

Mainstreaming Gender into Media Education

By Colleen Lowe Morna and Pauliina Shilongo

Abstract

The Gender and Media Baseline Study 2002 shows that women constitute only 17 % of news sources in the Southern African media. Women are also portrayed in a far more limited number of roles than men, most frequently either as sex objects or as victims of violence. As much as freedom of expression is hailed as a fundamental human right, the news media seem to exclude the perspectives and views of large portions of the population.

This paper explores the role of training in changing the hierarchic approach to sourcing in the news media into more inclusive and diverse approaches by reviewing key projects initiated by Gender Links, a Southern African NGO based in Johannesburg and its partners. In particular this article serves as an interim report of a three-year pilot project on mainstreaming gender into entry-level journalism education, which the Department of Media Technology at the Polytechnic of Namibia and Gender Links embarked on in 2002.

Key words

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entry- level training
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1. Introduction

The fact that women are under-represented and portrayed in limited roles in the media everywhere in the world is not in question. The two Global Media Monitoring Projects, and in Southern Africa the recent Gender and Media Baseline Study have put figures to what is abundantly apparent from a quick scan through the media [1]. To any media professional who ponders these discrepancies, it should also be apparent that they do not constitute good journalism in a technical and ethical sense, nor are they necessarily good for business.

Freedom of expression is about giving voice to everyone. There is a form of self- censorship at work when women, who constitute 52 percent of the world's population, only comprise 18 percent of news sources globally (GMMP 2000) and 17 percent in Southern Africa (GMBS

2002). Editors say that they cover whoever 'makes' the news [2]. These are invariably people in power, and men predominate in these ranks.

However, good journalism is not only about those who make decisions, but also about those who are affected by decisions. Underpinning the findings on gender in the media in Southern Africa is the overwhelming tendency towards single source stories (often emanating from "the minister"); the tendency to report on events rather than issues and the weakness of contextual, analytical reporting.

Logically, training should be a key entry point for opening the eyes of the media to the more professional reporting and fresh story ideas that gender awareness brings. The challenge is how best to achieve this.

Media training, like any other, consists of three main components- skills, knowledge and attitudes. The nature of the profession is that skill training tends to receive the highest priority, especially with the rapid advances in information technology. In the Media Training Needs Assessment of Southern Africa commissioned by the NSJ Trust, attitude training ranked the lowest. Yet gender awareness involves challenging deep - seated attitudes and stereotypes learned from childhood, cemented by custom, culture and religion, and reflected in every facet of life, from the social, to the economic, to the political.

Thus the major challenge for changing the gender biases of media practitioners is to integrate gender awareness training into all types *and* aspects of media training. This is at the heart of the gender mainstreaming initiatives described in this paper.

The paper draws from the overall experiences of Gender Links (GL), a Southern African NGO that promotes gender equality in and through the media, in the training dimensions of its work. It especially draws from, and serves as an interim report for, the project jointly undertaken by GL and the Polytechnic of Namibia (PON) to mainstream gender into a new entry level media training programme.

This PON project is instructive because of the "clean slate" offered by the new programme as a testing ground, and the long-term nature of the project that spans three years. Although the project, which began in January 2002, is only half way complete, a number of lessons are already informing future directions of this work.

2. Background

In September 2002, GL, the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) and twenty institutional partners around Southern Africa undertook the most extensive gender and media-monitoring project in the region and in the world. Covering twelve countries and spanning one month, the GMBS included over 25 000 news items, compared to the GMMP that covered seventy countries, but just for one day and included approximately 16 000 news items. Outputs of the project included a regional overview report and twelve country studies.

The regional study found that on average, women constitute only 17 percent of news sources in Southern Africa (compared to the global average in the GMMP study of 18 percent). These ranged from women constituting 26 percent of news sources in Angola (the highest) to 11 percent in Malawi (the lowest).

While economic and political coverage took up about a quarter of news time and space, and sports another twenty percent, coverage of gender equality accounted for a mere two percent of the total.

The qualitative research highlights instances of blatant sexist reporting, such as the sexual exploits of the editor of the Windhoek Observer, featured regularly on the back page, or the reed dance in Swaziland reported under the headline: "The great boob show" (GMBS Regional Report: 38-41).

It also highlights the more common but insidious subtle forms of gender stereotypes. Examples include the “Kids Corner” article about different professions in the Bulawayo Chronicle of Zimbabwe where the woman is carrying a pot, while the teacher, police and army officers are men (GMBS Regional Report: 46).

The report highlights the “gender blindness”, or failure to source women even where they exist as obvious sources, in many mainstream stories. One example cited is a story from Mauritius on teachers striking, for example, is based entirely on male sources, even though women predominate in the teaching service.

The study found that the highest proportion of media women practitioners (45 %) is in the TV presenter category, and lowest in the print category (22 %). Women are more likely to be found in the “soft beats” like social issues and human rights. Yet male reporters are in the majority in all the beats - even gender equality. The study sees the latter as an opportunity, to improve the quality of coverage on this important issue through training male and female journalists.

2.1 Gender in Namibian media

The Namibian media reflects regional trends. The Media Monitoring Project Namibia (MMPN), a project of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Namibia, has been monitoring the Namibian news media since 2001. The MMPN 2002/2003 annual report, which covers ten months of monitoring from March 2002 to February 2003, reveals even starker findings than the GMBS.

The MMPN study, which monitored only domestic news items compared to the GMBS that included international and sports news, found that only 14% of the sources are women, compared to the GMBS finding for Namibia of 19 %. Most of the media monitored quote documents more often than women (MMPN Annual Report 2002/2003: 2).

The MMPN study found that the vast majority of the media monitored have either no named source or rely on a single source. This applies both to hard news stories, where it might be argued that reporters are under time pressure, and pre-planned event reporting, where reporters have access to a variety of sources. For example, in a story about the launch of a women’s employment creation project reported by the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) in September 2002, only the male minister was interviewed, while male and female workers featured only as visuals (MMPN Annual Report 2002/2003: 57-66).

3. Media training: shapes, forms and challenges

Are journalists born, or are they made? The traditional school of thought, prevalent certainly in English-speaking countries, is that journalism is an apprentice career. Studies have shown that up to half of the journalists in the SADC region have no formal media qualifications (Media Training Needs Assessment, 2001).

A number of significant changes have taken place over the last decade. The wave of democratisation that swept through the region in the 1990s has led to a rapid increase in the number of journalists in the SADC region, now estimated at some 15 000 (Media Training Needs Assessment, 2001).

