



The voices of informal traders were absent from the media coverage of World Cup 2010.

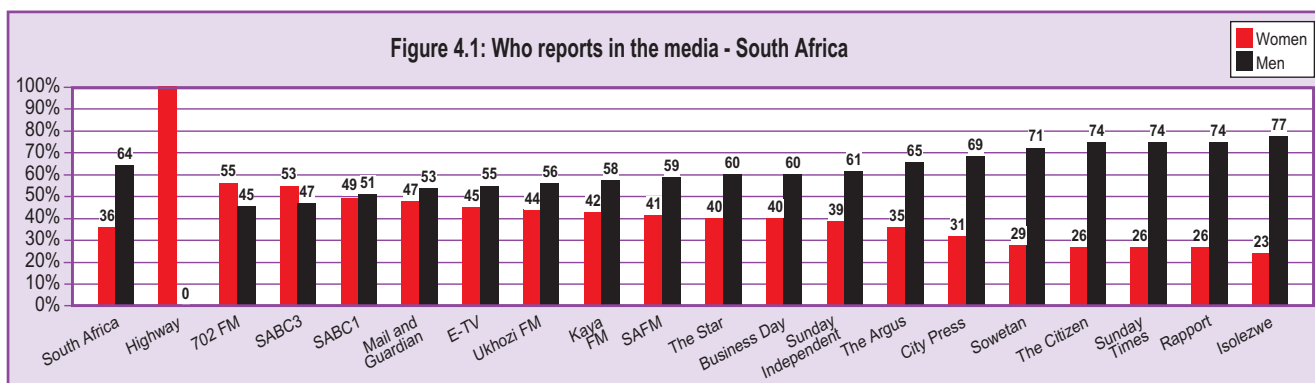
Photo: Jennifer Lewis

GENDER IN NEWSROOMS

The *Glass Ceiling Study* (2009) which explored the institutional composition of media houses in Southern Africa revealed that in South Africa women make up 50% of the staff in media houses; 25% of those in top management and 35% of those in senior management. The study also showed that women are more likely to be assigned to soft beats rather than men.

To the extent that the GMPS monitored news content, it gives us only a glimpse at those who create the news in so far as they are reflected in news content as reporters, presenters and writers. However, it is useful to cross reference the findings of the Glass Ceilings research with the GMPS. This chapter also makes important links between those who create the news and content, such as whether women journalists access more women sources, and whether having more women in management and as reporters makes a difference?

Reporters

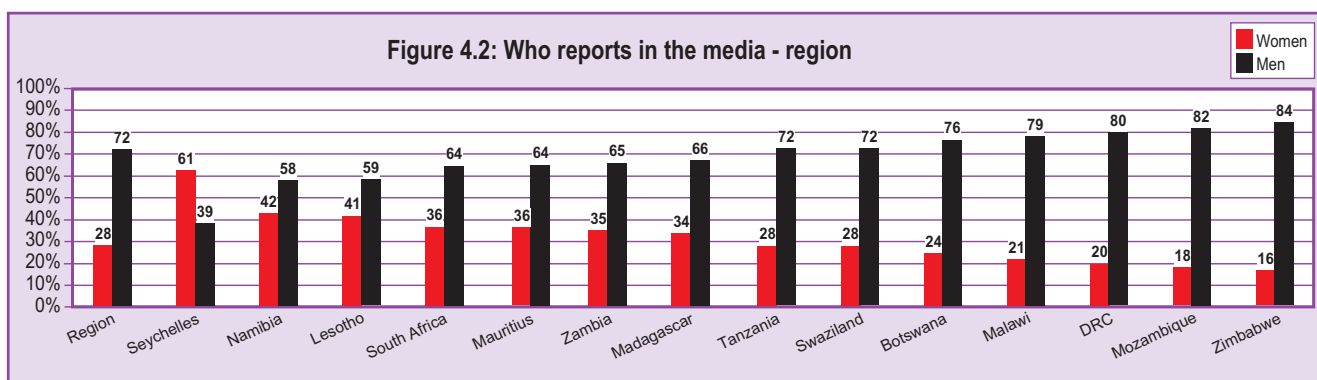


As illustrated in figure 4.1 women constituted 36% of those reporting during the monitoring period. The Glass Ceiling report that encompassed all media employees (including management, administration, technical and other backroom workers) found that women constituted 50% of the total.

