



Journalists from MUVI TV at work in the newsrooms in Lusaka, Zambia.

Photo: Thabani Mpofu

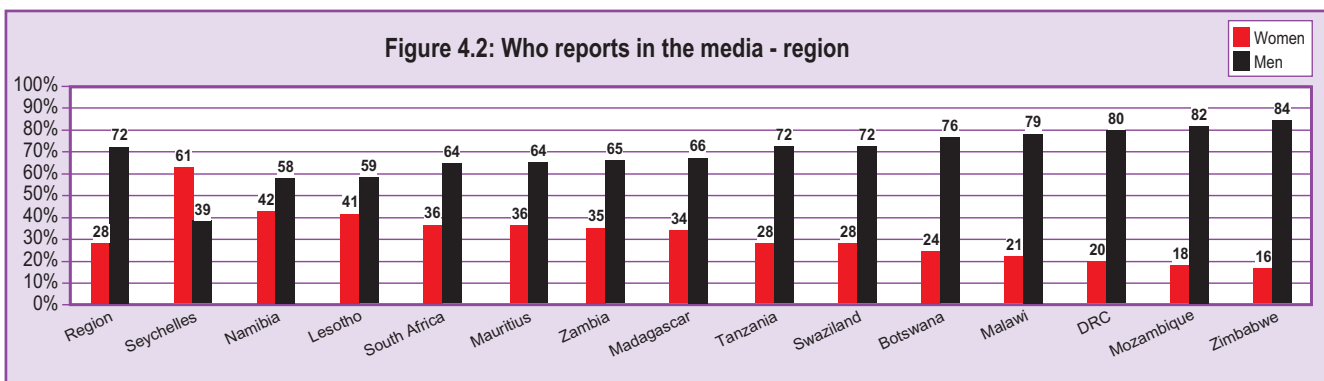
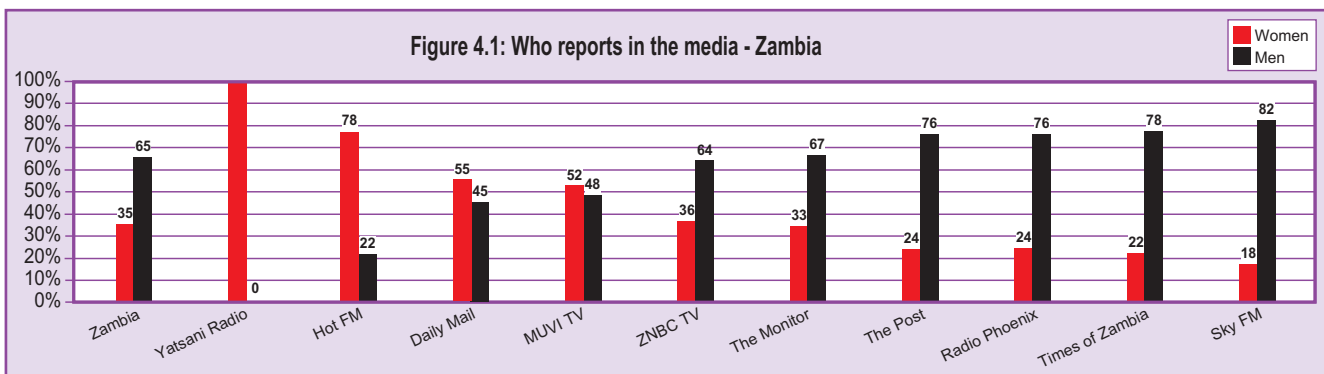
GENDER IN NEWSROOMS

The *Glass Ceiling* study, which explored the institutional composition of media houses in Southern Africa in 2009, revealed that Zambian women make up only 11% of those in top management and a third of those in senior management. The study also showed that women are more likely to be assigned to soft beats than men. Insofar as the GMPS monitored news content, only a glimpse at those who create the news was evident, insofar 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 female journalists seek more female sources and whether having more women in management and as reporters make a difference to women's representation in the media.

Reporters



As illustrated in figure 4.1, women constituted 35% 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 40% of the total.

In Zambia, the proportion of women reporters ranged from 100% in *Yatsani Radio* to 18% in *Sky Radio*. *Hot FM* had the second highest proportion of women reporters at 78% followed by *Zambia Daily Mail* with 55%. *Times of Zambia* (22%) and *Radio Phoenix* (24%) have fewer women reporters compared to other media.