It is becoming increasingly essential for media practitioners in the region to have a qualification of some kind. There is also a hunger among media practitioners who have not had formal training to upgrade their skills. Given the rapid advances in information technology, the growing complexity of mainstream reporting in the era of globalisation, and the management challenges of running successful media businesses, refresher courses in the media field are becoming a necessity even for the most seasoned media players.

Not surprisingly, there has been a rapid increase in media training institutions. The Media Training Needs Assessment identified several different types of training in the region (see

Figure One). These divide broadly into entry level courses, and courses for mid-career media practitioners.

Entry- level courses sub-divide into those offered by career-oriented training institutions, that tend to have a more practical focus, and those offered by universities, that are more geared towards analysis and research.

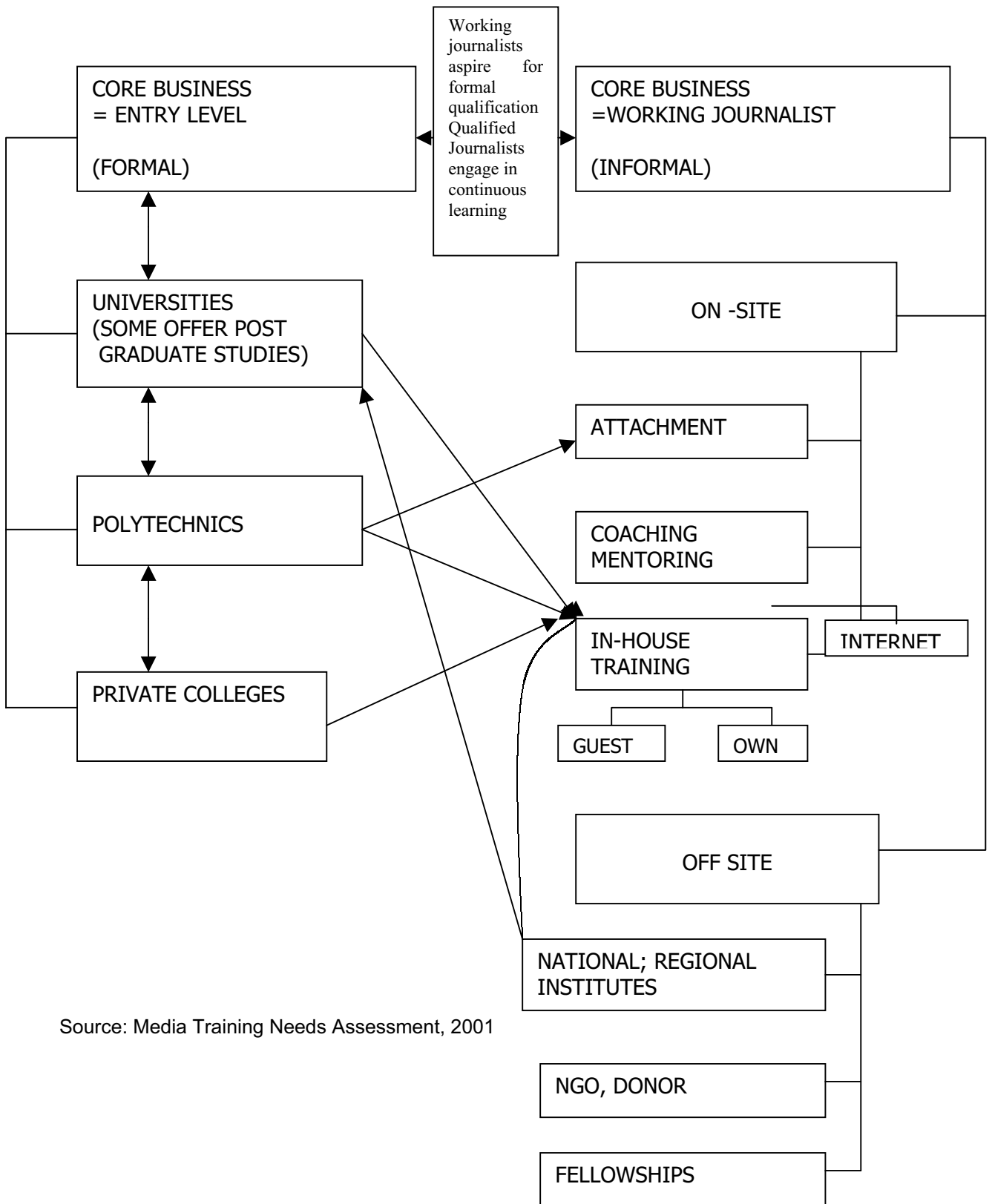
Courses for working journalists divide into those that are offered off site, such as the short courses offered by the South African Institute for the Advancement of Journalism (IAJ), the Zambian Institute of Mass Communications (ZAMCOM) and the Malawi Institute of Journalism (MIJ) and those that are offered in-house, such as those offered by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Training Unit.

Developing a new media training programme that answers to the multitude of needs and yet is viable for the training institution is a challenge. Many Southern African countries have small media industries. The market saturation of graduates from qualification programmes is therefore limited. Media training is expensive because of the equipment required. Another challenge is how to accommodate the many mid-career practitioners who have many years of experience, and probably many short courses but no formal qualification.

Developing standards to assess work-based learning is an important concern for media training institutions. Other than in South Africa where the standards generation process is institutionalised through the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) framework, most Southern African countries do not have such body and framework.

The Namibian Qualifications Authority (NQA) is still defining its role and functions and cannot render much support. However, the Department of Media Technology at the Polytechnic of Namibia is developing policy and guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) programme, due to be introduced in 2005. This programme will allow mid-career practitioners to assess their work-based learning and assess further training needs. This will shorten the process of acquiring qualifications for such persons.

FIGURE ONE: TYPES OF MEDIA TRAINING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA



Source: Media Training Needs Assessment, 2001

3.1 Skills, knowledge and attitudes

The Media Training Needs Assessment found that with the advent of more commercially-driven media in the region, there is a high demand for basic media training and the acquiring of technical skills to the detriment of issue or knowledge-based training. To the extent that there is demand for issue-based training it is invariably in the “hard” areas such as financial reporting.

Gender can and is often viewed as a beat on its own. In that respect it can be classified as a form on knowledge-based training. However, as gender cuts across all areas of reporting, the more challenging form of this training is in changing the mindsets of reporters so that they can recognise the gender dimensions of all stories. In this respect, gender is also an important component of attitude training. This encompasses ethics and the challenging of deeply ingrained prejudices. These may be around race, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, HIV/AIDS, or any form of “otherness” that one can think of.

