

# Gender and Media



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## 15 years of service

1. Conducted the first ever Gender and Media Baseline Study and two follow up Gender and Media Progress (GMPS) studies.
2. Conducted the Southern African Gender and Media Audience Study and Glass Ceilings - Gender in Southern African Newsrooms Study.
3. Piloted the Gender and Media Literacy course in 14 SADC countries.
4. Worked with media partners to establish the Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC) a collaborative platform for media stakeholders.
5. Conducted four Gender and Media Summits - a platform for media to showcase good practise on gender responsive media practice.
6. Participated in four SADC Gender Protocol @ work summits.
7. Collected over 500 case studies of gender in the media.
8. Supported 108 Centres of Excellence for Gender in the Media to develop, adopt and implement gender policies.
9. Worked with nine journalism and media training institutions to mainstream gender in curriculum.
10. Offering gender aware news content through the Gender Links News Service since 2003.
11. Building the capacity of hundreds of journalists in the SADC region through on-the-job training.
12. Contributing to amplifying women's voices in the news.
13. Shaping public opinion through tackling contentious news topics.
14. Responding to hundreds of media interview requests by the media.
15. Chairing the Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG).

Media Centres of Excellence	Country															Total
	No. of COEs	Bots	DRC	Les	Mada	Mal	Maur	Moz	Nam	SA	Swa	Tan	Zam	Zim		
No. of events during the year	7	11	10	6	11	4	12	1	14	5	11	6	2	100		
GIME COEs	Country															Total
	No. of COEs	Bots	DRC	Les	Mada	Mal	Maur	Moz	Nam	SA	Swa	Tan	Zam	Zim		
No. of beneficiaries	1	1	0	1	2	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	1	12		
No of beneficiaries	MALE					FEMALE					TOTAL					
	221					347					568					
How rated by partners in evaluations - average scores	Content	Design	Documentation	Facilitation	Group work	Outputs	Outcomes	Learning	Networking	Admin						
	86	83	86	84	84	85	77	86	83	83						
Outputs	Reports		Action plans		Books		DVDs		Pamphlets/posters							
	30		0		0		0		1							
Outreach	Website hits		Contacts generated		Media mentions		Other events attended		No of MOUS with partners							
	5641		Not available		10		6		86							
Evaluations - average scores	Content	Design	Documentation	Facilitation	Group work	Outputs	Outcomes	Learning	Networking	Admin	Overall					
	85	85	81	84	83	82	81	86	85	83	84%					

This year the Media Programme celebrates 15 years of hard work, achievements and challenges. The programme is an opinion leader and ground breaker. As the region commemorates 25 years of the Windhoek Declaration on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Media, GL has been at the forefront

in foregrounding women's access to the news media as integral to Freedom of Expression and Access to Information. Women constitute 52 per cent of the population, yet they constitute less than one-fifth of news sources, according to the 2015 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP).



Tarisai Nyamweda, GL Senior Media Programme Officer, GL Chairperson Emily Brown and members of the GMPS team.  
Photo: Thandokuhle Dlamini

The programme is well known for its research-based advocacy which has informed action plans and gender policies in media institutions across the Southern African Development Community (SADC). From the Gender and Media Baseline Study (GMBS) to the 2015 Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS), the programme continues to push boundaries, exploring new areas of diversity such as Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI). The GMDC continues to reposition itself, looking more at working closely with institutions of higher learning through the COE process.

Following the launch of the Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG) the media programme has influenced global discourse through chairing GAMAG. With a membership of over 900 organisations and individuals, GAMAG has profiled GL's media COE work through engagements and knowledge sharing at the first ever GAMAG General Assembly in Geneva in December 2015. GL has been part of a campaign to get the United Nations to commit to standard setting and support for gender equality work.

In 2015, the programme continued to forge new partnerships through working with the Ford Foundation on LGBTI rights and partnering with the Association of Independent Publishers to prepare community newspapers for the upcoming South Africa local government elections. GL deepened its relations with media institutions through the 108 Centres of Excellence (COE) for gender in the media and nine partners in the Gender and Media Education (GIME) work. These partnerships have helped GL achieve efficiency and value for money through opportunities for in-kind support.

## Objectives

- To contribute to the Post-2015 SADC Gender Protocol target of attaining gender equality in and through the media in SADC and leveraging this work globally through the Global Alliance on Media and Gender. GAMAG works to contribute to the strategic objectives of Section J of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.
- Contribute to the body of knowledge on gender and media research, advocacy and training through conducting period research on gender in the media. GL has just conducted the Gender and Media Progress Study, a sequel to the 2003 Gender and Media Baseline Study (GMBS) and the 2010 GMPS. The latest GMPS provides baseline data on media coverage of cross cutting issues such as disability and sexual orientation and gender identity. Research continues to be a useful tool for advocacy.
- Provide a platform for knowledge sharing and learning around gender and the media through the Gender and Media Diversity (GMDC) and Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG). The Media programme continues to engage media stakeholders through the GMDC and globally through GAMAG. This continuous collaboration provides opportunities for the exchange of ideas crucial to the growth and strength of the gender and media movement. Journalism and media training institutions are the backbone of the GMDC. The GMDC houses research projects, publications as well as training materials under the Virtual Resource Centre (VRC).
- Support media houses to mainstream gender and diversity in institutional practice and content. Through the Centres of Excellence (COE) for gender in the media project, GL has continued to engage 100 media houses across the SADC region to push for gender response practice and content. This project has seen media houses develop and implement in-house gender policies and action plans.
- Empower journalism and media training institutions to mainstream gender in their teaching curriculum through the GIME COE project. Working with close to ten training institutions, the media programme has been able to engage with trainers and students on key, media and diversity issues across the region.
- Document, replicate and share media good practice through the SADC Gender Protocol summits. To

date the programme has collected 500 case studies of good institutional and journalistic practices that can be replicated. The summits facilitate learning, knowledge sharing and a platform to strategize and plan for the future.

