

GENDER AND MEDIA IN THE 2009 MOZAMBIQUE ELECTION



Yvone Soares, a Mozambican politician, prepares for a mock television interview with journalists Bayano Valy and Mathieu Bron.



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Acknowledgments

Gender Links (GL) would like to acknowledge the support of Ericino De Salema, senior journalist and member of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), who worked toward ensuring gender equality in governance. Gender Links Board Member Ruth Ayisi has been at the forefront of this project, trying to ensure that women actively participate in governance and are partners in dictating the pace of development and democracy in their country.

Ayisi also conducted the gender, elections and media workshops in Mozambique.

This project was made possible with funding from UKaid through the Department for International Development (DFID).

Chapter one: Overview



Women voters prepare to cast their votes in October 2009

Synopsis

This report provides an overview of the gender, elections and media project run by Gender Links (GL), in partnership with the Gender and Media Southern Africa Network (GEMSA) during the October 2009 elections in Mozambique.

The project forms part of a region-wide campaign to increase women's political representation and participation in line with the 2008 Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development, that aims to achieve gender parity in all areas of decision-making by 2015.

GL conceptualised the project, including tracking those countries conducting elections and organising training for media and women politicians. The project covers all SADC countries holding elections at national, provincial and local level between 2009 and 2011. These include: Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa and Tanzania.

In Mozambique, leadership of parties is male-dominated and there are few women represented in political party structures. However, women are present in political commissions and at the national council of the parties. A total of 98 women were elected into parliament in the October 2009 election. In 2004, 87 women made it into parliament. This represents an increase of 4.4 percentage points from 34.8% in 2004 to 39.2 in 2009.¹

¹ http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2223_04.htm

There are no legislated or constitutionally mandated quotas for women's representation in political parties in Mozambique. The ruling party, The Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO), has a voluntary quota of 35% women's representation while opposition party Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO), has a 30% voluntary quota.

Across the SADC region, South Africa has the highest number of women in parliament at 42%, followed by Angola at 36%. Countries such as Botswana and Namibia have gone backwards following recent elections, while Mauritius made marginal gains recently: moving forward one percentage point to 18%. Women's representation in parliament in Botswana currently stands at 7.9% down from 11%, and Namibia slid from 30.8 to 24%.

Objectives

The project aimed to:

- Assist the media in understanding how gender equality is integral to citizenship, democracy and freedom of expression.
- Gauge the extent to which the SADC Protocol targets of 50% by 2015 are being honoured.
- Improve media coverage of politics and elections.
- Enhance the capacity of women leaders to engage strategically with the media.
- Conduct a gender audit of the elections.

Country context

Mozambique is located in southeastern Africa and is bordered by the Indian Ocean to the east, Tanzania to the north, Malawi and Zambia to the northwest, Zimbabwe to the west and Swaziland and South Africa to the southwest. It is divided into ten provinces and one capital city, Maputo, with provincial status. Its provinces are then subdivided into 129 districts which are further divided into 405 Administrative Posts and Localities, the lowest geographical level of the central state administration.

Women's participation in district level planning forums is low; therefore, women have little voice to influence resource allocation decisions at this level.

Currently Mozambique has 43 Municipalities, with an executive branch headed by the mayor and the legislative municipal assemblies, 42 of these are dominated by FRELIMO. With a population of 20.4 million (INE 2008), of which 10.5 million are women, Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world, partly due to its 16-year civil war which lasted from 1977 to 1992.

During the civil war, as many as one million Mozambicans were killed through fighting and famine, but following the 1992 Peace Agreement, Mozambique witnessed a period of



stability and economic growth which has continued into the present, despite interruptions by flooding in 2001 and 2002 which destroyed much of the country's infrastructure.

Seventy percent of Mozambicans live in rural areas, where the majority are subsistence farmers. Frequent droughts in the country's interior over recent years have caused large scale migration to urban and coastal areas, leading to overcrowding and environmental degradation. Nearly half of the population is under 18 years of age, with 44% under 15.

Although Mozambique has experienced significant growth, it continues to face many obstacles, including natural disasters, which underscore its continued vulnerability. The country still struggles with a rapidly worsening HIV and AIDS epidemic which disproportionately harms women and girls, both directly and indirectly. Apart from the impact of HIV and AIDS and other natural factors, traditional and cultural practices are some of the factors hampering women's advancement in Mozambique.

Mozambique is heavily donor dependent. Between 1997 and 2003, Mozambique achieved astonishing rates of growth driven primarily by investments in physical capital, private sector growth and the infusion of donor aid. Since 1999, the government has implemented a comprehensive programme to address poverty (PRSP-PARPA), investing in social and economic infrastructure aimed at extending access to public services, reducing welfare inequities, and supporting livelihoods. However, these services are often inaccessible for many poor families, especially women and girls. In March 2006, the government approved the National Gender Policy and Strategy (PGEI) and in December 2007, the government approved the National Plan for the Advancement of Women. For the most part, the government and donor's attention to women's rights and gender equality issues has been concentrated in the areas of health and education; progressive legislation in the context of extremely weak implementation and lack of government accountability and transparency; and gender mainstreaming in development programmes.