Though inevitably shoved to the bottom of the training list, attitude training is at the core of the media profession. There is a saying that media practitioners can never hope to be objective, but they can certainly aim to be fair. To be fair, a media practitioner must at least acknowledge his or her prejudices. And they must understand that fairness is a cornerstone of media ethics.

All media practitioners require a mix of skills, knowledge and attitude learning to be effective. The Media Training Needs Assessment found that in the region, these tend to be viewed as separate subjects. Thus, for example, investigative journalism and computer-aided research are often taught as separate subjects whereas the latter is simply a tool for in-depth reporting. One could add that integrating gender awareness into *both* forms of training would yield a host of new sources and new story ideas. Yet attitude training, and in particular gender awareness training, is at present the most likely of all to receive short shrift.

4. Gender mainstreaming

This marginalising of gender concerns is not unique to the media, or to media training. Across the globe, policy makers and development practitioners have grappled with how to integrate gender considerations into the every day business of governance.

When gender inequalities first began to receive any serious consideration with the First World Conference on Women in Mexico in 1975, most governments responded with what is now referred to as the Women in Development or (WID) response. This involved the token addition of projects specifically to benefit women in their traditional areas of work, like sewing, knitting and small stock, without questioning the roots of their economic, social and political inequalities.

Most media houses and training institutions have passed through, or are indeed still in, a WID stage. The classic response of the media to pressure from gender activists, especially after the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing where the media is one of twelve action areas, has been to devote specific space or air-time to “women’s issues”. These are seldom about how to get into politics, gain access to credit and land, or set up a thriving business. They are more often in the cookery and lifestyle genres.

Media training institutions in the region typically offer isolated gender and media training course in the case of in-service training institutions, or as a passing reference in an existing module of entry-level training (for example, under diversity, society, community reporting or some broader umbrella). Where courses are optional, such as in the case of in-service training, the general finding is that gender-specific courses are under subscribed, and attract a majority of women participants. They fail to reach those who most need to be reached: the cynical male media practitioners and gatekeepers.

The recent trend in development discourse is away from the WID towards the Gender and Development (GAD) approach. The latter views equality between women and men as central

to sustainable development. It encompasses two key concepts: the empowerment of women, and changes in the attitudes of men that are essential for equal partnerships to emerge.

Central to the GAD approach is the concept of gender mainstreaming, defined by the UNDP as “taking account of gender equity concerns in all policy, programme, administrative and financial activities, and in organisational procedures, thereby contributing to a profound organisational transformation” (Governance for Sustainable Growth and Equity. Report on International Conference, United Nations, New York, 28-30 July, 1997)

5. GL’s approach to gender mainstreaming in media education

Formed in 2001 by Southern Africans with backgrounds in gender and the media, GL has followed a two-prong approach in the training dimensions of its work. At a macro level, this has involved developing training tools and offering training courses in partnership with entry-level and in-service training institutions across the region in various beat (or knowledge-based courses), including gender violence, gender and HIV/AIDS and (upcoming, with six elections in the region in 2004) gender and democracy. GL is also now developing gender and media training tools in more skills related fields, such as photojournalism, the electronic media and (upcoming) in sub-editing [3].

Where GL conducts direct in-service training with media training institutions it has tried to learn from some of the pitfalls identified in the Media Training Needs Assessment, namely the need to move from event to process driven training. Participation is competitive; participants produce programmes and supplements carried by mainstream media as part of their training; they are expected to produce at least two more stories after the training before they receive certification and classroom training is complemented by a six week on-line training course.

The second major track that GL has followed has been to engage each year with one or two media training institutions over an agreed, extended period of time in providing support for mainstreaming gender into the curriculum and institutional practices. As illustrated in Figure two, and as will become apparent in the remainder of the paper, the macro and micro approaches are not mutually exclusive.

For example, the training tools produced as outputs from the gender mainstreaming pilot projects have been used to train trainers in other media training institutions. Similarly, the training tools produced in the beat and skills training, as well as the courses offered, have had linkages to, and helped to bolster, the gender mainstreaming pilot projects. The latter projects are by their nature long term. But they have the great advantage of “grounding” the broader initiatives; ensuring institutional ownership and buy in and –hopefully- ensuring sustainability.

So far, GL has engaged in three such partnerships. Two of these have been one- year projects with in-service training institutions, the IAJ and ZAMCOM, catering to working media practitioners. The third is the three-year project with a career-oriented, entry- level institution, the Polytechnic of Namibia.