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. Zambia (35%) comes fifth while Zimbabwe (14%) has the lowest proportion of women reporters. This figure is consistent with the *Glass Ceiling* that also found that Zimbabwe had the lowest proportion of women employees.



Men dominate the visual media.

Photo: Frank Windeck

Who reports on what?

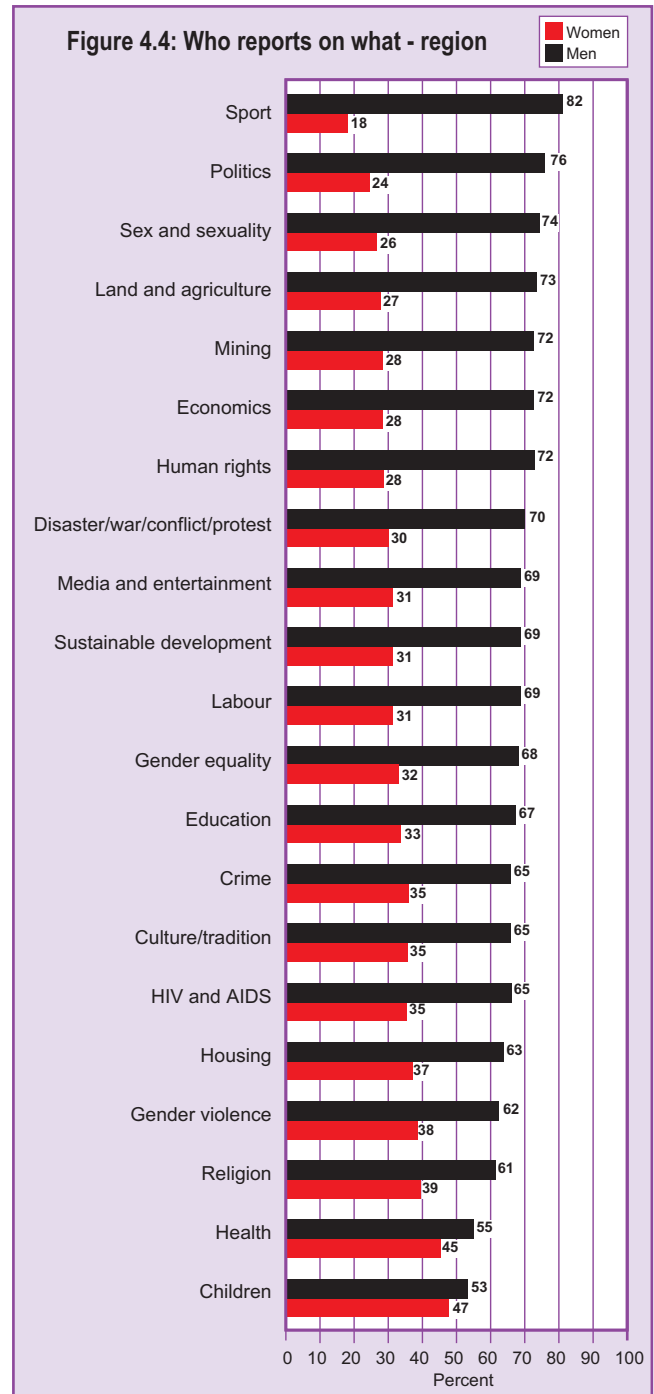
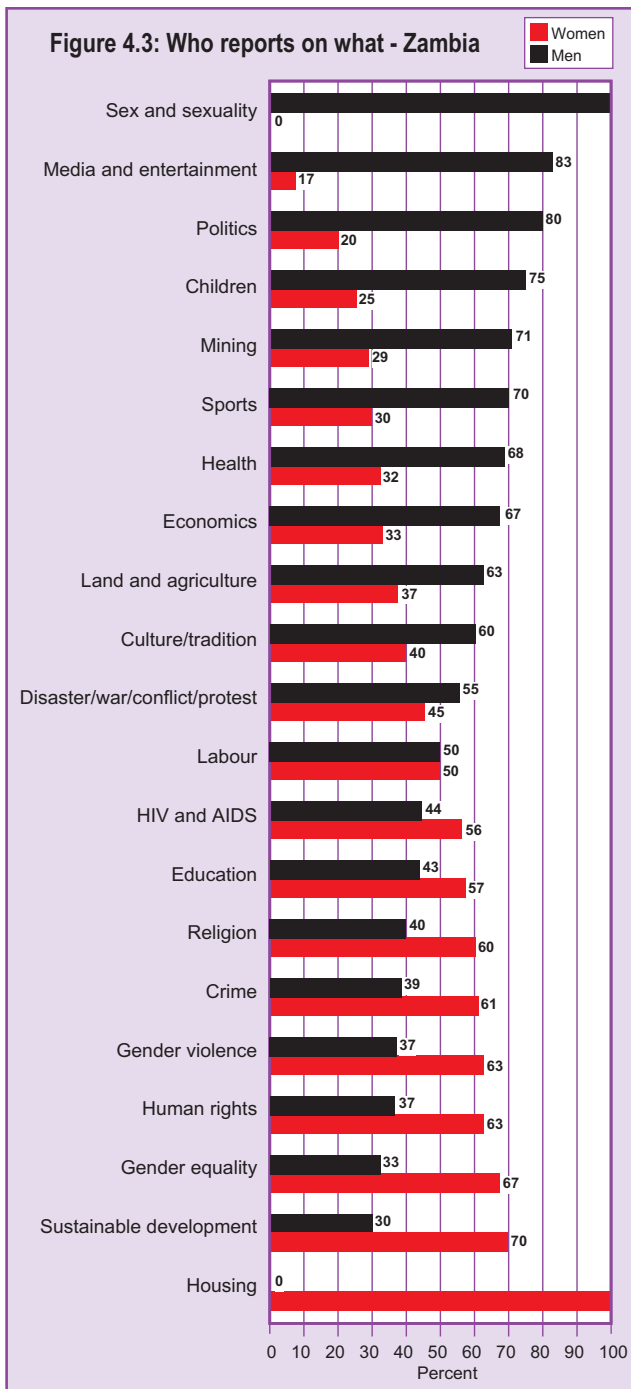