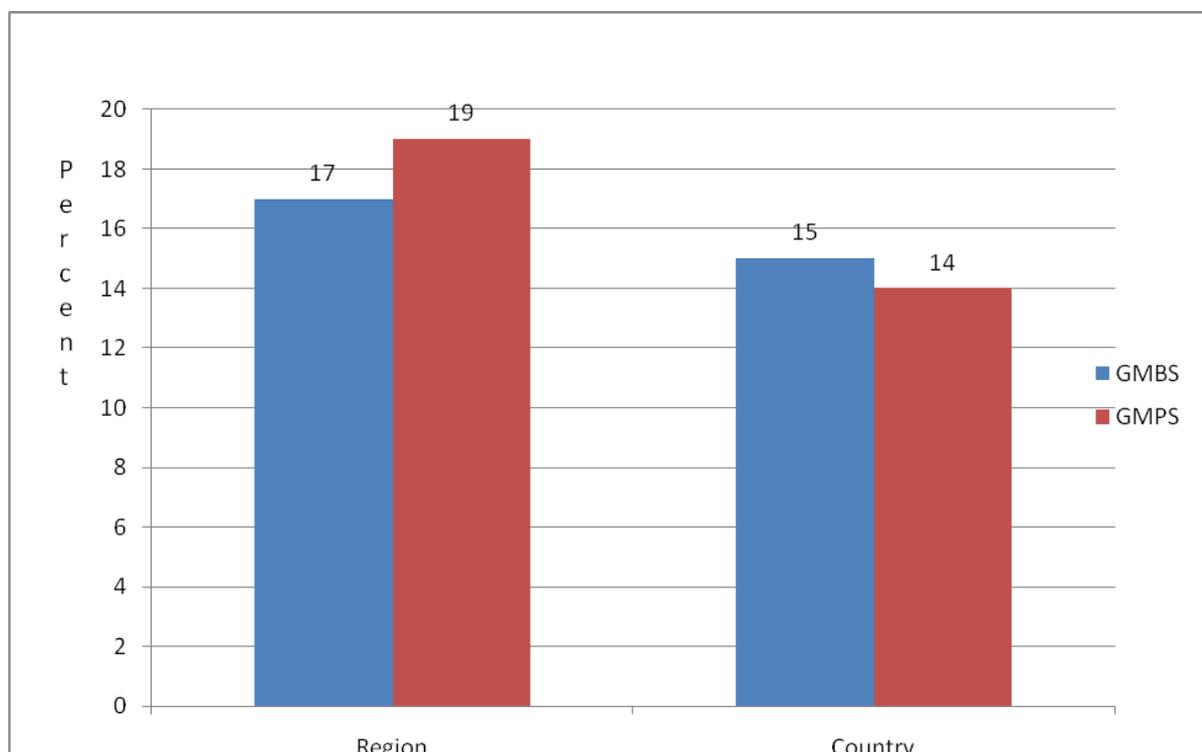
The country is ranked 165 out of 169 in the UN's Human Development Index, and estimates on the number of people living in poverty range from 54 to 70% (UNDP 2010, UNICEF 2007).

Gender, politics and media

Generally female politicians have a difficult relationship with the public and the media, often bearing the brunt of negative media portrayal compared to their male counterparts. On the other hand, some members of the media have argued that women politicians are less accessible than their male counterparts. This project, therefore, brings women politicians and the media together to engage honestly and constructively on issues of mainstreaming gender in political coverage.

GL, in partnership with the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), undertook the Gender and Media Baseline Study in 2003 that formed the backdrop of the Gender and Media Summit in September 2004. This led to the formation of the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Network, with GL and MISA as founding institutional members.

Figure one: Women and men as news sources GMBS and GMPS – Mozambique and region



As illustrated in figure one, the GMBS found that women constituted 17% of news sources in Southern Africa. In the 2010 Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS) the proportion of women sources increased regionally from 17 to 19%. Mozambique, however, went down one percentage point from 15 to 14%.

Key components

The project included the following strategic interventions:

- Training journalists to report on the gender dimensions of elections and election coverage.
- Training women politicians on gender in elections and how to interact with the media more effectively.
- General engagement with the media.
- Gender audit of the elections.

Outputs

The outputs included:

- Women politicians, as well as media practitioners from print and electronic media, were trained around relevant gender and political issues.
- Profiles and photographs of women politicians.
- Training resource material on gender, elections and the media contributed to the GL Virtual Resource Centre. Several examples of media clippings and case studies were collected and produced during the period.
- Election story ideas that mainstream gender.

Outcomes

Outcomes that can be directly attributed to the project include:

- Greater awareness among participants of the role of media during elections.
- Media empowered to design gender-aware programmes and news broadcasts.
- Media practitioners empowered to mainstream gender in election coverage.
- Women politicians educated to engage critically with the media.

Next steps

- Begin work immediately with media and politicians ahead of local government elections.
- Harness the political will in Mozambique to increase women's representation at all levels of decision-making.