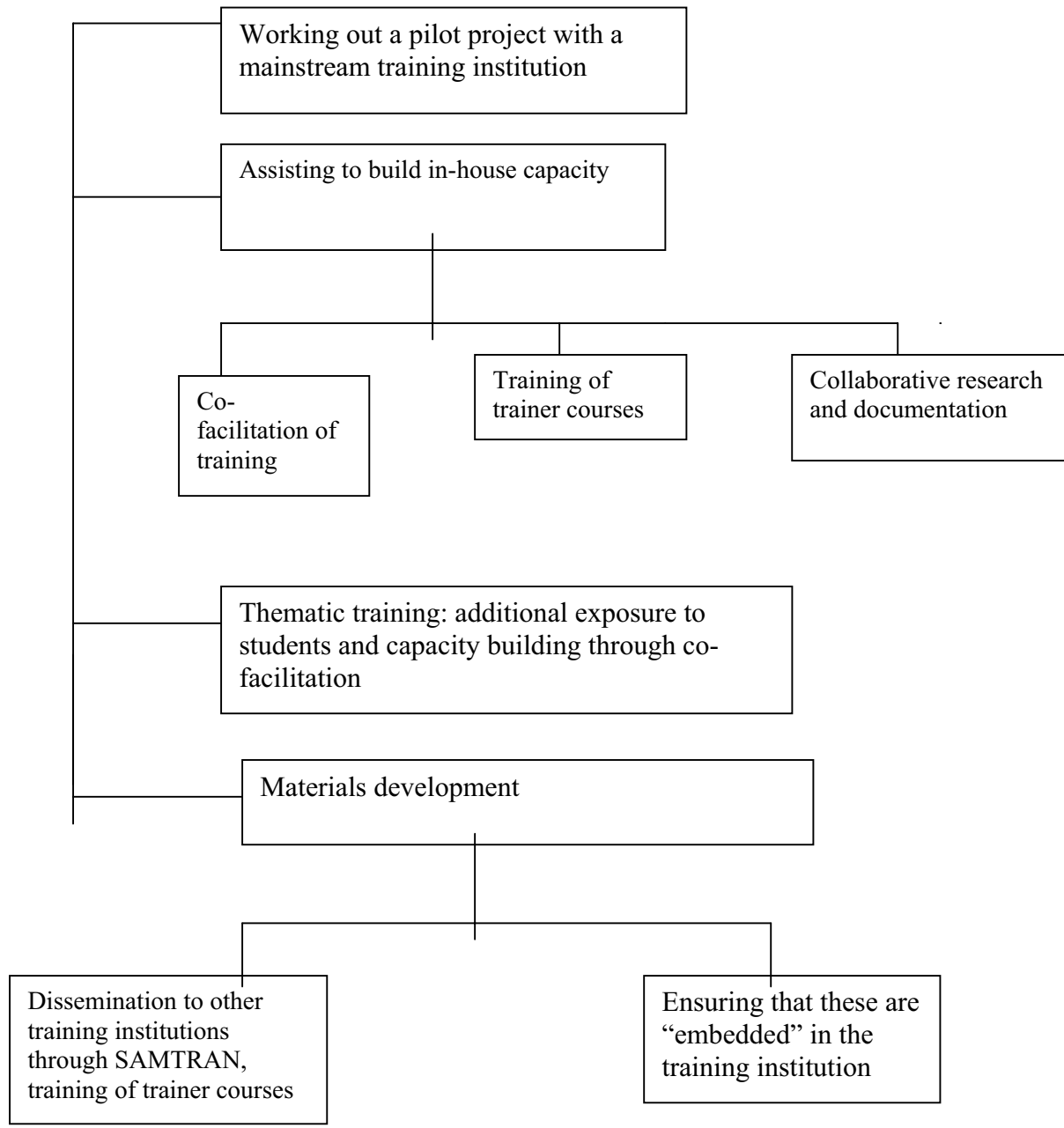
Each project has its own specifics. But broadly the projects have included:

- ≠# Agreeing on objectives and work plan with the institution.
- ≠# Building in-house capacity through co-facilitation of agreed courses/ modules for gender mainstreaming; and participation as appropriate of trainers in Training of Trainer courses and joint research initiatives, especially the GMBS.
- ≠# Deepening of skills and broadening the scope of the programme through special course offerings.
- ≠# Development of relevant training materials.
- ≠# Dissemination of these materials to other trainers and embedding them within the host institution.

To the extent that the gender mainstreaming pilot projects have relied heavily on identifying champions within institutions and relationship building, they have benefited from the Southern African Media Trainers Network (SAMTRAN). This grew out of the first meeting of regional media trainers organised by the PON alongside the tenth anniversary of the Windhoek

Declaration on Press freedom in May 2001. The Media Training Needs Assessment referred to frequently in this paper also served as a catalyst for SAMTRAN. The assessment, undertaken by GL for the NSJ Trust, provided useful insight and contacts for this new organisation on the media training landscape in the region.

Figure two: Approaches to gender mainstreaming in media training



6. Gender mainstreaming in in-service media training

The first of the gender mainstreaming partnerships between GL and a media training institution took place with the IAJ in 2001, facilitated by the geographical proximity between the two organisations as well as the foresight and openness of the IAJ - the leading provider of in-service training in the new South Africa. With a strong emphasis on redressing the various imbalances in the media created by apartheid, the IAJ had a keen grasp of the importance of gender within the broader transformation agenda.

Indeed, the IAJ pioneered the idea of mainstreaming gender into all components of media training- the cornerstone of the gender mainstreaming pilot projects. Courses for which the IAJ and GL developed a gender component included race and ethics; feature writing; sub-editing; basic, investigative and in-depth reporting.

To take some practical examples of how this is achieved, the gender component of the course on race and ethics in August 2001 examined interviews with “people on the street” before and after the budget in one newspaper. In the “before” interviews, seven people were interviewed: three men, and four women- but three white women and only one black woman (a pensioner). In the “after” interviews, the number of original interviewees dropped from seven to four- three men (two black, one white) and one woman (white, and professional). Fairly blatant examples of whose voices are taken seriously in the new South Africa!

The course on investigative reporting considered a story entitled “Women miners toil for R1200 a day”, with the sub- heading: “But pioneers who have broken into a man’s world are not complaining”.

The only reason that women are being hired is that they are willing to work for lower wages than men. The story is told mainly from the perspective of the male employer and union official who see nothing wrong with violating minimum wage regulations. The one woman interviewed is identified by name, at her work place. The several bodies in South Africa set up to protect human rights are not consulted.

When participants stopped to think about it, they agreed that the real story here is not about women happy to pick up any crumbs from the table but about blatant sex discrimination in the new South Africa – both a more accurate and interesting angle.

The sub-editing course had a host of headlines, captions and illustrations to grapple with. An example is the coverage of a competition on best father run by a local NGO for father’s day on 17 June 2001 designed to raise awareness on fatherhood. One newspaper covered a father in Alexandra township who is challenging the stereotypes of irresponsible fatherhood by caring for his daughter and helping with domestic chores. But the headline reads: “Dad is an ideal mom”- in one line reversing the important message in the story that dad is in fact an ideal dad!

Encouraged by the response of participants, some of whom at first showed open hostility to being confronted with a session on gender, yet invariably commented that it had been an eye-opening experience, GL and the IAJ went on to develop a training manual “Gender in Media Training: A Southern African Tool Kit.”

In April 2002, twelve trainers from around the region, including from ZAMCOM and the PON, carried out a peer review of the manual. GL has since conducted two training of trainer workshops using the manual, again attended by trainers from ZAMCOM and PON. These processes around the manual provided an important link between the IAJ and the other two projects, though not the springboard for them.

The relationship between ZAMCOM and GL began with the co-hosting and co-facilitation of a one- week workshop on covering gender violence in November 2001 as part of GL’s thematic training. The active participation of four ZAMCOM trainers from the radio, television, research

and IT departments in the workshop sparked a discussion on how ZAMCOM could ensure that gender is integrated in all its work.

The plan agreed by ZAMCOM and GL, running through 2002, involved working together on specific courses, developing local materials and completing a gender and media handbook for Zambia that ZAMCOM had already initiated. In addition to participating in the peer review of, and training of trainer course linked to the IAJ/GL training tool kit, the ZAMCOM project coincided with the GMBS research launched by MISA and GL.