## Activities

### **Centres of Excellence for Gender in the Media:**

GL continued with COE workshops for media houses. Most of the training focused on stage seven, which involves on-the-job support and capacity building for media house personnel. Media houses in Botswana, DRC, Madagascar, Mauritius, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia have completed all the relevant stages of the COE process. Verification involved administering the Gender Score Card (GSC) which measures progress in gender mainstreaming against key gender and media indicators. Media COEs and individual journalists presented case studies at the annual SADC gender summits in 13 countries. Due to funding constraints participants could not proceed to the regional summit in Botswana.



Gladness Munuo GL Tanzania media COE co-facilitator at the 2015 Tanzania national summit.  
Photo: Thandokuhle Dlamini

“The Gender and Media awards have motivated Tanzania journalists to improve the quality of their work. We would like to see that continuing as the awards have become synonymous with the GL brand. The awards provide an opportunity for journalists to self-evaluate their own performance and to present their case studies, thereby allowing for originality and creativity. This has also helped to build participants’ presentation and public speaking skills. It is my hope that one day GL will open an office in Dar es Salaam”  
*Gladness Munuo Media COE Co-Facilitator: Tanzania*

**SADC Gender Protocol@Work summit and training of SABA Gender Focal points:** Media COE participated in national and the regional SADC Protocol@Work summit. GL is working with broadcasters that fall under the Southern Africa Broadcasting Association (SABA) as part of the media COE project. Following commitments made at SABA's 2014 Annual General meeting and UNESCO's support under the International Project for Development Communication (IPDC), GL conducted training for 26 gender focal points drawn from 12 member broadcasters. This training aimed to enhance the capacity of gender focal points to drive the gender mainstreaming work from within the public broadcasters. SABA profiled its gender mainstreaming efforts at its annual conference in Rwanda.

### **Conducting the Gender and Media Progress Study:**

In 2015, GL conducted the second Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS) to gauge the extent of progress in the media since the landmark Gender and Media Baseline Study (2003). The study is unique in that it brings together all GL's previous research - on media content generally, as well as advertising, radio talk shows, tabloids, glass ceilings, as well as Gender in Media Education. The preliminary findings of the study will be launched on World Press Freedom Day, 3 May 2016.

### **Coordinating the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) in 10 SADC countries:**

While conducting the GMPS, GL also coordinated the Southern African input into the fourth Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) in 12 countries. The GMMP is conducted voluntarily by media monitors across the globe. The global coordinator, World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) launched the GMMP in 2015. WACC also shared the results with media partners at the GAMAG General assembly.

### **Advancing effective communication on LGBTI in Africa:**

With support from the Ford Foundation, and as part of its vision of an equal and just society, GL conducted broad based consultations with media and LGBTI groups on representation of LGBTI in the media in East, West and Southern Africa.

## Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity



Media and LGBTI activists during a 16 Days march in Orange Farm, South Africa.  
Photo: Thandokuhle Dlamini

Diversity has become an essential part of GL's programming with pilot project in the media and governance programmes. GL integrated LGBTI into its media programme through monitoring news content in East, West and Southern Africa. In Southern Africa, GL conducted in-depth content monitoring as part of the 2015 Gender and Media Progress Study in 14 Southern African countries. In East and West Africa, GL collected case studies for qualitative analysis as outlined in the funding proposal. GL compiled an LGBTI analysis paper following the research study. The analysis paper forms one of the chapters of the Gender and Media Progress study.

**Gender in Media Education (GIME):** As part of efforts to support journalism and media training institutions, GL convened a strategic GIME meeting on the sidelines of the fourth SADC Gender Protocol summit in Botswana. Six institutions presented case studies. As part of peer learning, GIME meeting participants visited the University of Botswana Media Studies Department. This interaction provided a platform to engage with both lecturers and students on mainstreaming gender in teaching and learning. The students shared how gender mainstreaming projects have assisted them to examine different perspectives on the issues they cover. They have benefitted from specific training such as gender, media and elections. Between April and July the GMDC provided journalism and media students' on the job training opportunities, under the Gender Links News Service through producing online newsletters at the 2015 SADC Gender Protocol country summits.

**GMDC seminars:** The GMDC in collaboration with Association of Progressive Communications (APC) and Institute for the Advancement of Journalism (IAJ) hosted a seminar on 29 May 2015 as part of the CIVICUS sponsored Global Day of Citizen Action commemorations. The seminar discussed freedom of expression, gender equality and the Post-2015 agenda.



**Stimulating debate through media alerts and highlight:** The Centre uploaded 30 media alerts and highlights on its VRC database. These media alerts uploaded on the website highlighted key topical gender debates globally. A short comment is given and a link to where the article is produced online is

given. It helps to channel people towards what is happening around us.



Global Alliance On Media And Gender

**Chairing GAMAG and organising its first General Assembly in Geneva:** Elected as first chair of GAMAG in 2014, GL played a pivotal role in organising and participating in the first ever GAMAG General Assembly in Geneva Switzerland. The General Assembly focused on key institutional issues and action planning for the research, training and advocacy committees. GL used this occasion to host a Media COE side event and shared lessons from the regional media and GIME COE projects that generated interest and debate among global partners.

"GL is recognised globally for developing Alliances, Networks and Centres of Excellence, as well as conducting ground-breaking research, such as the 2015 Gender and Media Progress Study, the largest such study ever undertaken. GL CEO, Ms Colleen Lowe Morna, has been a driving force and provided major support for the creation and development of GAMAG, as it works to promote gender equality in and through the media. Ms Lowe Morna has dedicated herself to the challenges of leadership and building a positive, long-lasting relationship between GAMAG, its members and UNESCO." *GAMAG International Steering Committee*

## Outputs

Target for the year	Baseline	Indicators	Achieved
COE process completion rate is at 100%.	Media houses are at 54% through the ten stage COE process. 7 out of 15 public broadcasters have joined the process.	Number of media houses that complete the COE process, including at least two thirds of the public broadcasters in the region.	Media houses are at 90% through the ten stage process and 69% of stage seven.
1600 (cumulative) GLNS items in multi-media formats, in two languages, used an average of two and half times each and 75 website reads and 5 Tweets and Facebook likes, by March 2016.	1179 cumulative, usage 3 (English 4.3; French 2.5 and Lusophone 1) 10 case studies collected.	Number of stories produced by the GL News Service (GLNS); average no of times each article/programme is used.	1443 articles produced in English and French.
Number of case studies shared at the annual SADC Protocol@Work Summit on Gender in Media Education.	Seven case studies at the 2014 SADC Summit.	Media training institutions have documented at least 16 ways in which they have mainstreamed gender into curriculum and training by March 2016.	16 case studies of mainstreaming gender in media education documented.
At least four media training institutions complete elections training and produce four election newsletters through the GLNS.	Ran a successful Gender and elections training programme with the Polytechnic of Namibia in 2009.	Collaborating with media training institutions to run multi-pronged gender and elections training workshops for students and the media.	GL conducted 9 elections workshops in Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Tanzania.

