: gender equality in and through the media by 2015. This would have ensured 50% representation of women in all areas of decision-making as well as guaranteeing that women and men have equal voice and that media challenges gender stereotypes. It specifically called for gender sensitivity in the coverage of gender violence: a particularly challenging topic to cover.

The study also took place during the last year of the Centres of Excellence (COEs) for gender in the media project. Since 2011, GL has worked with more than 100 media houses to mainstream gender in institutional practice and content.



GL has taken these operations through a sustained capacity building and support programme that provides opportunities for on-the-job training as well as monitoring and evaluation of it.

This three-part study sought to explore progress made since the 2009 *Glass Ceilings in Southern African Media Houses* study, the 2010 GMPS and the 2010 Gender in Media Education (GIME) audit. The table gives details of what each of these studies covered. Together the studies covered women and men in media studies; in media practise, and media content.

YEAR	STUDY	WHAT IT COVERED
2009	Glass Ceilings in Southern African Media Houses	Survey of women and men in a representative sample of media houses - newsrooms, marketing, management, administration.
2010	Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS)	Monitoring of news items from a representative sample of media outlets over a period of one month. This study followed on from the original 2003 Gender and Media Baseline study.
2010	Gender in Media Education (GIME) study	Staff and student composition, content and practise of media education and training.

This 2015 GMPS therefore presents a culmination of many years of research, advocacy, policy and training. The year 2015 is also a time to commemorate 20 years since the signing of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA).

Bringing together findings on content, media house composition and teaching of media and journalism allows for triangulation. For example, *Glass Ceiling* data provides vital insights on whether a critical mass of women in the media, especially at decision-making level, influences gender in content. The key research questions to the GMMP also present a significant opportunity.

Researchers monitored for the GMPS in 14 countries in the SADC region (with the exception of Angola, where GL has yet to establish strong media partners) from 1 April-30 April 2015. A full list of monitors appears at **Annex A** and **Annex B** presents a list of media houses monitored.

## Objectives

The GMPS sought to:

- Gauge the extent of progress in achieving gender equality in and through the media since the 2008 signing of the SADC Gender Protocol;
- Compare and benchmark the performance of media in different countries against their performance in the GMBS, the 2010 GMPS and the Glass Ceilings study;
- Use the findings of this study as a basis for the inclusion of media as a stand-alone goal in the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- Obtain baseline data on the coverage of LGBTI issues in the media to inform advocacy efforts around advancing effective communication on LGBTI communities in Africa;
- Use this data to assess the impact of the media COE project. The COE project supports media houses to mainstream gender in editorial content, programming and institutional practice; and
- Use data to gauge progress made by media training institutions in mainstreaming gender in journalism and media education as well as to make a case for continued work with journalism and media training institutions.

Compared to the 2010 GMPS, the 2015 study incorporates several new features, including:

- Comparisons between COEs and non-COEs: The 108 media COEs undertook a 19-stage gender mainstreaming process that involved newsroom training on the ten theme areas of the SADC Gender Protocol. This study seeks to make a comparative analysis of the performance of COEs and non-COEs;
- The incorporation of case studies from the monitoring into the reports at appropriate points to give texture to the quantitative findings;
- Analysis of media coverage of sexual orientation and gender identity;
- Analysis of the people behind the news as a follow-up to the Glass Ceilings study; and
- Follow up to the 2010 GIME audit - gender mainstreaming in media and journalism education.

## Key findings

### General media practice

- **At 67%, the proportion of single source stories remains a source of concern:** Single source stories in the region constitute 67% of the total, up from 61% in the 2010 GMPS. Malawi (86%) has the highest proportion of single source stories followed by Swaziland at 85%. Swaziland had the highest proportion of single source stories in the 2010 study at 82%. At 33%, Tanzania has the lowest proportion of single source stories, followed by South Africa at 50%. The finding directly aligns to the low proportion of women sources in the region's media.
- **National news coverage dominates:** The research found that 44% of stories are national in outlook; 28% local, 16% international and 16% regional: similar to the 2010 results.
- **Politics, sports and the economy still dominate news coverage compared to social stories:** Coverage of politics increased from 19% to 21%, the economy from 12% to 17%. Sports coverage dropped from 18% to 17%. Health and HIV constituted 3% of the total while climate change and sustainable development - the buzz word for this period - constituted a mere 1% of the total coverage.



Media practitioners during a COE workshop in Botswana query single source stories.  
Photo: Mboyi Maswabi

### Gender in media content

- **There has been a small increase in the proportion of women sources from 17% in the 2003 GMBS to 20% in this study:** Male perspectives continue to dominate news in the region.
- **The pattern is the same across the globe, where women sources have remained stagnant:** The 2015 GMMP shows that the proportion of women sources remains at 24%, the same proportion recorded in 2010.
- **Performance varies between different countries in the region:** With 28% women sources, Seychelles and Botswana tied for top position. For Seychelles, this represented a decrease compared to 2010, while for Botswana this represented a significant increase. Zimbabwe (24%) also performed well compared to the baseline study. Zambia, Mauritius and the DRC regressed, with the DRC (6%) registering the lowest proportion of women sources (6%).
- **COE's had a slightly higher proportion of women sources (22%) than non-COE's (19%).** This pattern is true for eight of the 12 countries in which COE's and non-COE's. Zimbabwe registered the highest difference (29% for COE's compared to 15% for non-COE's). Mauritius registered the biggest gap (23% for non-COE's compared to 8% for COE's) following political and leadership changes that have had a negative effect on some of the inspirational work that had started to take root there. This reflects the fragile nature of gender and media work, and the need for constant vigilance.
- **Women are more likely to be seen than heard:** At 25%, television still has the highest proportion of women sources. Print gained two percentage points from 18% to 20%. Radio has the lowest proportion of women sources, after a two percentage point drop from 20% to 18% compared to the 2010 GMPS. Women constitute 28% (a percentage point increase from 27% in 2010) of all images in newspapers in the region, compared to 20% of news sources in the print media. The only content area to achieve gender parity is advertising, with women constituting half of all the subjects in adverts. All this evidence goes to show that the media still values women more for their physical than mental attributes.