The two partners contracted ZAMCOM to lead the research in Zambia. Two ZAMCOM trainers received monitoring training as part of the GMBS. The GMBS yielded useful case material for the Zambian handbook and for the ongoing training at ZAMCOM. Further case material emerged from the gender and HIV/ AIDS workshop that GL ran in partnership with ZAMCOM in Zambia in March 2003.

In July 2003, the institute, in collaboration with GL and the local chapter of MISA, hosted a two-day workshop on the Zambian GMBS to engage editors and other media stakeholders in the findings of the GMBS, again putting it at the centre of gender and media initiatives in Zambia.

The final component of the ZAMCOM project, to be completed in 2004, involves a two-day workshop to devise a gender policy for the institute. This component, proposed by ZAMCOM, is so far unique among the gender mainstreaming pilot projects and is conceptually sound.

The logic is that if such projects are to be sustained, they must- to use a current media phrase - be "embedded" in institutional practise. The policy will cover internal practices including recruitment, promotions, selection of participants, work place issues and the conduct of courses; as well as ensuring that gender is mainstreamed into the content of training. This could offer a template for other training institutions.

7. Gender mainstreaming in entry-level media training

The pilot project on mainstreaming gender into entry-level journalism training with the Department of Media Technology at the Polytechnic of Namibia was designed from the onset to cover the three full years of the programme. It commenced in 2002 when the PON introduced its three-year Diploma Programme in Journalism and Communication Technology. While the curriculum had already been developed and approved prior to the commencement of the project, it has considerably influenced the teaching methods and objectives of the courses.

7.1 Background and characteristics of the PON Diploma Programme

Based on research findings showing that 65 % of media practitioners in Namibia do not have formal qualifications [4], and that the niche market of the PON is offering a flexible course catering both for new entrants and those already in the field, the programme has three distinctive features:

- ⌘ The programme is offered in the evening to accommodate working media practitioners.
- ⌘ In the third year the students choose one of three specialisations: Public Relations and Corporate Communication; Journalism and Broadcast Production; and Multimedia Design and Production.
- ⌘ The Department of Media Technology is developing policy and guidelines for Recognition of Prior Learning to be introduced in 2005.

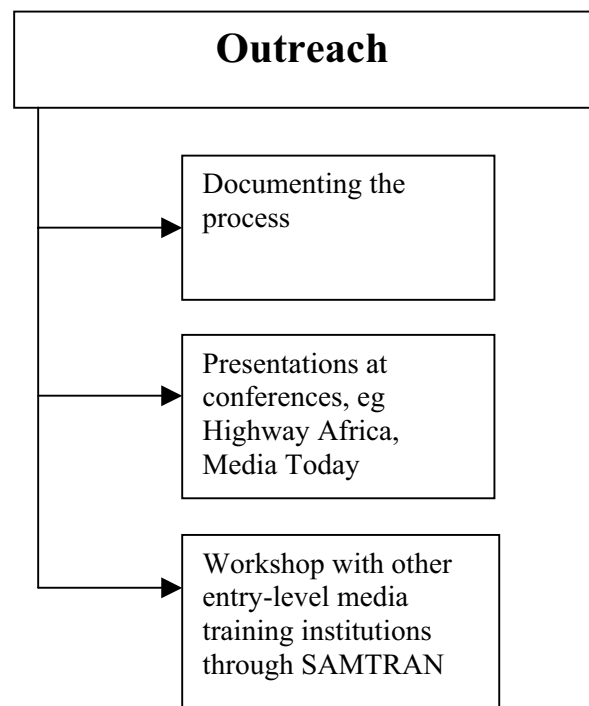
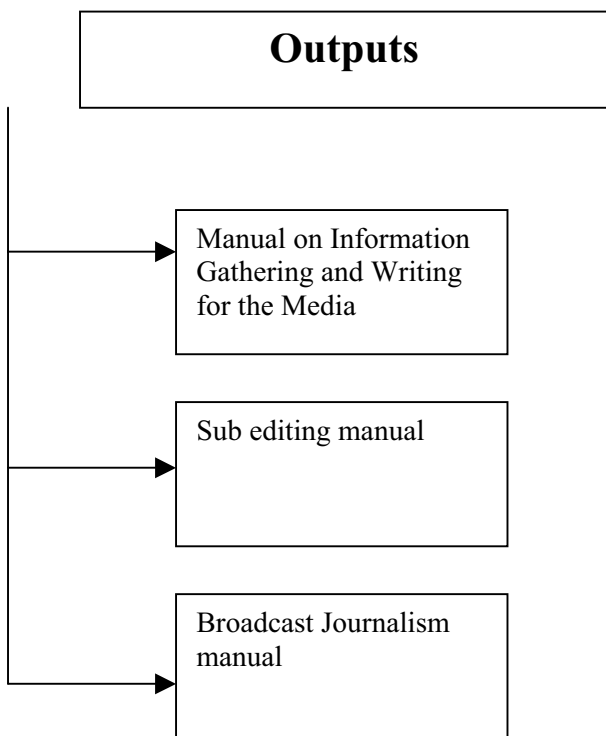
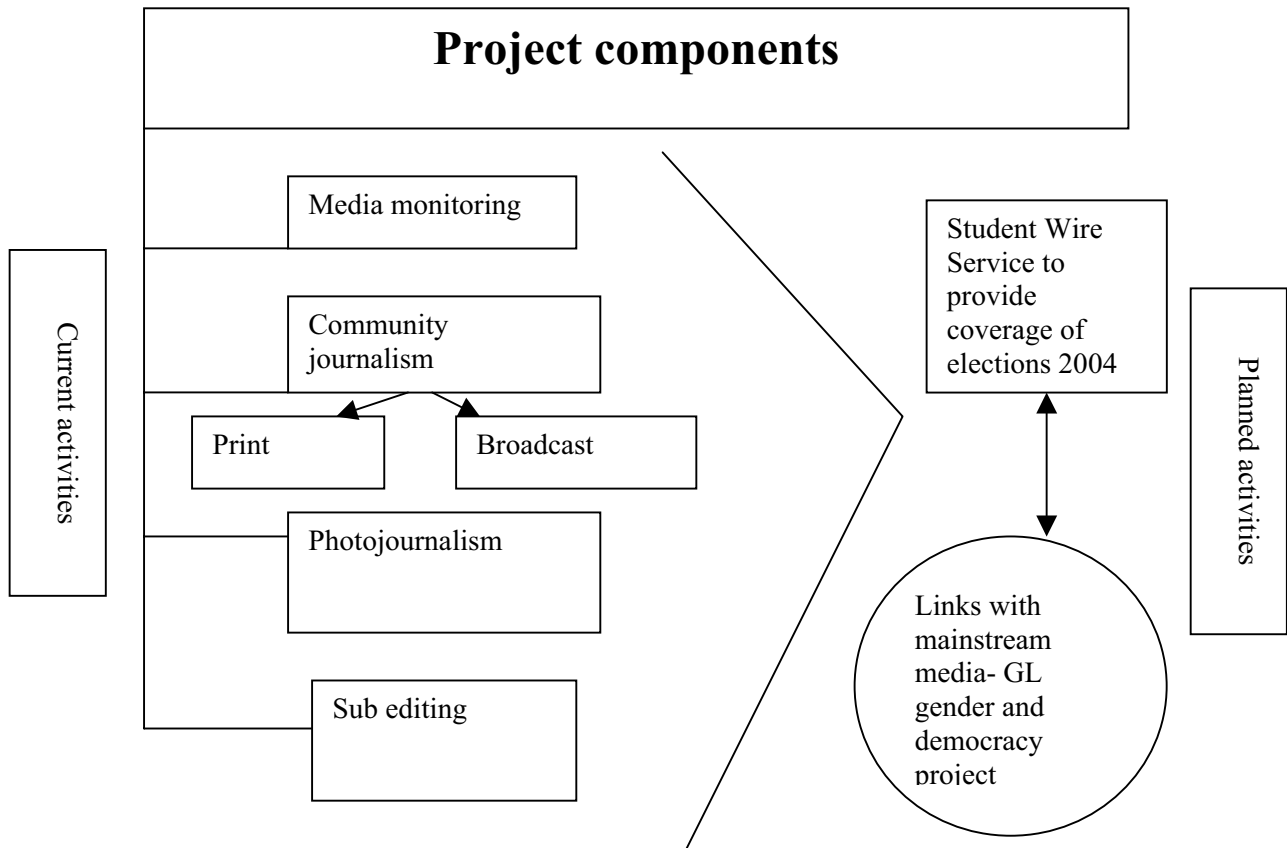
In the 2002 intake, only seven out of 25 students *did not* already work in the media or communications field while in 2003 only seven out of 25 students *are already* working in the field. This mixture of full-time students and mid-career practitioners has resulted in a broad range of ages from 17 to 50 years. The mixture of the young school leavers and more mature,