Figure 4.3 concerns the stories covered by women and men in Zambia, while figure 4.4 gives comparative data for the region. In Zambia women report the most on housing (100%), sustainable development (which increased from 43% in the *Glass Ceilings* study to 70) and gender equality (67%), GBV and human rights, both at 63%.

Men reporters in the region are also covering the topics traditionally seen as women's or soft issues.

Men reporters cover topics such as children, health, housing and gender violence. In the past GBV has been mostly reported on by women. Sex and sexuality is a topic covered by men reporters more than women.

Across the region, reflecting the low proportion of women reporters generally, men are in the majority of those reporting on all beats. However, they are more heavily concentrated in the soft than the hard beats.

Beats over time

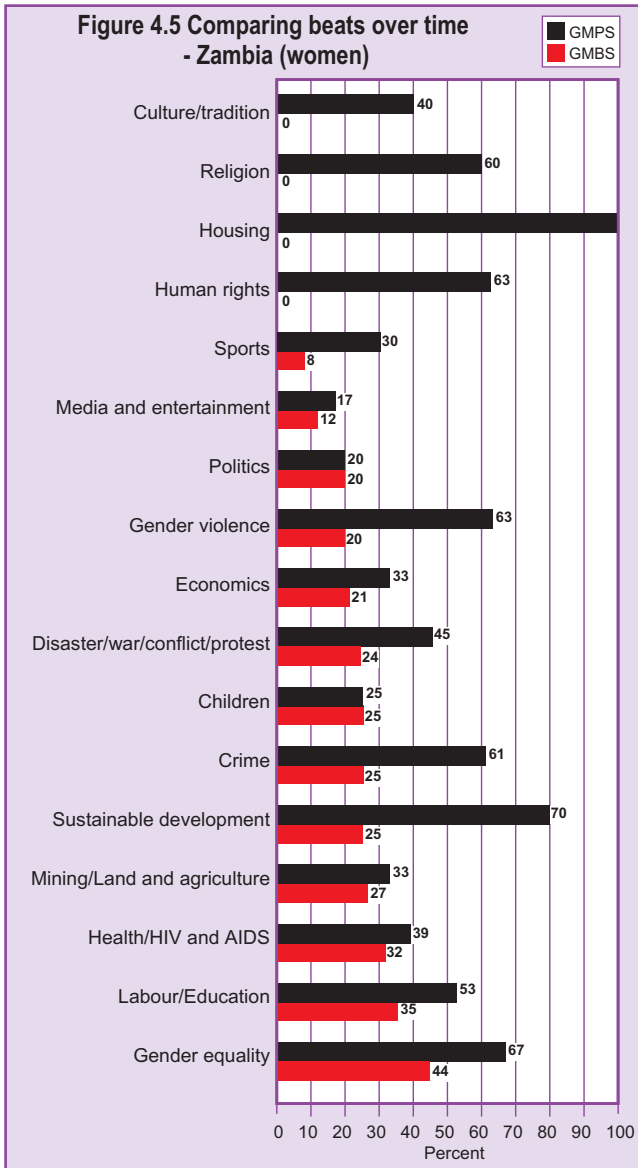
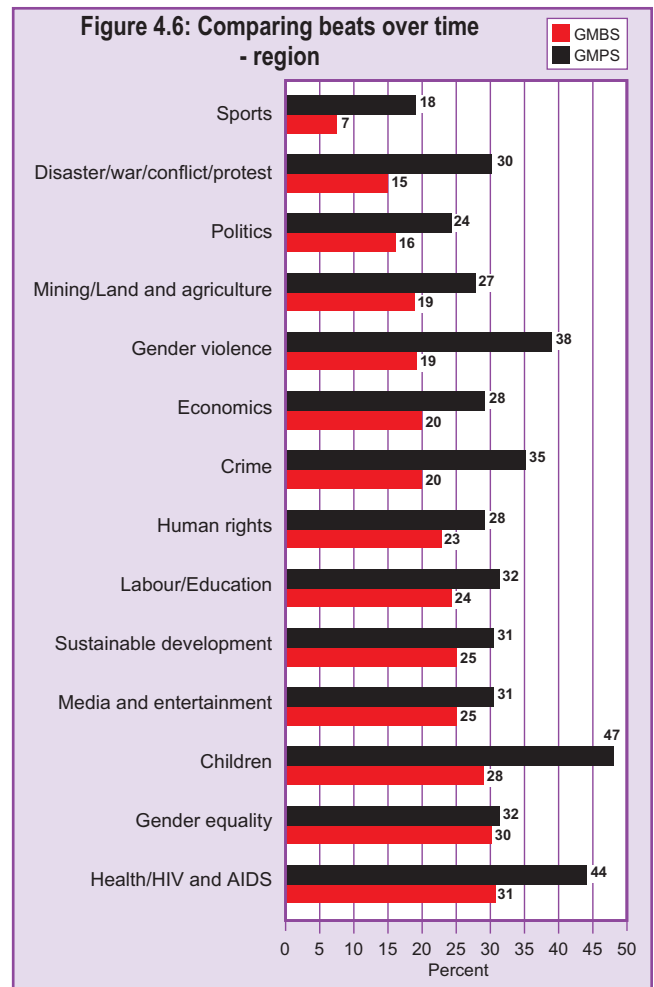


Figure 4.5 shows that there have been some positive changes over the past seven years on the beats that women cover in Zambia. Women have made progress in covering beats that were usually men's preserve. The proportion of women journalists covering sustainable development, human rights, crime, disaster, war, conflict, protests, and sport has increased. They however predominate in covering soft beats with housing accounting for 100%, gender equality (67%) and gender violence (63%). They have also not made any progress in covering politics where they remained at 20% and children's issues 25%.

Figure 4.6 shows that there have been some positive changes over the last seven years in the beats that women cover regionally. Women are making progress in beats that were formerly men's preserve.



The proportion of women journalists covering sustainable development, human rights, crime, disaster, war, conflict and protests, as well as sport, has increased. Women, however, dominate in covering soft beats, with housing accounting for 100%, gender equality (67%) and GBV (63%). They have also not made any progress in covering politics, where they remained at 20% and children's issues 25%.