In South Africa the proportion of women journalists in the media ranges from 23 to 100%. All the stories produced by *Highway Radio*, a community radio station, during the monitoring period were women. *Radio 702* (55%) and *SABC 3* (53%) had over 50% women reporting during the monitoring period.

Between 40-49% women reporters produced news stories at the *SABC 1* (49%), the *Mail and Guardian* (47%), *eTV* (45%), *Ukhozi FM* (44%), *Kaya FM* (42%), *SAFM* (41%), *The Star* (41%) and *Business Day* (40%) during the monitoring period. The finding for women reporters at the *Sunday Independent* (39%), *The Argus* (35%) and *City Press* (31%) was between 30-39%. *The Sowetan* (29%), *The Citizen* (28%), *Sunday Times* (26%), *Rapport* (26%) and *Isolezwe* (23%) were below 30%.

Of the 19 institutions that were monitored only two media registered more than 50% women journalists during the monitoring period. There is need for the media to engage with increasing the numbers women journalists in newsroom and media houses.

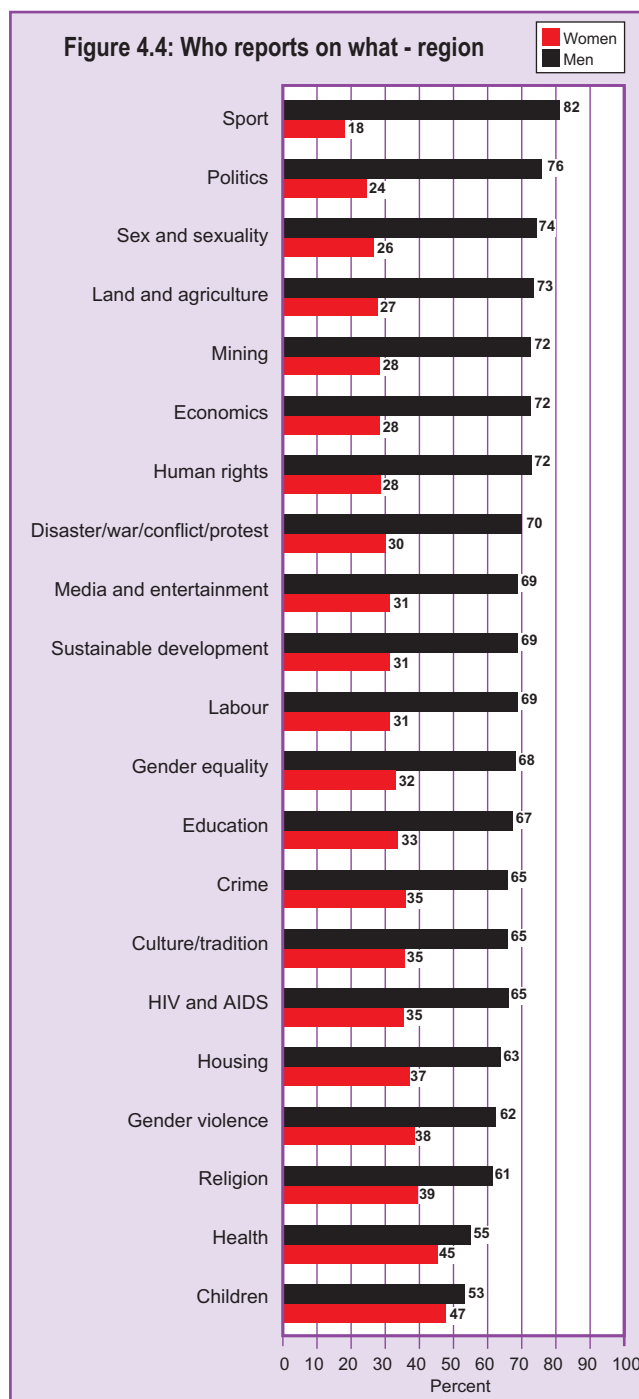
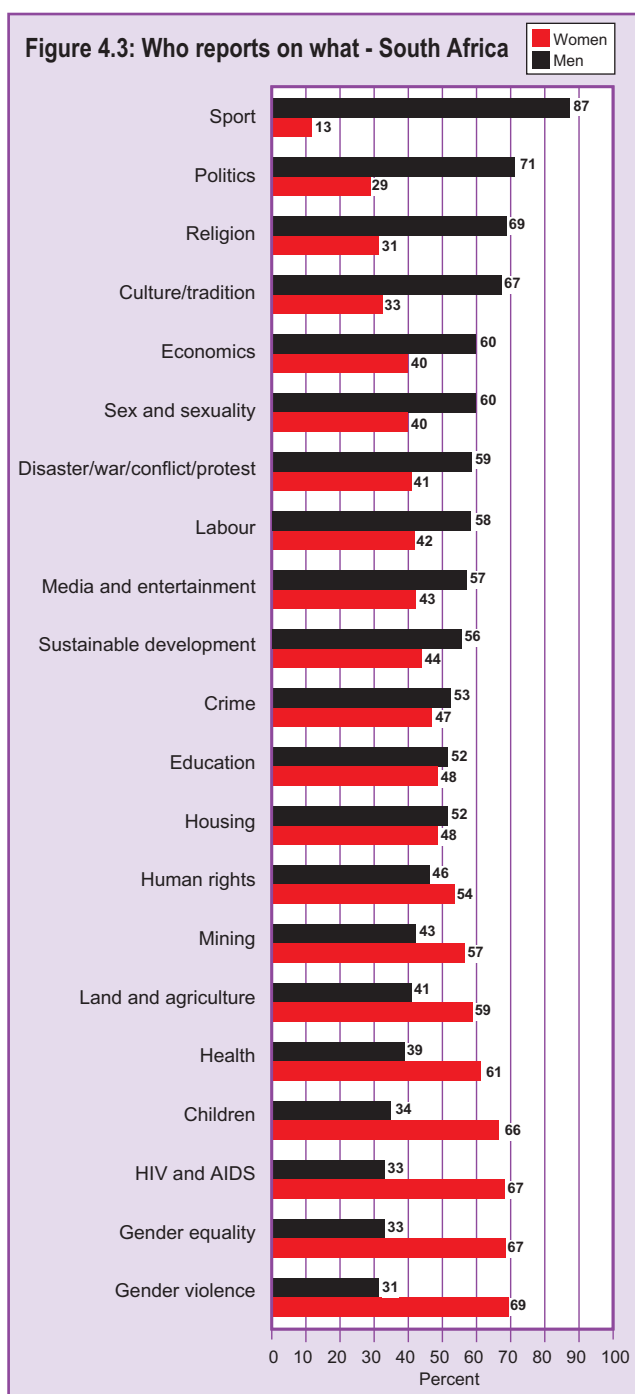


