



CONCEPT NOTE
GENDER AND MEDIA SUMMIT
"EMPOWERING WOMEN IN AND THROUGH THE MEDIA -PROVIDING A VOICE
FOR GENDER EQUALITY POST- 2015"

The Southern Africa Broadcasting Association (SABA), Gender Links (GL) and the Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC) will host the fifth Gender and Media Summit under the banner *Empowering Women in and through the Media- Providing a Voice for Gender Equality* from 18 to 19 August 2016 in Windhoek, Namibia. The summit will be preceded by a three-day gender and media training workshop for journalists in Namibia from 15-17 August 2016. The summit will feature awards for gender in media leadership and practice, as well as the launch of the Southern Africa branch of the Global Alliance for Media and Gender (GAMAG).

A centre piece of the summit will be the second Gender and Media Progress Study conducted by GL and partners in the GMDC in 2015. The study updates findings from several earlier studies covering gender in media content (including advertising); institutional practice, and media education.

The conference aims to provide a global overview of initiatives taken to address women's empowerment in light of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Post 2015 Agenda. The SDG's project a world where all women and men contribute to and benefit equally from development; a world where women and men of all ages can equally access information through media including online platforms for self-expression, including cultural expression and contributing to peace.

According to the World Bank, Africa will not reduce poverty without working on the important building blocks of achieving gender equality. It is estimated that if women worldwide had equal access to productive resources such as seeds, fertilizer, extension services to name a few, 100-150 million fewer people would go hungry every day.

To emphasise the severe affects gender inequality has on families, communities and countries as a whole the United Nations established a global platform to address gender imbalances and coupled it with the media as media is the greatest tool shaping thoughts and opinions to redress the disparities. Achieving gender equality in and through the media is central to achieving gender equality.

2016 is significant for several reasons. It is the first year of implementing the SDGs adopted in 2015. 2016 marks the 25th anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration on an Independent and Pluralistic African Press. In addition, in many Southern African countries commemorate

the month of August as Women's month. August 2016 is therefore an opportune time to highlight the progress and challenges on gender equality in and through the media in SADC.

Objectives

The summit and training that precede it aim to:

- Critically analyse progress made in the region on enhancing gender equality in and through the media, based on the evidence gathered in the GMPS and other studies.
- Propose ways in which the media in the region can champion the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Post-2015 Agenda. The SDGs project a world where we can achieve gender equality and empower women and girls; where all women and men contribute to and benefit equally from development; where women and men of all ages can equally access information through media including online platforms for self-expression, including cultural expression and contributing to peace.
- Highlight the role of the media in promoting gender equality through a month-long media campaign flagging the key themes of the conference.
- Train 50 women and men from the SADC in Gender Aware Newsroom Leadership and Management as well as Gender Mainstreaming.
- Locate the issues of gender in the media within the broader regional debates on freedom of expression, plurality and diversity of the media.
- Recognise and affirm gender aware media practise in SADC newsrooms.

Context

In 2008, SADC Heads of State adopted the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development with 28 targets aligned to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by 2015. This unique sub-regional instrument brings together global and African commitments to gender equality and enhances these through time bound targets.

The Southern African Gender Protocol Barometer produced by the Alliance of civil society organisations that campaigned for the Protocol showed that by 2015, SADC countries had only progressed to about two thirds of where they needed to be against these targets. However the Alliance had already started a campaign for the Protocol to be revised and updated in line with the Sustainable Development goals that have over thirty globally agreed targets and time frames for the attainment of gender equality. SADC Heads of State are expected to adopt the Post-2015 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and its Monitoring, Evaluation and Results (MER) Framework in August 2016.

The SADC Gender Protocol requires that gender be mainstreamed in all media laws, policies and training; that women and men be equally represented and fairly portrayed in the media; and that gender parity be reached in newsrooms. The Protocol also calls for sensitive coverage of topics such as gender violence, gender, HIV and AIDS. Over the last decade, GL has worked with 100 media houses across SADC that have elected to become Centres of Excellence for Gender in the Media, including twelve of the fifteen public broadcasters represented in SABA, on adopting and implementing gender policies.

Unfortunately, progress is still slow. The recently concluded Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS) conducted by GL and media training partners in the GMDC shows that women comprise only 20% of news sources in the SADC region, up by just one percentage point compared to the 2010 study. This shows that women are still denied a voice in the mainstream media, at the very moment that the world is calling for greater voice, choice and control for women as part of the SDGs.

The GMPS shows that overall women constitute 40% of media practitioners – one percentage point less than in 2010. However, there have been improvements in women’s representation in decision-making. The 2015 study shows that women constitute 30% of the Board of Directors (compared to 28% in 2010); 35% of top managers (compared to 23% in 2010) and 34% of senior managers (compared to 28% in 2010).

The media remains one of the most powerful tools in the world for addressing gender stereotypes. This explains the global campaign initiated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at the Global Forum on Media and Gender held in Bangkok, Thailand in 2013 to put the issues of gender and the media at the fore of the Post 2015 agenda. The conference brought together over 800 media, non-governmental as well as governmental organizations to form the Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG).

Within Southern Africa, GL and the GMDC have worked together on a range of research policy, training and advocacy initiatives featured at the four gender and media summits that took place every two years from 2004 to 2010. From 2011 to 2015, the GEM summit merged with the annual SADC Protocol@Work summit convened by the Alliance and local government partners. Reflecting the need for gender and media issues to be independently highlighted, and driven by the media, the fifth summit in 2016 will focus exclusively on the media.

Partners

SABA was launched in 1993 as a non-profit, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) to promote quality broadcasting by enhancing professionalism and the credibility of public service broadcasting among the 14 SADC countries. SABA is Co-Chair for GAMAG-Africa Chapter and Host for the meeting. SABA is also the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Training, Capacity Building and Content Creation. SABA is there to provide leadership for public broadcasters in the areas of digital migration, capacity building and training, creation and exchange of radio, television and online content as well as the empowerment of women in and through the media.

Gender Links is a regional Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) founded in 2001. It is committed to an inclusive, equal and just society in the public and private space in accordance with SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. GL achieves its vision through a people-centred approach guided by the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development that is aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals, Beijing Plus Twenty and Africa Agenda 2063. GL is credited with creating a gender and media movement in Southern Africa and championing this cause across the globe through its position as chair GAMAG and has participated in international advocacy activities such as the campaign for a stand-alone goal and indicators on gender, media and ICTs.

The multi-stakeholder **GAMAG** endeavours to accelerate the effective implementation and the systematic global follow-up of the Section J, of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPA). The BDPA calls for increasing participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication and promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.