### Outreach

The GL media programme makes use of multi-media platforms to reach audiences. These include facebook, twitter as well as the GL website. The programme posts its multimedia products produced under the GL News Service on all three platforms. This includes opinions and commentaries, vodcasts, podcasts and publications on various subjects.

GL also makes use of the chat facility on its website to conduct cyber dialogues during key periods such as the 16 Days campaign, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the GAMAG General Assembly. This has allowed for interaction and participation between the programme and its partners and target group. The case study that follows illustrates how GL reaches out to, and engages with, its media partners:

### Walking the talk: GL and the University of Limpopo

The Department of Media, Communication and Information Studies at the University of Limpopo and Gender Links have had a long standing partnership. Students from the department participated in the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) and the Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS). This has helped strengthen their research and media analysis skills. What the students learnt through their education is transferred back into media content in community media houses as the students also do their practical training at these institutions.

One of the pillars of the vision and mission statement of the University of Limpopo is community engagement. GL and the university have worked with twelve community media in the province that have elected to become COEs. According to the university, "the training further enriched the media house in becoming a platform for community participation and involvement on issues that affect them directly, which are most often not featured on public and commercial television stations."

The university says that continued collaboration with Gender Links would benefit media houses as follows:

- Limpopo Centres of Excellence can hold their own Provincial Summit in 2016, where they will show-case their ability in producing gender mainstreamed content, and
- The Media Studies Programme can produce case studies of media houses that have successfully mainstreamed gender into their content and structure, thus measuring impact (through research).



University of Limpopo GMMP monitoring team.

Photo: Albert Ngosa

## Outcomes - results

Targets for the year	Baseline	Indicators	Achieved
Proportion of women sources in media COEs reaches 24%.	21% women sources overall and, 26% have reached 30%.	Increase in women sources and gender aware coverage in the COEs. (Qualitative: editorial and testimonial evidence of change).	Women constitute 22% of news sources in COEs. GAMAG has developed a
A strong global alliance on gender and the media; targets reflected in SDGs.	GL appointed Chair of GAMAG in 2014.		Post-2015 position paper and petition supported by 500 member organisations around the world.
Average GSC of 80% ranging from 50% to 89%. (Annual)	Gender scorecard (GSC) average of 71% (65% lowest, 79% highest) 2014.	Progress in implementing gender policies and action plans in media COEs as measured in the media house scorecard.	To be reviewed in 2016.
Gender is mainstreamed in journalism and media education and training departments in seven institutions by 2016.	At least seven media training institutions become COEs; establish baselines through a scorecard.	Number of media training institutions that become COEs.	Nine media training institutions have become COEs and have completed the relevant modules of the GIME COE project.

The revision of the SADC Gender Protocol in line with the Post-2015 agenda calls for new baselines and benchmarks. This will be done in 2016. GL in partnership with SABA, will also re-introduce the Gender and Media (GEM) summit.

The average proportion of women sources in COEs (22%) is based on preliminary findings of the GMPS.

This figure falls slightly short of the target of 24%. Globally, the GMMP found that in 2015 women sources in the media remained static at 24% since the last study in 2010. These overall findings are of great concern to GL and to the broader gender and media fraternity. However, qualitative evidence suggests that important changes are beginning to take root at the institutional level:

## Southern Africa: Media COEs see the light

Across the region, media houses have shared testimonial evidence of the difference that gender awareness is making in their daily work. Media houses in Botswana broke new ground by coming together to devise their own gender policy. Spencer Mogapi of the Sunday Standard/Telegraph newspapers said at one of the COE workshops, "I never thought of gender in the workplace or in content but now I make sure that we have female staff and that gender issues are covered. It is important to give women a platform in the issues pertaining to the development of the country. We cannot afford to leave them behind."



Media COEs in Mozambique have also now come together to develop and launch a joint gender policy. The participating media houses include Television Mozambique, Savanna, Zambeze, Radio Muthiyana, Magazine Independent, Noticias, Escorpio, Expresso, Publico, Televisao Independent de Mocambique, Verdade, Radio Terra Verde.

The Swaziland Broadcasting and Information Services (SBIS) plays a vital role in disseminating information to the nation, with radio being the main source of news for 95% of the population. Smangele Dlamini, the gender focal person, feels strongly that all programme producers and broadcasters in the station need exposure and must be pushed to embrace gender mainstreaming. "What is presently needed at the station is a paradigm shift, where mentoring and coaching on gender becomes basic to enhancing production skills. The onus is now on the management to ensure that the station is not left behind as other media houses are miles ahead," she said. Dlamini is determined to work with gender mainstreaming partners and ensuring that SBIS becomes a leader in gender mainstreaming in the SADC region.

In Zambia, male workers and volunteers dominated Radio Yatsani by when it started its operations in 1999, despite having a female head. After joining the COE process, Yatsani Radio developed a gender policy which has since been approved by the Board. There has been a marked improvement in the gender balance of sources. For example a governance

programme called the Podium ensures participation by both men and women. The radio station also has a Code of Conduct that covers sexual harassment in the workplace.

In Zimbabwe, Radio Dialogue, a community radio station in Bulawayo, has contributed to the media COE mandate through change in its programming which now includes radio shows that profile gender and women's rights. Their administrative structures have also undergone changes to promote equality of access and opportunity within the media house. According to Emmanuel Nkomo from Radio Dialogue, in the last year the station has increased the number of women in management. "We have a female Director, a female Finance Manager, a female Human Resources Manager and also a female Programs Coordinator. We are trying to give women an equal chance in the field. We are not putting women there for the sake of it but because they are professionals who have been trained by Radio Dialogue since some of them were in lower positions but now have been promoted into more influential decision making roles," Nkomo said. The number of female Board members has increased to four out of seven. Radio Dialogue scored 94% in the 2015 verification exercise.