As illustrated in figure 4.2, the GMPS, which only reflects journalists, shows that across the region women constitute 28% of those who report and present the news. Journalists were included in the professional category in the Glass Ceilings research.

In South Africa women constituted 42% of the professionally qualified category. The proportion of women reporters in the South Africa GMPS is 36%. South Africa is ranked fourth after the Seychelles (61%), Namibia (42%) and Lesotho (41%).

Zimbabwe (14%) has the lowest proportion of women reporters. This figure is consistent with the Glass Ceiling findings which has also found that Zimbabwe has the lowest proportion of women employees.

Who reports on what?



Beats over time

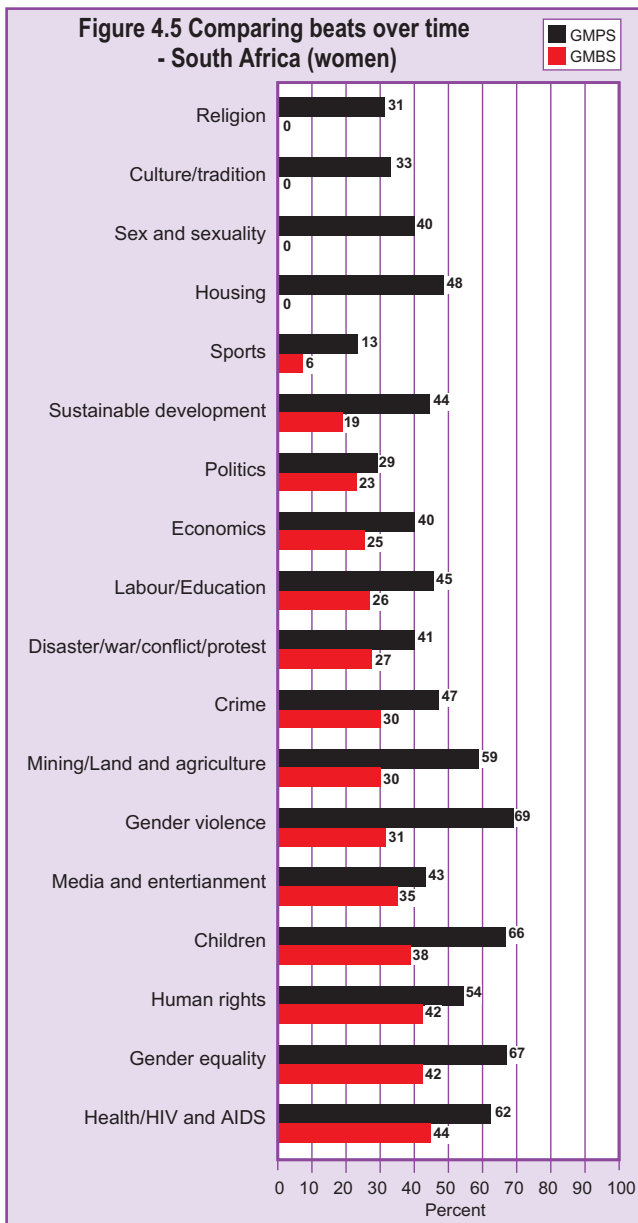
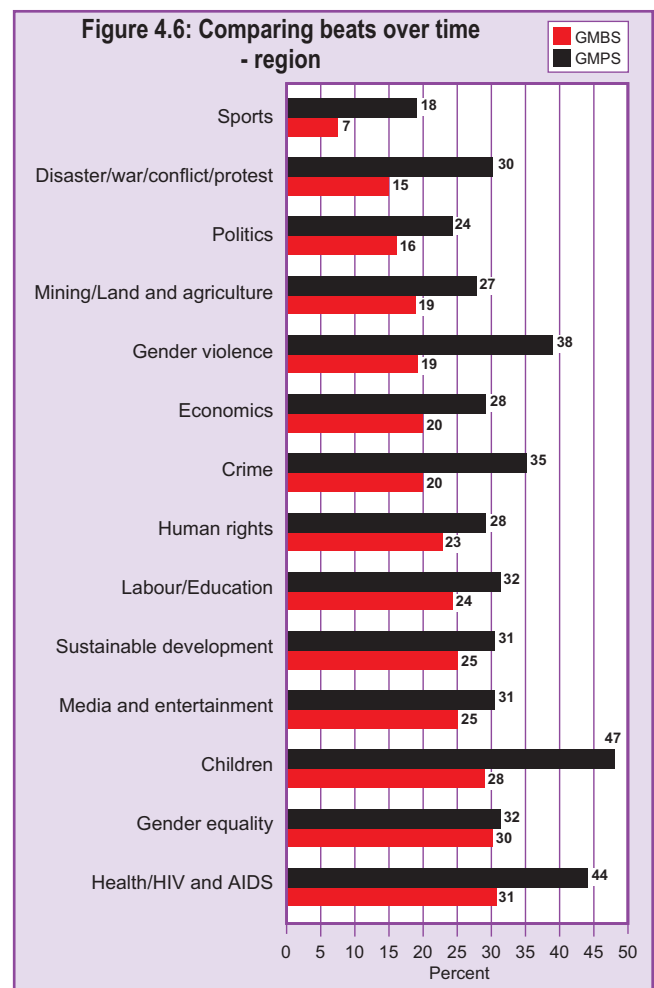


Figure 4.5 shows that there has been a marked shift in the types of beats that are covered by women in South Africa since the GMBS. They have moved away from concentrating on “soft” beats in a significant proportion to cover more hard news. There has been increase in women reporting in every beat and women covering new areas such as religion, culture and tradition, sex and sexuality and housing.