GL Board Member Loga Virahsawmy challenges an editor in Mauritius to diversify the portrayal of women in the media. Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

### Gender in newsrooms

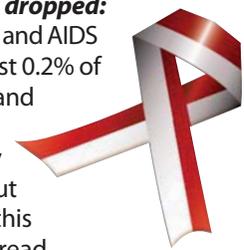
- **Men still predominate within the media:** The follow up to the *Glass Ceiling* study found that women comprise 40% of all those employed by the media (down by one percentage point compared to the 2009 *Glass Ceiling* report). Although increasing the level of women in decision-making is a core component of the COE programme, the research found little difference between the COE's and non-COE's at this stage. The programme is relatively new. It is easier for the COE's to change editorial practise than to overhaul employment practise.
- **There has, however, been a significant increase of women in management in the media, from 28% in 2009 to 34% in the current study:** This is a positive finding for the 50/50 campaign, as promotions are one of the areas in which quick wins are possible. All countries except Botswana and Tanzania experienced an increase. The proportion of women in management ranges from 17% in the DRC to 55% in Lesotho.
- **Newsrooms are beginning to challenge the gender division of labour on beats:** The 2015 study revealed a marked increase in the proportion of women reporters in non-traditional beats: from 16 to 29% (politics and government); 20% to 39% (economy); and 7% to 22% (sports).

### Gender-based violence

- **Stories about GBV accounted for just 1% of all stories:** Despite gender-based violence constituting the most flagrant human rights violation in the SADC region, the proportion of GBV coverage has dropped from 4% of the total in 2010 to under one percent now.
- **Women make up 58% of sources in stories about, or that mention, GBV:** This presents a marked change from the 2010 study, in which men spoke for women - even about issues that do not affect men. In Madagascar, no stories about GBV had male sources. However, this may give the message that GBV is a "women's issue" instead of portraying men as partners in the fight against GBV. Lesotho has the lowest proportion of women GBV sources at 18%.
- **Survivors constitute less than a fifth (19%) of all sources on GBV:** This statistic comes in below the proportion of official sources, such as spokespeople at 23%, or "experts" at 16%.
- **Men remain more likely to report on GBV:** Women make up 43% of those reporting on GBV in the monitored stories, an improvement from 35% in 2010.

### HIV and AIDS

- **Coverage of HIV and AIDS has dropped:** The proportion of stories on HIV and AIDS dropped from 2% in 2010 to just 0.2% of the total in 2015. On the one hand this reflects the successful measures to increase advocacy and awareness, as well as roll out treatment and care. However, this trend is quite worrying, when read alongside UNAIDS figures showing that Southern Africa is still far from being out of the woods on this pandemic.
- **At 24%, treatment stories receive more coverage compared to other sub-topics.** Prevention stories come next at 19%. Meanwhile, impact stories account for only 2% of coverage - the same proportion recorded for stories about rights.



- Media barely access the voices of those affected by HIV and AIDS, instead relying on official sources. The main people affected by HIV and AIDS account for just 3% of sources in stories about this topic.

### Sexual orientation and gender identity

- **GMPS introduces monitoring on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity:** GL introduced this parameter for the first time in 2015, following consultations with LGBTI groups on definitions and monitoring. A reference group meeting reviewed Chapter Seven on LGBTI. One outcome of this round table is the creation
- **Media rarely covers the topics of sexual orientation and gender identity in SADC.** At less than 1% coverage, this shows the extent of self-censorship practiced by journalists in the region.
- **Coverage of LGBTI issues is often reductionist and sensational:** The monitoring found that there is often a blurring of the lines between sex and sexuality: stories in which homosexual sex is portrayed as unnatural or unclean, suggesting that gay women and men do not deserve human rights because of the type of sex they engage in.

### Gender aware coverage

- **Getting it right:** The study highlights a number of examples from the monitoring of gender aware coverage. This includes coverage of gender-specific topics; balance between women and men sources; challenging gender stereotypes; use of gender disaggregated statistics and gender aware language.

### Gender in media education

- **Women continue to predominate in media education:** Women constitute 64% of students in media training (up by three percentage points

compared to the 2010 GIME study), but constitute only 43% of the faculty.

- **GIME COE's notch up the changes:** Although only 29% of the institutions surveyed reported having gender policies, Centres of Excellence for Gender in Media Education shared several examples of what they are doing to mainstream gender in student research, curriculum and assessments.

### Key recommendations and next steps



- This study will be launched and given wide publicity at the Fifth Gender and Media Summit to be convened in partnership with the Southern African Broadcasting Association (SABA) in Namibia in August 2016.
- Gender Links and partners will canvass the findings of this study in country workshops in all 14 participating countries. The GIME institutions who led the research will anchor these workshops.
- GL will engage the participating institutions individually and revisit action plans developed under the media COE project.
- GL will continue working with the Gender and Media Diversity Centre to revive the gender and media movement in SADC.
- GL will work with UNWOMEN, UNESCO and GAMAG on globally accepted gender and media standards with which to engage media houses in the countdown to 2030.