



Emsie Erastus, GL intern, monitoring radio programmes for the GMPS.

Photo: Gender Links

● CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Single-source stories dominate news coverage in the South African media. The level of gender stereotyping in the South African is still problematic. Women still predominate in areas such as homemakers, beauty contestants and social workers.

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 25%. 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 issues are integrated into all aspects of media work.

However, having more women journalists does make a difference. Women journalists access significantly more women sources than men reporters.

The study shows that despite the MAP project, HIV and AIDS coverage has declined both in quantity and quality, although practices in 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 the 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 entities that have shown interest in creating an enabling environment for women and men by developing gender policies. Provide support to organisations that have gender policies to implement them more effectively.

Training

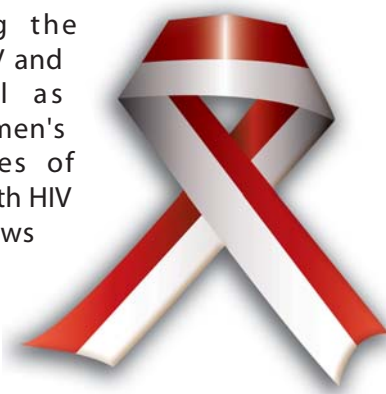
- Develop and run training courses for media members on how to mainstream gender in news coverage.
- Work with institutions of higher learning and the public to develop a critical citizenry through gender and media literacy courses so that they may hold the media accountable.

Gender-based violence

- Train journalists on how to cover gender-based violence, increase women's voices and how to extend the repertoire of topics that are 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: Gender Links

Susan Mogari monitoring the Business Day during the GMPS.