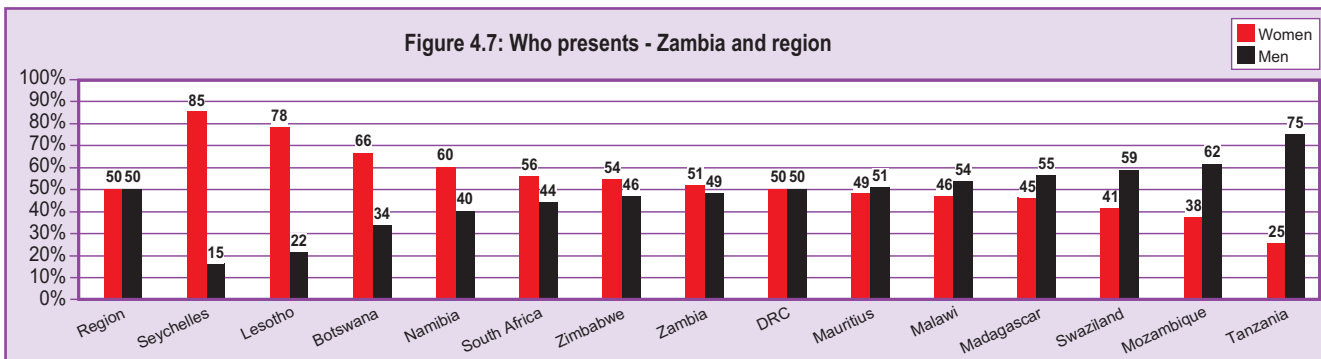
Table eight: Breakdown of women reporters and presenters - Zambia and region

Category	% Zambia	% Region
TV presenters	45	58
Radio presenters	54	41
TV reporters	49	42
Radio reporters	32	30
Print reporters	34	25

Table seven provides a breakdown of the number of women television, radio and print reporters as

well as presenters in Zambia and the region. Women are better represented as radio presenters where they make up 54% of presenters. This is followed by television reporters at 49% representation. They are least represented as radio reporters.

In the region, the pattern is different with women dominating as TV presenters followed by TV reporters. They are least represented as print reporters.



As in the case of the GMMP, which found that women constitute 52% of presenters, the GMPS found there are equal proportions of women and men presenters in the region (see Figure 4.7). In Zambia, female presenters account for 51% of the total. The DRC is the only country with precisely equal proportions of women and men presenters. At 85%, Seychelles has the highest proportion of women presenters, followed by Lesotho with 78% and Botswana with 66%. Tanzania has the lowest figure at 25%.

Making a difference?

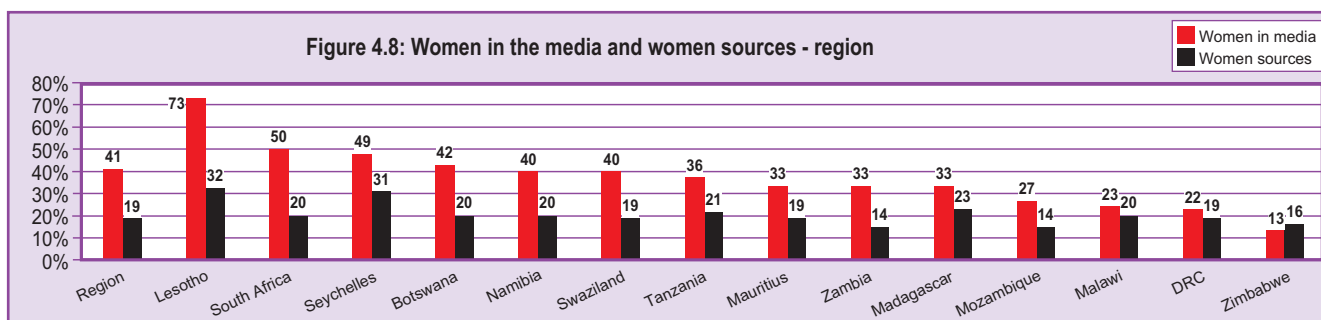


Figure 4.8 compares the data in the Glass Ceiling study on the overall presence of women in media houses with the proportion of women sources for each country. This shows that having more women in the media does not necessarily result in a higher proportion of women sources.

While the proportion of women in media in the region is 41%, there is just a fifth of women sources. Zambia has a third of women in media and 14% women as 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.

