



Looking to the future.

Photo: Trevor Davies

● CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At 20% women sources, Namibia is ranked fifth in the region with Botswana, South Africa and Malawi after Lesotho (32%), Seychelles (31%), Madagascar (23%), and Tanzania (21%) in the SADC region. This is still way below the targets outlines in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development which calls for 50% representation in media by 2015.

The level of stereotyping has gone down in Namibian media, with women and men now being portrayed in a diversity of roles. Women now feature as miners and men as homemakers, which is a slight improvement from the Gender and Media Baseline study which revealed higher levels of blatant stereotyping in media.

This however does not mean that stereotypes do not exist. There is still lack of media diversity in sourcing as there are high proportions of single sourced stories in media at 58%.

At 81%, Namibia is ranked eighth in the region when it comes to use of primary sources in news. Zimbabwe has the highest proportion of primary sources with 92% followed by Lesotho at 90%.

Having more women in media does not necessarily translate to gender balance in news content. The Glass Ceiling research revealed that the proportion of women in top/senior positions is 37%. This is higher than the 20% proportion of news sources. This shows that having women in the media can only make a difference if strategies to mainstream gender are integrated into all aspects of media work.

The study shows that despite the MAP project, HIV and AIDS coverage has declined both in quantity and quality, although practices within newsrooms and the greater tendency to consult those most directly affected is welcome.

Key strategies for follow up will include:

Awareness raising and advocacy

- Awareness raising and engagement with the findings of this research at the Gender and Media Summit 2010 and follow up processes in country. The launch of the regional report at the Summit will provide a platform for further engagements.
- Engaging with the public/state media about their mandate to represent all the citizens in a country and to develop strategies to increase the women's voices in the news.

- Have a series of seminars in all SADC countries about the quality of journalism taking into account the high proportion of single source and anonymous source stories as well the stereotypical representations of women.

Women in and through the media: 50/50 by 2015

- Using the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development to advocate for gender equality in and through the media.

Policy

- Engage with media that have shown interest in creating enabling environment for women and men by developing gender policies. Namibia Broadcasting Corporation, Namibia Press Agency (NAMPA), Base FM and Live FM are some of the media houses that expressed willingness to develop gender policies.
- Provide support to organisations that have gender policies to implement more effectively.

Training

- Develop and run training courses for media on how to mainstream gender in news coverage.
- Work with Namibia institutions of higher learning and the public to develop a critical citizenry through gender and media literacy courses so that they may hold the media accountable. Gender and Media literacy is already being mainstreamed in journalism training at the University of Namibia (UNAM).

Gender based violence

- Train journalists on how to cover GBV, increase women's voices and how to extend the repertoire of topics that are currently being offered.
- Work with the media and civil society organisations to create safe spaces where women who have experienced gender based violence can speak out.

HIV and AIDS

- Engage with the media on increasing the coverage of HIV and AIDS as well as increasing women's and the voices of people living with HIV and AIDS in news coverage.
- Put the gender dimensions of HIV and AIDS on the media agenda through training; producing content; having regular exchanges of information and backstopping for journalists.

Media provisions in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development



Ensure gender is mainstreamed in all information, communication and media policies, programmes, laws and training in accordance with the Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport.

Encourage the media and media-related bodies to mainstream gender in their codes of conduct, policies and procedures, and adopt and implement gender-aware ethical principles, codes of practice and policies in accordance with the Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport.

Take measures to promote the equal representation of women in the ownership of, and decision-making structures of the media, in accordance with Article 12.1 that provides for equal representation of women in decision-making positions by 2015.

Take measures to discourage the media from:

- Promoting pornography and violence against all persons, especially women and children;
- Depicting women as helpless victims of violence and abuse;
- Degrading or exploiting women, especially in the area of entertainment and advertising, and undermining their role and position in society; and
- Reinforcing gender oppression and stereotypes.

Encourage the media to give equal voice to women and men in all areas of coverage, including increasing the number of programmes for, by and about women on gender-specific topics that challenge gender stereotypes.

Take appropriate measures to encourage the media to play a constructive role in the eradication of gender-based violence by adopting guidelines which ensure gender-sensitive coverage.

www.genderlinks.org.za



Photo: Sikhonzile Ndlovu

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