Emmanuel Nkomo of Radio Dialogue makes a presentation at the Zimbabwe SADC Gender Summit.  
Photo: Loveridge Nhamoyebonde

As chair of GAMAG, GL has participated in high level strategic meetings with different United Nations (UN) agencies to find ways of setting international standards for gender, media and ICTs. The lack of visibility for these concerns in the SDGs is a source of concern. Fortunately for the region, and thanks to the lobbying over many years, the SADC Gender Protocol has strong provisions on gender equality in and through the media. Up to now, however, the only specific target concerned gender equality within newsrooms by 2015. GL and its partners are lobbying for these provisions to be further strengthened in the Post-2015 agenda, through a specific target for gender parity in news sources in the media by 2030.

### Challenges

While it is apparent that the work on gender and the media requires even greater effort in the future, funding for the media programme, especially the GMDC, remains a challenge. This work up to now

has been funded through DFID Programme Partnership Arrangement (PPA) that comes to a close in 2016. With dwindling resources it has been hard to access funds for movement building. The programme continues to seek new donor avenues. The shift in donor focus has presented GL with opportunities to reposition and delve into new emerging cross cutting areas such as climate change and sustainable development, economic empowerment and sexual health and reproductive rights.

In the media and GIME COEs, the programme continues to utilise in-kind support from partners. For example partners have provided venues for the training activities in most countries. Media COEs especially have not allocated adequate financial resources for gender mainstreaming work. This has seen GL create synergies between activities in a bid to achieve more with less financial resources.

### Risk analysis

Risks	Rate - High/Medium/Low	How these will be mitigated
<b>Internal</b>		
Dwindling financial resources for gender and media work.	High	GL is exploring new funding opportunities both at regional and country level. The programme also conducts periodic consultancy work as part of GL Services. The organisation has explored new emerging areas of work such as Sexual orientation and Gender identity.
<b>External</b>		
Failure by media institutions to implement their gender policies and action plans.	Medium	GL conducts periodic monitoring and evaluation in the form of media verification to gauge the extent of progress in implementing gender policies.
The UN not including any specific media targets and indicators in the SDGs.	High	In the absence of a global set of standards around gender and media, GL and partners have built specific goals and targets into the SADC Gender Protocol.

### Next steps

- **GMPS advocacy:** Following the launch of the GMPS 2015 report on World Press Freedom Day, GL will collaborate with in-country partners to launch the study in all 14 SADC countries. Journalism and media training institutions, who led the in-country studies are a key partner in this initiative.
- **Post-2015 action planning workshops in all 100 media COEs:** GL will engage with all media COEs to share individual media house GMPS findings as well as setting new baseline scores to guide the Post-2015 work. Under this initiative, participating media COEs will review their action plans in line with Post-2015 SADC Gender Protocol targets.
- **GIME COEs:** The media programme will continue supporting GIME institutions to mainstream gender

in journalism and media curricula. Working under the auspices of the Gender and Media Diversity Centre, the GIME institutions are key in keeping the GMDC alive as a centre for collaborative work and sharing.

- **Gender and Media summit:** Working with the Southern African Broadcasting Association (SABA), GL will acknowledge good media practice as well as documenting case studies of good work across the SADC region.
- **GAMAG:** The programme will continue with gender and media advocacy at the global level through GAMAG. In the period ahead, focus will be on collaborating with UN Women to set International standards for gender and media.

## Write about rights

Publishing under the banner “*fresh views on every day news*”, the Gender Links News Service commissions over 20 articles each month on gender issues from activists, journalists, media students and opinion shapers around Southern Africa in English and French, and markets these to the media.

The service is a direct response to the findings of the Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS) 2010, which shows that women's voices are still grossly under-represented in the media, especially in opinion and commentary, and that coverage of gender issues is negligible. It also builds the capacity of journalists and journalism and media studies students to write gender aware and thought-provoking articles.

The GLNS attempts to set the news agenda by covering key regional and international events in order to ensure a gender perspective forms part of the debate or discussion during these times. The Service often produces special series on important topics and throughout the year.

Launched in 2003 as the Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Service, the service expanded in 2010/2011 to include both Francophone and Lusophone Southern Africa. As the programme started producing multi-media formats, it changed its name to the GLNS.

This gave an opportunity to journalists who were not traditionally print media journalist to participate in the service. The service put out podcasts and vodcasts that enhanced the work of the GLNS. In 2015, the Lusophone service ceased its operations as it failed to achieve critical mass in the Mozambique market, and struggled to penetrate other Lusophone countries due to cost challenges especially in Angola.

## The writers



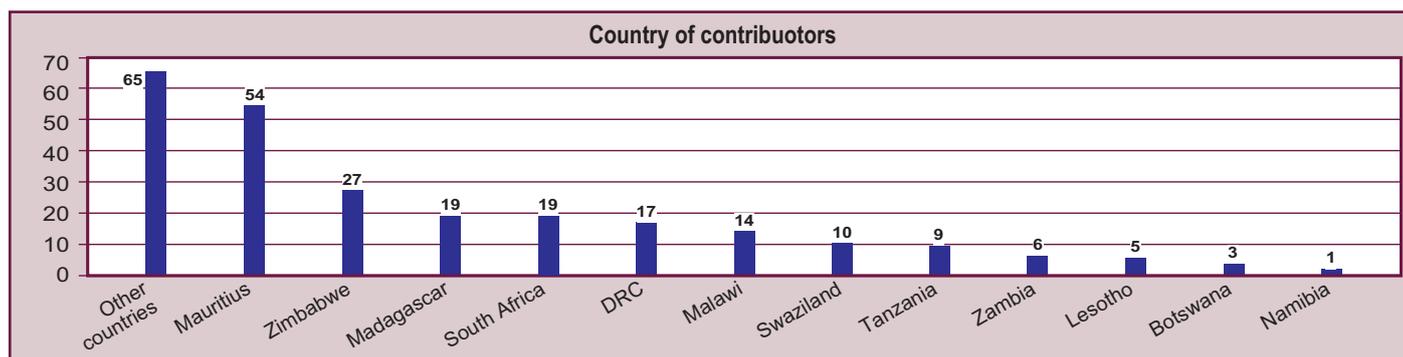
Women make the news.