experienced mid-career practitioners has created in interesting dynamics in the classroom that have influenced the experiences of the mainstreaming project.

7.2 Components of the PON gender- mainstreaming project

The PON project has evolved organically, based both on the general needs identified by the staff of the department and GL's experiences from the other two projects. As shown in the figure three, the components of the project can be categorised into activities with the students as part of the curriculum, and study material development- the main outputs of the project. The third and fourth components consist of outreach and impact assessment, which are to be implemented in 2004.

Figure three:
Conceptual framework for the PON Gender Mainstreaming Project



7.2.1 Community Journalism Project

During the curriculum development process PON staff had identified diversity and inclusiveness as important components of training. The gender-mainstreaming project had an immediate resonance with the community journalism component of training.

Jan Schaffer defines civic journalism [5] as both an attitude and a set of tools for journalists. "The attitude is an affirmation that journalists have an obligation to give readers and viewers the news and information they need to make decisions in a self-governing society." This means that the journalists' goal should be to treat readers and viewers "as meaningful participants in important issues, as meaningful as the elites and the experts the journalists so often quote." (Jan Schaffer, *With the People – A Toolbox for Getting Readers and Viewers Involved*, Pew Center for Civic Journalism, 1997).

In the first semester of the academic year 2002 the Information Gathering and Writing for the Media course undertook a Community Journalism Project. This included a workshop by GL on gender aware reporting that fed directly into story ideas and planning for an eight-page newspaper supplement called *Echoes*, carried by the Namibian, the widest circulation daily.

The topics and sources of the stories in the publication reflect an awareness of the need to include a wide variety of perspectives and to recognise relevant gender dimensions. The topics included an investigate piece about sex work, problems residents face in a new and isolated housing settlement and challenges of daily living in informal settlements in which the views of women and men are equally represented.

A story about a dispute over fencing off a dam on the outskirts of Windhoek serves as an example of how gender awareness can enrich a story. A man who earns a living from fishing in the dam was upset about his loss of a livelihood. But a woman spoke up in favour of fencing off the dam because of the danger of children drowning.

In the second semester of the academic year 2002 the students undertook a field trip to the remote, southern town of Karasburg where they had the opportunity to integrate gender and other diversity considerations into visuals and radio journalism in a rural setting. Students produced radio programmes and photo essays on such subjects as substance abuse among the youth, employment creation projects in isolated villages, a home-based care project for people living with AIDS and stories about Warmbad, a small town where the residents are fighting to renew their ownership of a historical spring.

During the week some students fell into the traps that culture and traditions in rural areas may impose on gender aware reporting. The group reporting on the home-based care project observed that the majority of the volunteers in the project are women, yet they only interviewed the male leader of the group because he was the one speaking.

A student from the group reporting on Warmbad, home of the the Nama tribe known as Die Bondelswarts, found out that the matron of the school hostel, a middle-aged mother of three children, was the reigning Miss Bondelswarts. The student decided to do a photo essay on her concentrating on the colourful traditional outfits of the Bondelwarts. But he overlooked the angle of how the Miss Bondelswarts competition potentially challenges western stereotypes of beauty. Examples such as these served as useful learning points in the debriefing after the field trip.

7.2.2 Media monitoring

The media monitoring assignment served as the second testing ground for mainstreaming gender. Following a workshop co-facilitated by PON and GL on how to monitor the media from a gender perspective, students had to monitor news of a specific beat of their choice for one month. They then selected and analysed examples of gender aware and gender blind

stories as well as stories that perpetuate or challenge gender stereotypes. They also had to generate story ideas based on the monitoring and pitch one the ideas to a panel of editors.

The analyses revealed that there are very few gender aware stories in the Namibian media. The pitching exercise served as a practical illustration of the deep-seated gender biases among predominantly male editors.