There have also been significant increases in the areas that women traditionally cover such as children (38% to 66%), gender-based violence (31% to 69%) and gender equality (42% to 67%). This does mean that male reporters are not reporting on issues that are seen as women's issues. This needs to be addressed.

Figure 4.6 shows that the proportion of women reporters has increased across all beats in the region. In particular the proportion of women covering sports has increased from 7% to 18%. These changes are beginning to break down the gender division of labour in newsroom.

Reporters and presenters

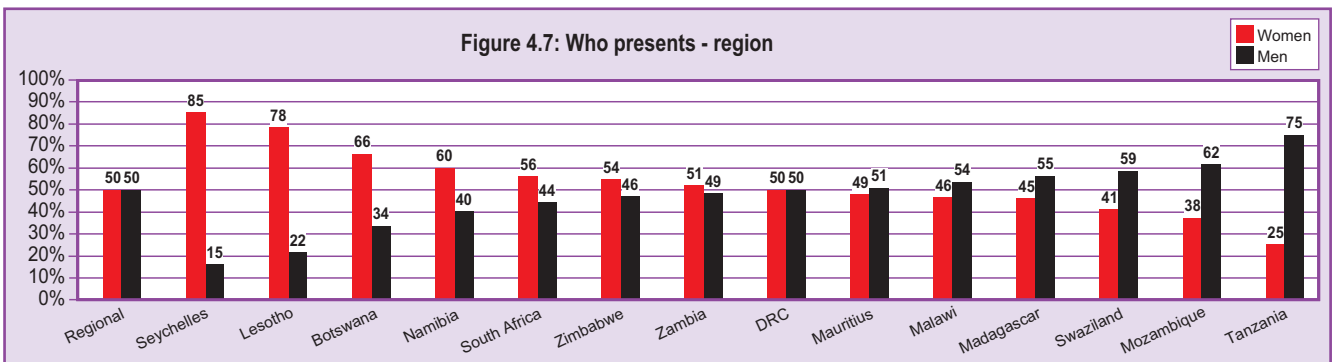
Table eight provides a breakdown of the number of women presenters in television and radio as well as the number of women reporters in television, radio and print media in South Africa and the region. While, in the past, there has been a definite predominance of women as presenters in television, this is not a significant finding in the GMPS South Africa.

The highest proportion of women is in the radio presenter category. At 57%, South Africa has a significantly higher proportion of women as radio presenters than the regional average of 41%. The finding for radio reporters is similar, where South Africa has 54% women as radio reporters, while the region has 30%.

The low proportion of women reporters (33%) in the print media is of concern. This is mirrored in the region where women constitute 25% of those reported in the print media during the monitoring period.

Table eight: Breakdown of women reporters and presenters - South Africa and region

Category	% South Africa	% Region
TV presenters	55	58
Radio presenters	57	41
TV reporters	49	42
Radio reporters	54	30
Print reporters	33	25



As in the case of the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), which found that women constitute 52% of presenters, the GMPS found there are equal proportions of women and men presenters in the region. In South Africa, female presenters account for 56% of the total. At 85%, Seychelles has the highest proportion of women presenters followed by Lesotho with 78% and Botswana with 66%. Tanzania has the lowest figure (25%). The findings on women presenters (compared with print reporters who comprise 33% of the total in South Africa and 25% regionally) underscore the fact that in the media women are still valued more for their physical than intellectual attributes.

Making a difference?