Photo: Valentina Madope

The multi-media news service has two arms: Anglophone (anchored at GL headquarters in Johannesburg) and the Francophone (anchored in Mauritius). This report outlines the activities of the GLNS during the period January 2015 - December 2015.

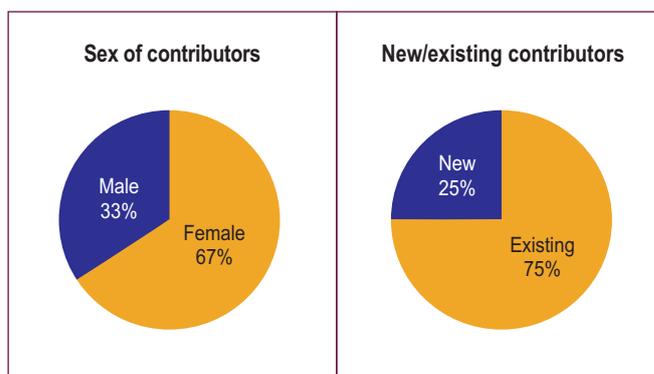
## Objectives

- Stimulating debate on gender and diversity in SADC and beyond through producing media products in multi-media formats.
- Amplifying women's voices through the GLNS platform.
- Build capacity of journalists to probe gender issues in the writing.
- Provide content to the media, which often lacks the capacity to report on gender.
- Challenging stereotypes and changing attitudes.
- Providing a platform for new journalists to write and be published.
- Providing an alternative platform for contributors to speak their mind on a variety of relevant and often controversial subjects that society might consider taboo to openly discuss.



The graph above shows that the highest number of SADC writers for the news service is from Mauritius (54) followed by Zimbabwe (27). The service constantly seeks to build new writers from all over SADC and beyond. Thus the highest number of writers (65) is in fact from “other” countries.

Men comprise approximately one quarter of the writers - overall. In 2015, 25% of new writers contributed to the service. 75% of existing writers continued to support the service.



“I have occasionally been contributing to the GL News Service for over 5 years and in this period, my writing has improved, with the help of its editorial support and I have gained international recognition as a critical thinker, activist and social advocacy journalist. The GL service has allowed me to engage and network with a range of experts. My work has been cited in academic works, has helped shape policy discussions - and for this, I thank the GL team for providing this activist-driven platform to reach a wide net of professionals.” *Oliver Meth - Social advocacy journalist from Durban, South Africa*



Oliver Meth, Anglophone service contributor.

## Outputs

The service in numbers	Number of stories		Usage	
	2014	2015	2014	2015
English	150	129	298	364
French (Lusophone)	106	120	165	312
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>676</b>



Lungile Mabuza, former GL intern documents, the stories of women entrepreneurs on video in Swaziland. Photo: Thandokuhle Dlamini

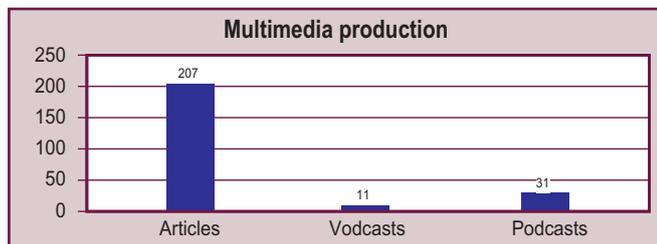
In 2015, the service published 249 stories (lower than in 2014, due to the discontinuation of the Lusophone service.) 129 (52%) of these were in English and 120 (48%) in French. These stories were used almost 364 times by the online, print and broadcast media. Stories were also used for research purposes, as training material and distribution to colleagues. In 2015, the Francophone service produced 120 news items, used 312 times. An example of how GLNS stories get re-used is the story written by Loga Virahsawmy entitled “Une présidente pour tous les Mauriciens” commenting on the islands first women president. Seven news outlets, namely the Mauritian papers “Le Défi”, “Le Quotidien”, “This Week” and by the website of the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation ([www.mcbintnet.mu](http://www.mcbintnet.mu)). Beninnewsmagblogspot.com, newsivoire.com an online paper from Côte d'Ivoire and AllAfrica.com picked the story.

"Professor Ameenah Gurib Fakim will remain in the history of Mauritius as the first woman President of the Republic who has broken many gender stereotypes. She has shown that women can make it with hard work and perseverance. She is the only President of the Republic who does not come from any political background and is getting the highest function of the State on her own merit.

All the male Presidents we have had since 1992 starting with Sir Veerasamy Ringadoo, Cassam Uteem, Karl Offman, Sir Anerood Jugnauth and Kailash Purryag were all males and members of political parties. By holding the highest and most prestigious position of the Republic of Mauritius she is lighting the torch and showing to the world that African and Mauritian women can make it to the top.

Gurib Fakim is among the most qualified woman in the region let alone Mauritius. She is a monument in the scientific and technological fields. She now joins the club of women world leaders. We are proud that she is among the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, Cristina Fernandez de Larchner of Argentina, Dalia Grybanskaite of Lithuania, Dilma Rousseff of Brazil, Michelle Bachelet of Chile, Atifete Jahjaga of Kosovo, Park Geun-hye of South Korea, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic of Croatia, Marie Louise Coleiro Preca of Malta to name only a few women Presidents. After Joyce Banda, Former President of Malawi we now have Ameenah Gurib Fakim the only woman President in the SADC region."

*Excerpt from article by Loga Virahsawmy*



Of the 249 news items produced during the year 207 were articles, 11 vodcasts and 31 podcasts. Most of these multimedia news items were produced during the national and regional summits.