Due to last minute cancellations by female editors, the panel consisted of two male editors. A female student who had found out during the monitoring that out of 43 business stories not one story featured a woman as a source presented a story idea about women entrepreneurs in the country. One of the editors summarily dismissed the idea as having been presented with "an attitude." He then went on to say that he would consider placing the story in the women's pages.

The example provided a useful learning point about how gender awareness training needs to include strong professional arguments to counter experiences such as this. The main line of argument could have been that since women's voices are not heard at all on the beat, a story about women in business is new and therefore newsworthy. It may also appeal to a new segment of readers. Clearly, another lesson is the importance of gender awareness training not only among media practitioners, but also among their decision-makers.

7.2.3 Sub-editing

In the first semester of 2003 the project expanded to include subjects taught in the second year of the diploma programme. Print design, editing and production courses were identified as the most next entry points for gender mainstreaming as they build on the skills and knowledge learned in the first year courses.

The concept was that second year students would learn how gender dimensions come into a story at the production stage by editing, designing and laying out the second *Echoes* newspaper for written by first year students who had received the same sort of gender training as they had the previous year. The training of the second year students included a workshop where the students developed a style guide for *Echoes* to be used as the official style guide for further productions of *Echoes*.

7.2.4 Replicating the process

It is in this second stage replication of the process that the biggest challenges so far have been registered. Most of these problems did not stem from the mainstreaming project but rather technical hitches in the process. Basic problems like lack of context and inadequate or no attribution plagued many of the stories written by the first year students. In many cases the second year student "editors" failed to point out these problems in time and guide the reporters adequately. The first year students also resented the advice given by their sub-editors, apparently because it came from a fellow student, and refused to follow them.

Co-ordination also proved problematic. While in 2002 the project participants consisted of one group of students and the lecturers directly edited their stories, this time there were two courses, two separate groups of students and all in all five different instructors involved in different stages of the project. This resulted in communication breakdowns and- at times- conflicting instructions.

As a result, the lecturer directly responsible for the project decided to delay the publishing of the *Echoes* newspaper supplement. The first year students will now rewrite their stories during the second semester of 2003 and the lecturers will edit the stories to ensure direct feedback with each student on problems in his or her story. The stories will be enriched by the rural reporting field visit in September/October 2003, which will include gathering visual material. The field visit will be preceded by a workshop, facilitated by GL, on gender and images, using a new training manual that the organisation has developed with Harare-based Southern African Media Services Organisation (SAMSO) called "Picture our Lives."

The monitoring experience, that was not performed as thoroughly by the first year students as by the second year students last year, will be repeated with much more detailed guidelines on gender analysis.

An important lesson from this experience is that any attempt to mainstream attitude or knowledge training into an already packed curriculum must be carefully assessed against the students' entry-level skills and knowledge. Equally important is co-ordination and proper planning which should involve all people participating in the project and all lecturers teaching the courses in the programme, not just the ones directly involved in the project. The need for all trainers to be involved in the process will be discussed at a roundtable between GL and all concerned PON staff in September 2003.

7.3 Synergies

The synergies between the gender mainstreaming project and other GL partner projects with the PON have helped to strengthen the project. These include:

- £ Two thematic training workshops on gender violence as well as gender, media and HIV/AIDS. The former sparked the idea of producing publications as part of training that inspired "Echoes". A number of second year students participated in the latter workshop, providing an opportunity to deepen their knowledge-related skills on gender. Co-facilitation of these workshops with PON staff also helped to deepen their gender awareness and training skills.
- £ As mentioned, the PON staff member responsible for the gender -mainstreaming project participated in the peer review of the IAJ/GL manual and in a GL gender and media training on trainer workshop. Many of the ideas from these workshops have carried through to the PON project, for example getting local guest writers to contribute to the Namibian basic reporting manual (see below) and interactive exercises for making gender awareness training live and engaging.
- £ The PON staff member responsible for the project led the Gender and Media Baseline study team in Namibia and two students participated in the study, that has raised the profile of gender and media issues in Namibia, as well as helped to develop skills on monitoring the media from a gender perspective.
- £ Two second-year students had the opportunity to work with a team of seasoned reporters in producing a daily newspaper from a gender perspective at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in 2002 as part of a GL initiative. This intensive on-the-job training had a dramatic impact on the performance of both students, but especially on the male participant who has become an eloquent proponent of gender aware reporting.

7.4 Outputs of the PON gender- mainstreaming project

The main tangible outputs of the project are study material for the different courses taught in the diploma programme. At the curriculum development stage staff at the Department of Media Technology identified the development of locally relevant study material as key to successful delivery of the curriculum and achieving the programme's mission and objectives.

With the support of its main development partner, the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NiZA), the department embarked on a study material development project with the aim of producing series of study material responsive to the curriculum objectives.

Raymond Joseph, a South African journalist and expert in community media wrote the core chapters of the first book in the series, "A Manual on Information Gathering and Writing for the Media." GL and PON staff involved in the gender mainstreaming project edited and expanded on the text, using examples from the monitoring and community journalism projects, to ensure that gender is mainstreamed throughout the text. The manual also draws on contributions from Namibian media practitioners. The chapters were tested with the students of the Information Gathering and Writing for the Media course in 2003 and will be printed in the second half of 2003.

Two more manuals are being produced in 2003 that will incorporate gender from the start. A GL trainer is drafting the manual on sub-editing based on this component of the project. A manual on Broadcast Radio Journalism will be produced in the second half of 2003 by an experienced Namibian broadcast journalist and trainer. She will participate in the student field trip to bring in the student experiences to the material.

7.4 Future activities of the PON gender- mainstreaming project

Now that gender has been “mainstreamed” into the key activities of the department, namely student activities in the practical courses and study material development, the main focus in the third and last year will be sustainability and outreach.

Because productions, the classroom equivalent of on-the-job-training, has been one of the most successful ways to inculcate the principles of inclusiveness and diversity –the PON is looking at establishing permanent campus media outlets.

A pilot project of a student news wire service is planned for the academic year 2004. This project will focus initially on “alternative”, community-based coverage of the elections, which will take place at the end of 2004. It offers yet another practical entry-point for gender mainstreaming in political reporting, election coverage and public relations, which is one of the three specialisations offered in the diploma programme.

There are also strong possibilities for synergies with GL’s thematic training for next year that will focus on gender and democracy, but will be conducted on-the-job rather than as off-site, in-service training. An important challenge will be to get buy-in from the whole department during the round-table meeting in September, as having all trainers on board is critical to gender mainstreaming.

