

## Media watch

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Until recently, much of GL's work focused on media producers (editors and journalists) as well as media shapers (NGOs, decision makers etc). The Gender and Media Audience Study (GMAS) opened a new area of work with media consumers that in turn led to the development of a media literacy kit. Media literacy is essentially about creating an active citizenry, shifting the power from producers of media to consumers.

The gender and media literacy toolkit aims at making the experience enjoyable as well as enlightening.

The tool kit draws from research and training material developed over a number of years on gender and the Southern African media. The kit consists of a binder, with ten modules, "core" exercises and notes. The tool kit also comes with a CD ROM of case studies and a DVD with audio visual clips that accompany relevant modules. These are all numbered and cross referenced in the text. The modules allow for maximum participation and creativity on the part of learners, as well as adaptation to local circumstances. The binder format allows participants at whatever level or in whichever location to add to the basic texts their own collection of material based on the numerous exercises and assignments.

The materials also takes account of the Outcomes Based approach to Education (OBE) and discussions have been

initiated with the Ministry of Education on incorporating these materials into media education as part of a civic education curriculum being developed for implementation in South Africa in 2010.

In 2006/2007, with the support of the Open Society Foundation of South Africa (OSFSA) GL was able to test the training kit with the general public as well as run a Training of Trainer (TOT) course with its networking partners, especially GEMSA and the Department of Education (DOE). GL conducted the pilot course with the public on Wednesday evenings from 17:00 - 19:00 for ten weeks, from 17 June – 16 August. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of August, Women's Day in South Africa, participants had a full day of IT training; including how to create a newsletter, chat on cyber dialogues and sign up for various list serves. In total the pilot course consisted of approximately 30 hours of training.

From the 10-14 September, activists and trainers took part in the TOT workshop. They also participated in the media literacy discussion at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gender and Media (GEM) Summit before undertaking the course. Trainers included the staff of Gender Links; of the Gender and Media Southern Africa Network (GEMSA) and experts from the field including the former director of the Media Diversity and Development Authority (MDDA).

### Outcomes

- 25 participants completed the pilot course.
- 22 facilitators undertook the Training of Trainer course in gender and media literacy.



Media literacy participants during the "IT for Advocacy" training

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- Trainers developed an action plan to map out the next phases to take place in their organisation/countries and communities

### Outputs

#### Comments by participants in the pilot course:

- I would encourage more such workshops, and expansion of this course. I would like to get more information about gender equality in the media.
- I am currently studying journalism and I am proud to say you have played a part in my life and understanding the media. I was the youngest in a class... and my understanding of media and gender has grown in a very short space of time.
- The sessions where we focused on the skill of media monitoring were very useful as I felt I walked away with a practical skill. I also enjoyed the module where we learned about writing into print media because it is something I have often wanted to do but I now feel more empowered to do so.
- My favourite session was [Module 4: Visual literacy]. I enjoyed it because it was about interrogating and challenging societal 'truths'... I also found module 9 [Making your own media] very empowering. The fact that at the end of the session I could say now I can produce a newsletter as well as participate in a cyber dialogue was satisfying.

#### Comments on the TOT

- The use of the toolkit for gender and media literacy training creates a systematic approach to training that can be adapted to any community or organisation in the region. The use of the toolkit ensures that there will be consistent objectives and outputs across the region
- The TOT Action Plan involves targets and timelines with continuous feedback to each other and the Media Literacy coordinator at GL. The toolkit was devised with the intention of it being regionally applicable with issues and examples of gender in media across SADC.
- Linking media literacy to other campaigns such as '16 days of Activism' increases its relevance in the region to other pressing social challenges such as violence against women and children.
- Beyond the training of the media literacy toolkit; the TOT was an experience for networking and exchange of experiences from various gender and media practitioners across the region. Each participant now has the other as a resource. Contact information is kept in a database and was shared with all participants.

### Next Steps

Moving forward, GL will seek to:

- Follow up and support trainers in their implementation of the TOT Action Plan.
- Work with the DOE in running pilot projects with schools and integrating gender and media literacy in the life skills curriculum.
- Run pilot courses with other target groups eg local government, unions and community radio.
- Accredite the course with SAQWA.
- Work with GEMSA in replicating gender and media literacy work with different constituencies across the region.

### Feedback on the media literacy

"Gender Links is doing an awesome job in making awareness on gender issues more transparent and access of information to everyone. I am so encouraged by your work and perseverance that I feel and know that the numbers will add up to more awareness and zero tolerance to crimes of gender ignorance. Thank you for the opportunity and lessons learned from the gender and media literacy course."

- *Glenda Muzenda, South Africa*

"The workshop was indeed a very good initiative in providing a harmonised tool kit on media literacy to be used by countries in Southern Africa. Using the tool kit, the facilitators of the workshop presented a wealth of issues and methodologies on how best to report on gender-related issues in the media. I personally learned and benefited a lot from this workshop and I am sure the other participants also did. Immediately after returning to Seychelles I had an informal meeting with one or two members of GEMPlus to brief them on the proceedings and outcome of the workshop. However, we have had difficulties in getting a core group of members to prepare a strategy for GEMPlus to take forward the agenda of objective reporting of gender in the media, using the tool kit developed by GL. I do hope that it will not take too long before GEMPlus starts using the tool kit to further sensitise our local media houses as well as interested individuals on gender reporting in the media."

- *Michel Rosalie, GEMPlus, Seychelles*

"Another year, and another bumper crop of successful projects by a dedicated NGO who knows what its goals are and is committed to making a difference in our society. The Gender and Media Literacy Toolkit is to be commended. A society can only be empowered if its women are empowered; our various countries will only be free if women are free. The prerequisite for political, cultural and economic freedom is media freedom, and a prerequisite for media freedom is media literacy. Media literacy therefore is almost literally the key to free women, which makes the Toolkit so commendable. At the Salzburg Seminar in Germany, where I am currently teaching, with students from ten countries attending, a student from Pakistan, working towards her PhD and also lecturing at her university, is so impressed with the toolkit that she intends to refer to it in her own work. I would like to congratulate Gender Links for the superb work it is doing: may you reap the fruits of your dedication by seeing how our societies flourish."

- *Prof Lizette Rabbe, Head of the Media Studies Department, University of Stellenbosch*