### Raising the tough issues

One of the most important values of the GLNS is its ability to spark debate on tough issues such as poly-

gamy, incest, Gender Based Violence (GBV), Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities (SOGI), HIV and AIDS amongst others. This opens much-needed space to discuss topics which were once taboo, ensuring that the real and uncensored voices and stories of women and men are never far from the eyes and ears of SADC media consumers.

The excerpt below on where the popular "reed dances" - at which kings choose young maidens as wives in Swaziland and the Kwa Zulu Natal province of South Africa - fall within modern constitutional states espousing gender equality is one such example.

### Time for tough questions about the reed dances

The *Umkhosi woMhlanga* reed dance takes place in KwaZulu-Natal this week, under the shadow of the terrible accident that led to dozens of Swazi maidens being thrown out of an open truck and crushed to death ahead of a similar ceremony in the mountain kingdom at the close of Women's Month last week.

In most countries, the nation would come to a standstill, in respect of the dead. Not in Swaziland. King Mswati III deigned to acknowledge the accident and offer medical support to those with injuries. But the reed dance, at which he chooses yet another wife, went ahead. No shrine has been erected at the site of the tragedy. The lives of young women, according to this messaging, are worth nothing.

President Jacob Zuma, a Zulu and polygamist, has offered his condolences to our Swazi cousins. The South African media has opined about the road carnage. No one, it seems, cares about the human rights violations raised by these annual rituals.

Four centuries later what has changed for African women? Swaziland and even more so South Africa have Constitutions that guarantee rights and equality. Yet in South Africa, young women are subjected to virginity testing before they are allowed to participate in a royal dance.

At the heart of human rights values is the right to choose. We are told repeatedly that the young women in these dances want to be part of the ceremonies,

even to have their virginity tested. What choice do they have when society dictates that this is what they must do? What power would a young woman have in KwaZulu Natal or Swaziland to say “no” if chosen for a reed dance? What right would a young woman have in Swaziland to refuse to be the umpteenth wife of the king, if she really did not want to? What say do young Zulu maidens have when a highly unreliable test determines whether they are virgins or not?

Apart from the human rights violations that arise due to the invasion of privacy and lack of fairness of the test, a litmus test of gender equality is whether men are subjected to a similar test. If the answer is no, it's a sexist practice: period!

Both South Africa and Swaziland are signatories to numerous women's rights Conventions and to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development. The Protocol states that gender equality should never be contradicted by custom, culture, tradition or religion. It is no longer good enough to sign lofty conventions then

endorse practices that undermine them. Custom, culture and tradition must adapt to the thinking and values of the time, not vice versa. Leaders must walk the talk of gender equality, or give way to those who will! *Excerpt from an article by GL CEO Colleen Lowe Morna and researcher Shamiso Chigorimbo*



Swaziland reed dancers.

Photo: UNDP

### **Special series, summits and capacity building**

In addition to covering a wide range of topics, GLNS also runs special series on key events globally and in the SADC region. These include:

**Commission on the Status of Women:** In 2015, GLNS participated in the 59th session on the Commission on the Status of Women. The service produced a daily newsletter from New York providing multi-media news and opinion in English and French.

**Sixteen Days of Activism:** Staying true to the women's rights movement, GL runs a special series every year as part of its contribution to the campaign against gender-based violence (GBV). A theme is set for each

day during the period and articles relating to each theme are published. These included “I” stories or first-hand accounts. In 2015, the topics ranged from sexual orientation and gender identities, media, disability and many more.

**SADC Protocol@Work Summits:** GL hosted 13 country summits and produced online newsletters on the Protocol@Work show casing different thematic areas based on the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. Student journalists from GIME institutions produced most of the online newsletters that served as an important training ground. The examples that follow show how summits have served as an important training ground for media practitioners.

### **Learning by doing at the summits**



Jenipher Changwanda

“I was among the journalists to write a supplement at the 2013 SADC Heads of the State summit. I produced my first commentary entitled 'polygamy continues to disempower women.' The article focused on how some customary laws contravene legal instruments that countries have signed. It also exposes how these laws silence

women to stand up for their rights. I was excited to see my first article read by delegates at the summit and the entire world through Gender Links website.

As a contributor, I have benefitted a lot. First: in terms of exposure. Various people visit the GL website, as it is a gender space and resource. I have seen also some of my articles re-posted in other websites in the Africa continent.

Second, contributing to GL has improved my writing and research skills. Writing commentaries requires the author to be very opinionated to include updated statistics to support your piece. Thirdly, Gender Links offers trainings on how to write various stories pertaining to gender and field trips that have also helped in my profession.

Gender Links also creates a platform for learning through the Gender summits it organises. We meet Gender and Human Rights activists who encourage that we can also be like them if we stay focused. In years to come I see myself to be one of the influential journalist in the southern Africa and I aspire to be a gender activist." *Jenipher Changwanda, Malawi*



Kevin Suddason

"I participated in the Gender Links national summits held in 2014 and 2015, and also participated as a student reporter for Mauritius at the regional summit 2014, which was held in Johannesburg.

As a journalism student, this experience has allowed me to understand a number of real-life concepts to be applied when working as a journalist. Prior to both national summits, the Gender Links Mauritius team held an insightful briefing session, bringing together all student reporters and assigning tasks. To accurately and fairly report on an event, prior back-ground research should be carried out; that was the first lesson I learned from these briefing sessions.

Once at the summit, the reporting team would meet a final time for planning and verification purposes. We would select sessions we were to report on, arrange our day's work schedule accordingly and finally check if we could be of assistance to others. This was also an important lesson for a journalist. Working in a team and sharing information is key to successful internal communication that will ultimately be beneficial to the story.

Reporting at the summit allowed me to grasp working with semester-long assignment deadlines to working with daylong deadlines, at times even few hours' long. This has allowed me to accentuate my data-gathering, fact-checking and writing skills. I was able to complete articles at a much faster pace than I used to before the summits and that too without any negative effect on the quality of the writing.

The Gender Links experience as a whole is also an important tool for my future career in the media. I am now gender-conscious in my reports and try, as far as possible, to balance my sources and report in a neutral manner for both women and men. Details such as the use of the word 'survivor' instead of 'victim' as qualifier have changed my perspective on fair reporting.