Documenting the process and publicising it to the training community in the region is another important component of the project. GL and PON plan to organise a workshop with other entry-level trainers in the region through the SAMTRAN network.

8. Conclusions

8.1 Assessing impact

In his paper, “It’s the Training that Did It” Guy Berger of the Rhodes University Media Studies Department quotes Donald Kirkpartick’s four stages for assessing impact in any form of training:

- £ · Reaction: Did the learners like it?
- £ · Learning: Did they learn it?
- £ · Application: Did they use it?
- £ · Results/pay off: Did it make a difference?

At present, most media training in the region is only measured in terms of the first criteria (did the learners like it) through the administration of evaluation forms at the end of training courses. So far, this is mostly what we have to go on in assessing the impact of training in the gender mainstreaming projects.

Evaluations administered at the end of each of the IAJ courses suggest both that the learners liked the courses and that it opened their eyes. Many said they would apply this learning, as reflected in the following selection of comments:

- €# This module opened my world. I was not aware of the subtle nature of stereotyping, how this can be perpetuated through language, religion, etc.
- €# The issue of ethics and gender had never been brought to my attention or to the debating table. Our journalists have never been aware of these aspects. I’ll apply these lessons to change things.
- €# When we analysed the day’s newspapers, I realised that the messages that we send out are quite shocking.

- ≠ The (module) demonstrated just how our lives are so fundamentally shaped by race, class and gender. It is essential to understand this in order to change our thinking and in reporting race and gender as human values.

At the end of the academic year 2002 PON students filled out a questionnaire about their perceptions about the different components of the gender- mainstreaming project. These are few of their comments:

On the gender in media workshop and the monitoring assignment:

- ≠ "I learnt that there is a gender angle to every story which I did not know."
- ≠ "The workshop about gender was very informative and interesting. It is funny how journalists somehow overlook gender sensitivity. After the workshop I have really tried my best to do a story considering both sexes."
- ≠ "It raised an awareness in me about the importance of gender in a story. I read stories from a gender perspective, what role it plays in a story."

On the field trip:

- ≠ "The things we did was very useful, although it is sometimes difficult to bring the gender thing in one story. But we learned a lot."
- ≠ "I believe that if we get exposed to more assignments like the field trip regarding gender and community journalism, it will help us a lot, e.g. to interact with the community."

The real test is the extent to which such learning is applied, and further down the road whether it makes a difference. Five years from now, GL and MISA plan to repeat the baseline study. This will provide some measure of the extent to which training and advocacy work on gender and the media have made a difference.

In the medium term, GL, the PON and other partners would welcome a specific evaluation of the gender mainstreaming projects to track students and working media practitioners who have participated in such projects to their place of work to assess the extent to which learning is applied.

8.2. On-the-job training

In the course of engagements with editors on the findings of the GMBS, it has become apparent that an area where greater emphasis must be placed in the future is on- the- job training. The disadvantage of media training that takes place in the classroom or away from the newsroom is that journalists often return with innovative ideas to institutional environments that are not ready for change.

Until recently, GL training has engaged on-the-job concepts, without actually being on the job. The gender mainstreaming pilot projects have produced training supplements carried by mainstream newspapers such as the gender violence and HIV/AIDS supplements with ZAMCOM and the PON, and *Echoes* as part of the community journalism course with the PON.

The challenge now is to do on-the-job training *on the spot*. In the case of entry-level training, the gender and elections wire service planned by the PON, and GL's newsroom gender and democracy training provide an interesting new model for linking entry level training with on-the- job newsroom training.

8.3 Sustainability

Projects involving attitudes, like gender awareness, are often initiated and driven by one or two individuals in an organisation. Sustainability of such project, however success is deemed by other criteria, depends on the entire organisation adopting the process and its principles. For example, two lecturers have driven the Polytechnic project. The challenge remains to ensure that the entire department adopts the process.

As mentioned earlier the ZAMCOM approach of developing a gender policy alongside developing gender training tools and capacity is potentially a solid one for ensuring sustainability. This will be discussed with PON staff at the roundtable meeting in September.

8.4 Gender mainstreaming in university media training

Through its various training initiatives, GL has had considerable contact with university trainers who are interested in, and are developing approaches for gender mainstreaming in their curriculum. In some instances attempts are being made to link gender studies programmes with media training and to offer cross over courses.

There is considerable scope for sharing of experiences on gender mainstreaming in media education between universities, as well as between vocational training colleges and universities, such as the PON and University of Namibia. The authors hope that the "Media in Africa" conference, in which a number of trainers and media academics from around the region are participating, might provide the impetus for more collaborative efforts around gender and the media in higher education.

8.5 Innovative uses of information technology

In all areas and types of media education, there is considerable scope in the future for making more innovative uses of information technology. Despite the problems of access and connectivity, GL has followed up all its direct training with online backstopping support for those interested. Although only about twenty percent of participants have responded, those who have appear to have benefited from this opportunity.

As initiatives around on- the- job training develop, on-line support would seem to be a logical way of sustaining training that involves identifying and following through on story ideas. IT also offers exciting opportunities for peer support and networking among trainers. An issue that constantly arises in training is the usefulness of case studies and examples for training, as well as the ease with which these date in a business as perishable as the media.

In the latter half of 2003, GL will be indexing and archiving on- line all the rich case material to emerge from the GMBS. A workshop will then be held with media trainers around the region, especially those who have participated in the gender mainstreaming pilot projects, to discuss how this resource can be made into a "live" library through constant posting of examples that will be archived by GL as part of its Electronic Gender and Media (E-GEM) project.

This project will mean, to take one example, that the information writing and gathering training manual developed for Namibia by the PON, but with a separate compendium of local examples, can be used by other entry-level training institutions who can draw on the on-line resource for a wider variety of examples.

Multiplier effects such as these offer hope that the seed planted through a few strategically placed projects and interventions can, over the long-run, cascade into a much more sustained drive towards gender mainstreaming in media education.

Notes

1. For full texts see www.wacc.org.uk and www.genderlinks.org.za
2. These comments were aired regularly in the panel discussions with editors on the Gender and Media Baseline Study workshops organised in different Southern African countries between May and July 2003.
3. For more details see the publications section of the Gender Links website: www.genderlinks.org.za
4. The survey was conducted in March 2000 among media practitioners from print and electronic, state and private media houses in Namibia.
5. The Department of Media Technology at PON has adopted the term community journalism, but the approach is often referred to as civic or public journalism as well.

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