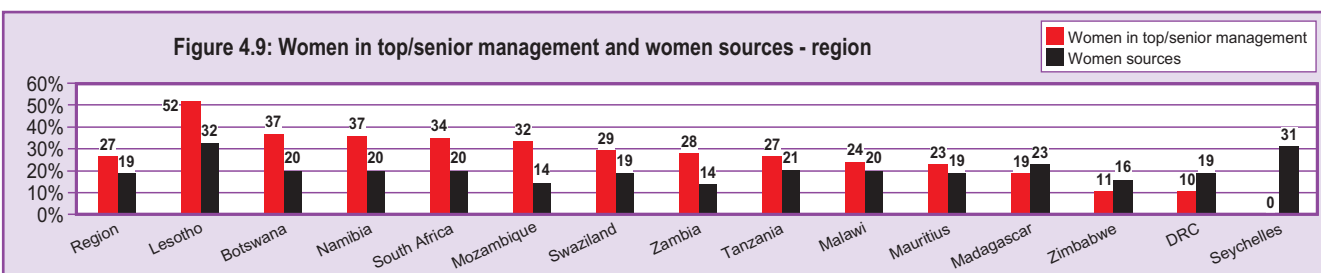
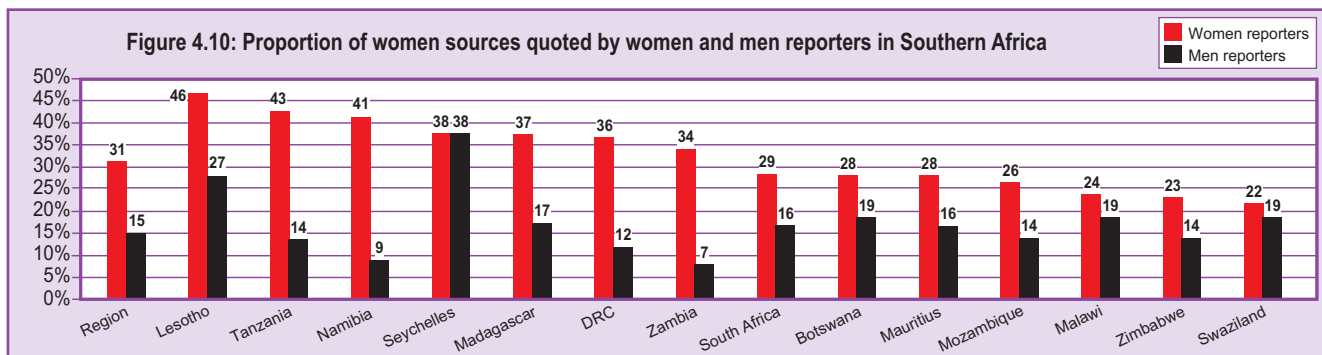


Figure 4.9 compares the proportion of women in top and senior management in the *Glass Ceiling* study to the proportion of women sources and also finds that there is no direct correlation. Across the region, women constitute 27% of decision makers, but only 19% of female sources. Seychelles has no women in top and senior management positions, but conversely has the second-highest proportion of women sources in the region. In Zambia, women make up 28% of those in decision-making positions, but only 14% of women sources.



One of the most important revelations of this study, however, as shown in figure 4.10, is that women reporters are more likely to seek women sources more than men.

A measure designed by the global 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 Zambia, this is even more starkly contrasted: 34% in the case of women and 7% in the case of men. These findings suggest that while increasing the proportion of women in the media overall, and the proportion of women managers specifically, it makes little difference to gender responsiveness to news content, but that increasing the presence of women journalists in the media does make a difference.

Conclusions

During the consultative workshop for the GMPS, the guest of honour, Christine Kalamwina, who is the Director of social, legal and governance in the cabinet office; gender in the development division, observed that while the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development calls for measures to be taken to promote equal representation of women in the media at all levels, this has not been achieved in Zambia.

Said Kalamwina: “This has been evidenced in the results of the research studies carried out so far. The government of Zambia will support the measures, strategies and practical ways of ensuring that Zambia increases the participation of women in the key decision-making positions in the media fraternity, including that of ownership of media houses.”

Friday Phiri, news editor of *Yatsani Radio*, said the reason that there are so few women in the newsrooms is because journalism does not pay well. Phiri noted that at *Yatsani Radio* there are more female reporters because they are working as volunteers in the Catholic-run station. He said volunteers come for experience and “once they get it they leave and even in the mainstream media female journalists go there for experience”.

George Chomba, news editor of the *Daily Mail* said that, over the years he has worked with journalism students coming as interns in his newsroom, he has observed that they study to pass examinations and not to make a mark in the field: “They do not know the job. They do not know the basics of journalism, which include balancing of sources. As news editor it becomes difficult to enforce those basics in view of the tight deadlines.”

The findings of the GMPS show that having more female journalists does result in greater gender balance and sensitivity. This needs to be reinforced through policy, training and gender awareness.