Finally, flying to Johannesburg, meeting, and working with student journalists from across the SADC region has broadened my reach and comprehension of member states. Being bilingual, I was lucky to be able to communicate with both francophone and Anglophone students. I now feel more concerned listening or reading news about SADC member states like Madagascar." *Kevin Suddason, Mauritius*

"Thanks to GL, I have managed to make a difference between feminism and gender equality. Knowing it will certainly enrich my work and I. Writing during the summits has allowed me to grow and develop my writing skills and my gender awareness. I am grateful to the GL team for that.



Aurélie Lodoiska

I also have to add that it was an exceptional experience to work during these two national summits because they have helped to change the way I look at society. I am keeping beautiful memories and rich encounters in my mind. This has been an enriching journey with GL". *Aurélie Lodoiska, BSc student in journalism who worked for two consecutive years in the GL's team covering the Mauritian Summit*

### **Francophone service - venturing into West Africa**

The journey to the West Africa by the Francophone service started in June 2014 when Augustin Tapé, a radio journalist from Côte d'Ivoire who has his own online paper - [www.newivoire.com](http://www.newivoire.com) - started doing podcasts and writing articles for the French service and publishing all the links for GL's French articles on his online paper.

In February 2015, Isabelle Otchoumare from Benin joined other Francophone service writer's and since then has republished most of GL's articles on her blog <http://www.beninnewsmag.blogspot.com/>. GL went another step west in October 2015 when Séry Baoula, a radio journalist from Burkina Faso, started sending podcasts and republishing GL's article on his blog named [parlons-genre.blog4ever.com](http://parlons-genre.blog4ever.com)

## Comments from contributors



Augustin Tapé

“Collaborating with Gender Links has been a very enriching experience for me. The GL News Service has allowed me to give greater visibility to the questions of women's rights in the different countries. The information gathered from Mauritius, DRC, Madagascar, the francophone

SADC countries, have been an eye opener on the women's realities in these countries. It has enriched my general culture and my network of contacts too”. *Augustin Tapé, radio and web journalist and gender activist from Côte d'Ivoire*

“Collaborating one year with GL has been very beneficial to me in many ways. Firstly, I learnt a lot on a range of issues, particularly on the question of violence against women and children because I went to meet the survivors of GBV in Burkina Faso in order to write my articles.

I also learnt a lot about the realities of the African continent by reading the stories of the other collabo-

rators of GL. The other positive factor is that all of these stories are linked to human rights issues in Africa and by writing for GL, I have known more about the situation of human rights in Burkina Faso.

What I have gained also is that via GL, I have managed to get to know my colleagues from other francophone countries. Together, we are now thinking of creating a network in order to cover all human rights issues in a gender perspective. Working for GL has been a salutary experience for me and I want to thank GL's executive director for giving me this opportunity. I just hope that the service does not stop here because making



Séry Baoula

our population aware of gender and human rights issues should be ongoing as challenges will always be present”. *Séry Baoula, radio journalist in Burkina Faso. He also publishes the work of other contributors on his blog [parlons-genre.blog4ever.com](http://parlons-genre.blog4ever.com)*

## Challenges

- Cost recovery remains a challenge as the media houses are not prepared to pay for the articles produced by the service.
- Getting well-written, newsy, deep and thought-provoking articles. Sometimes journalists are not willing to go a step further to source details or even sources that will enhance their stories
- Getting more media outlets to pick up stories.
- Getting experts and more established journalists to write for the service.
- Retaining regular contributors to frequently contribute to the service citing the low rates paid by the service compared to other news initiatives that give more to correspondents

- Tracking the multimedia products published on broadcast media

## Next steps

From April 2016, with the launch of its new website, GL will commence with blogging as a new way of working for the service. This is part of a much broader new media strategy that recognises that times, technology, reading habits, news consumption and opinion shaping are rapidly changing. While this may result in some loss of analytical rigour, it opens up the space for many more participants. By helping to train and foster many more citizen journalists, GL can be more effective in “making every voice count.”

## Why blogs?

The rationale behind the decision to re-inaugurate the GLNS as blogs is that GL is aware that people have less and less time to read but that does not mean that they stop doing so. Advances in the online media space are changing media consumption patterns with more citizens gravitating towards social media compared to traditional media formats. This new approach will also capture young audiences across the region.



Since GL is not in a position to pay the contributors of its new blog service, this NGO hopes that gender activists in SADC countries and those of Western Africa who have helped to popularise its French Information Service will nevertheless graciously feed its new blog service and continue to promote gender equality and LGBTQI persons.

## Crossroads - GL's Media work 15 Years later

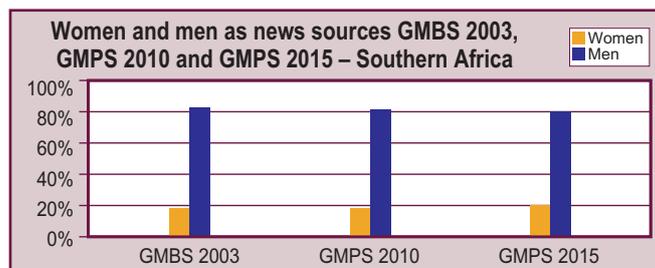
By Patricia A. Made - GL Board member



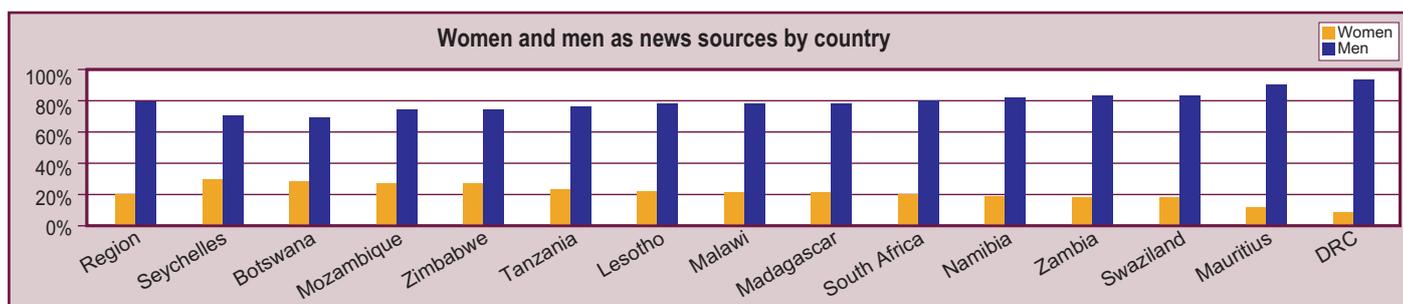
Journeys of change often come to a crossroad. In fact, because change is not a linear process, there may be several times during the journey that a crossroad is reached. After 15 years of focusing on the media in Southern Africa with a gender lens, Gender Links

(GL) has the opportunity to reflect on the question 'which way now'?