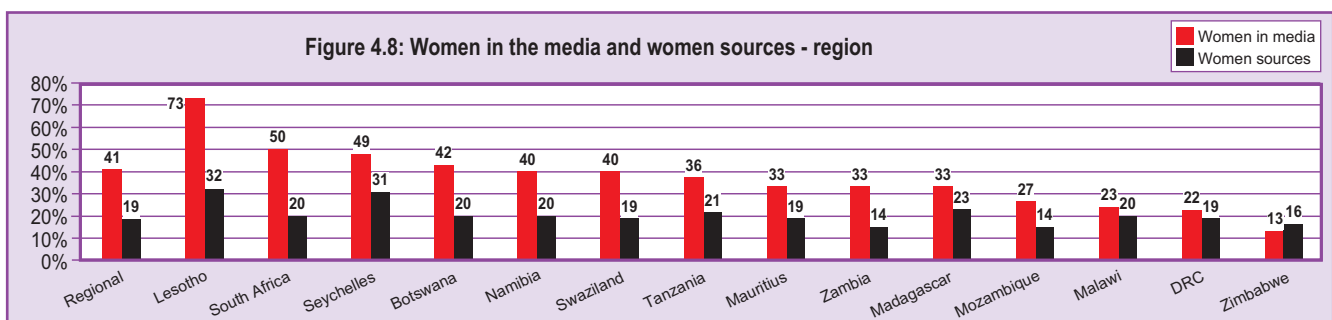


Figure 4.8 compares the data in the Glass Ceiling study on the overall presence of women in media houses with the proportion of women sources for each country. This shows that having more women in the media does not necessarily result in a higher proportion of women sources.

While the proportion of women in media in the region is 41%, there are just 19% women sources. South Africa has 50% women in media and 20% women news sources. The presence of women in media is not an end in itself. There is evidence of the need to raise gender awareness and change mindsets of the women who work in the media in the region.

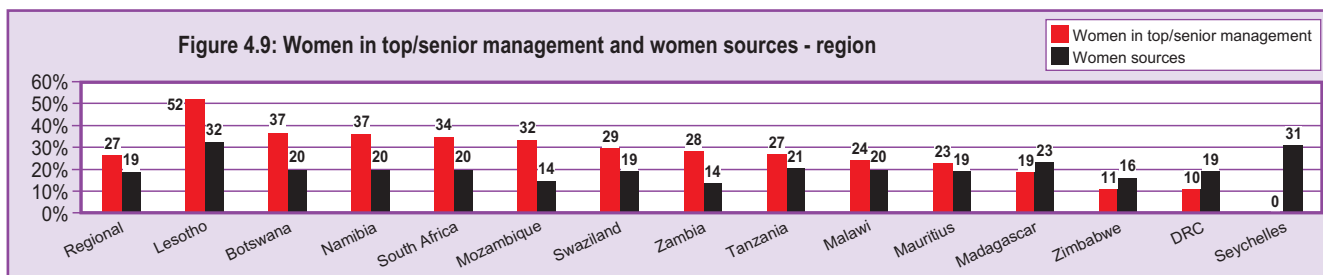


Figure 4.9 compares the proportion of women in top/senior and management positions in the Glass Ceiling to the proportion of women sources and also finds that there is no direct correlation. Across the region, women constitute 27% of decision-makers, but only 19% of women sources. Seychelles has no women in top/senior management positions but still has the second-highest proportion of women sources in the region. In South Africa, women make up 34% of those in decision making positions, but only 20% women sources.



In one of the most important revelations of this study, however, figure 4.10 shows that women reporters are more likely to access women sources more than men. A measure designed by the GMMP and used in the regional study for the first time, the research found that across the region women sources account for 31% of the total in stories reported by women, as opposed to 15% in the case of men. The comparative figures globally are 26% for women and 19% for men.

In South Africa, women reporters access 29% women sources and men reporters access 16% women sources. These findings suggest that while increasing the proportion of women in the media overall, and the proportion of women managers specifically, makes little difference to gender responsiveness of news content, increasing the presence of women *journalists* in the media does make a difference.

Conclusion

Participants confirmed that media houses have not created gender friendly environments. This was a key finding in the GL research, *Glass ceilings: Women and Men in Southern African media houses*.

The reality facing most journalists is multiple roles and responsibilities in the work place and in the home. Work places should have policies and practices in place to support women in their multiple roles.

There are still stereotypes in how women and men are assigned beats. The notion of which beats are hard and soft needs to be debated and reconceptualised. To classify issues such as HIV and AIDS and gender-based violence as soft beats is inappropriate. Both issues have serious social, economic and political angles.

An equally damaging stereotype is that the economy is the preserve of men, this is both in relation to who covers economics as well as the content and sources.