In 2015, GL undertook its most extensive Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS), covering media content, gender in newsrooms, as well as gender in media training. Media students in institutions that form part of GL's Gender in Media Education (GIME) initiative monitored 27,045 news items in 14 countries. GL released the top line findings of this research on 3 May, World Press Freedom Day 2016.



The graph shows that over the period 2003 to 2015, women sources in the region have etched up by a mere three percentage points, from 17% to 20%. At 22%, the media houses in GL's Centres of Excellence (COE) for Gender in the Media performed slightly better than those outside the fold (19%). Still, this is hardly commensurate to the commitment made by these media houses to better practise.



A breakdown by country shows that performance ranges from 28% women news sources in Seychelles to 6% women news sources in DRC. Nine countries are at 20% or above, six below this mark. For seven of these countries this is an improvement compared to 2010. However, Lesotho has slipped backwards, and South Africa - the torch bearer of democracy in the region - has remained virtually stagnant. Overall, Southern Africa is behind the global figure of 24% in the 2015 Global Media Monitoring Project. But even that figure has remained stagnant, compared to the last one day monitoring coordinated by the World Association for Christian Communications every five years in 2010.

On the face of it, the mainstream print and broadcast media across Southern Africa may look no different than they did 15 years ago. The objectification of women as sex objects is still pronounced; women's voices and perspectives on political, economic and a range of social development issues are still absent and it seems like more and more men analysts of all ages are sprouting from the media's woodwork; the

struggle for gender equality, justice and peace is still not a major news story; and the media continues to practice 'misrecognition politics' in the portrayal of feminists, gender activists and their movements.

Alongside this picture of media that appear obstinate in their hold on their own independence, freedom and power, while infringing on the fundamental freedoms and rights of women citizens in Southern Africa, is another image of *gender and media research, knowledge, re-training and activism*. The two images have converged in several ways over the last 15 years.

There is now a recognition within the media that the lens of gender put a huge spotlight on media practice, professionalism and ethics. This was done through the pioneering and ground breaking research on gender and the media done by GL and its partner organisations, such as the Media Monitoring Project, the Media Institute of Southern Africa, among others. This research, which focused on editorial content, employment patterns, advertising, media regulations and ethics has contributed to the building of a body

of knowledge that did not exist in the region 15 years ago. This body of knowledge also propelled Southern Africans into the global communities of gender and media research as the proprietors of knowledge produced by themselves.

Furthermore, GL in alliance with a host of civil society organisations translated this body of knowledge into activism to empower and inform both the media and the citizens who consume the media. A gender and media movement began to emerge in Southern Africa as media became the focal points of the gender equality and women's rights movements. And, this growing body of knowledge informed the Article on Media, Information and Communication in the 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, which holds the media in the region to a benchmark standard of accountability.

The gender and media research also opened the pathways for engagement with the media on the fundamentals of journalism such as “what defines news” and “who tells the stories”. This engagement also got men and women editors to really think about what they do and the journalistic practices that foster discrimination, silencing, and the perpetuation of stereotypes. Media owners began to look more seriously at how to become equal opportunity employers in accordance with labour laws.

Since research worldwide shows that sexism in the media moves from the classroom to the newsroom, a key link in the work to transform the media using gender as the lens of analysis is revisiting both the formal and continuing training of media practitioners. Twenty-five (25) media training institutions in Southern Africa participated in GL's Gender in Media Education (GIME) research and nine (9) of these have Memorandums of Understanding with GL as GIME Centres of Excellence. Gender and the media is emerging as an area for teaching and research within academic journalism and media studies programmes within Southern Africa. And, GL has produced and published a myriad of training manuals on how to integrate gender into every aspect of the media's editorial production. All of this gender research, knowledge, re-training and activism is integral to transforming the media for the future.

Now 15 years on, GL should look at the crossroad as a roundabout which can go in more than one direction. There are several roads that can be taken by different actors in the gender and media community that GL has built since 2001.

Academics, feminist research institutes and NGOs with a research focus must conduct gender and media

research on unexplored and new and emerging media issues, as well as gender and media research that adds more depth to the existing gender and media knowledge. The findings of this research must be crafted into actions for continuous engagement with the media industry so that the industry can reflect and take measures to change from within.



Mokopane FM Community radio manager Maleka Ledwaba discussing importance of gender in community media with Besley Madhuwa, Ngocho News, South Africa.  
Photo: Madikana Matjila

GL in alliance with media NGOs, gender equality and women's rights groups must now look at how to turn this research into creative and engaging education and outreach programmes that attract the region's youth. We must link also into the growing feminist activism on 'voice and power' which is gaining more and more currency within African feminist spaces, and especially on social media.

Thought must be given to the development of a more robust gender and media activism that calls out and publicises sexism in the media wherever it occurs. This means taking off the gloves and informing, through social and other media channels, as wide an audience as possible of the media's violations of women's freedoms and rights.

Broad-based campaigns that criss-cross every corner within the borders of Southern African nations must be built to create media-watch eyes among all citizens. The media must come to know that while they play the watchdog function looking at those in power, a groundswell of media literate citizens is evolving to watch, check and challenge the media's position of power and privilege.

Fifteen years is a short span of time in the journey of life and in the life of an organisation. GL has a robust and diverse history of work with the media to reflect on, draw lessons from, and to build on as it continues to take actions that contribute to the development of media in the region that are truly democratic in their practices and in their content.