Chapter two: Strategic interventions



Journalists discussing upcoming elections during the gender, media and elections training

Media training

This chapter looks at how media practitioners can help empower women politicians by simply doing their job as reporters. Statistics have shown that women are underrepresented in regional media, including women politicians. This chapter details how journalists were trained to engage with women politicians ahead of Mozambican elections and notes some of the key points coming out of the workshops.

The Gender, Media and Election workshop took place from the 30-31 July 2009 at the Tivoli Hotel in Maputo. Participants included editors, sub-editors, journalists and programme managers from both print and electronic media.

After the workshop, in-house newsroom training sessions were conducted in media houses in Maputo from 4-5 August 2009.

The aim of the workshop was to encourage the journalists to air their own prejudices about covering women in politics and to encourage them to think about women in prominent positions. What barriers exist for women to enter into politics or decision-making positions, what is the role of the media? What qualities do women leaders possess who receive positive media coverage?

The journalists identified women politicians whom they believed were media savvy. They named:

- Luisa Diogo, Mozambique's Prime Minister
- Maria Morena, RENAMO MP
- Graca Samo, head of Forum da Mulher (Women's Forum)
- Anabela Adrianopolis, leading journalist and presenter
- Condoleezza Rice, former US Secretary of State
- Graca Machel, former Minister of Education

They were then asked what attributes these women politicians have:

- Coherence, passion about issues, intelligence;
- Friendly to the media;
- Some journalists, especially the males, were critical about women in prominent positions who dressed in "provocative" ways, saying it distracted them from the messages they are transmitting. A woman journalist said she felt that women and men should be allowed to dress as they like, what they said should be more important.

The facilitator made some key points:

- Journalists have a lot of power during the run-up to elections especially among undecided voters;
- Balanced reporting is imperative;
- Alternative sources need to be sought, especially ordinary women and men;
- Journalists must get behind the story to the truth; they must not be misled or manipulated by politicians.

The journalists responded with the following points:

- Some politicians are not in politics for the sake of the people but rather for the money;
- The SADC target is too optimistic and women politicians and the political climate are not ready for it;
- Do women need to be literate? There was a general consensus that this should not necessarily hold women back from entering in politics. It was noted that there have been women in parliament who cannot read and write Portuguese;
- It was noted that a significant number of people in rural areas do not have easy access to means of communications, certainly not newspapers; most cannot read Portuguese. Radio is the most important medium, but not all have access to radios (or batteries);
- Most agreed that men dominated news coverage. Most journalists said it was difficult to interview women even when they wanted to. Women in rural areas are particularly apprehensive to speak on issues, instead referring journalists to the head of the village or the head of the family, who is traditionally a man;
- Women politicians and female experts on a subject, such as economists, would try to avoid interviews saying: "What have I got to say? I don't have anything special to say to you..." They try to persuade the journalist to talk to their male counterparts;
- Editors are not open to new sources; or angles;
- Heated debate surrounded the new Domestic Violence Bill. Many male journalists were critical of the law. A male journalist participant said that if the law was passed it would "split up families". The comments indicated how much work still needs to be done around gender and gender violence if sensitive/good reporting is expected;
- Many journalists did not favour quotas because they felt that it compromised politicians. Others pointed out that it had worked with race in other countries.

Bayano Valy, an independent Mozambican journalist and media trainer ran a session entitled: "Ethics and reporting during the electoral campaign". Valy divided participants into groups to discuss the following scenarios:

- A political party invites you to be part of the press office during the electoral campaign. It promises you good money. How do you proceed? Do you give up your job at your paper, not accept, or do both simultaneously?
- The wife of former President Amando Guebuza, Maria de Luz Guebuza, revealed to a newspaper that she is going to run for the presidency in the next elections; discuss this from a gender perspective.
- You see a supporter of party A (the party in power) destroy electoral material from party B. You sympathise with party A. What do you do? Do you report on this information, why?
- If the president (a man) has a lover, do you report on this?

Key points which came out of group work:



Bayano Valy, independent journalist and media trainer,

- One has to maintain impartiality as much as possible, although some papers are not so independent.
- Journalists should not let their political independence be compromised as in the first scenario. They should give up working in their own media house if they want to work for a political party. However, journalists pointed out that a significant number do not do this and there are journalists

working for political parties who are also working for media houses.

- A woman politician or candidate should be referred to in her own right, not as the husband of someone as in the second scenario.
- It is not the media's business about who politicians have sex with, man or woman. It was pointed out that Mozambican media do not love gossip.
- There is a need for a code of conduct for journalists.
- What is in the public interest? A journalist has to censor some information.
- There is self censorship, but there should always be rigour.

Journalists were divided into groups and asked to consider:

- Do women bring anything different to the political arena and to our coverage?
- What is the coverage of women politicians like, is it fair, serious – are they covered in a stereotypical way?

Journalists' responses included:

- Women do bring a distinctive perspective; this generated debate around socialisation of women; why women take the role of the caregiver in the family and how men could be more prominent in this role. The positive image of Barack Obama dropping his children off to school was used as an example.
- Women are more affected by some key issues such as poverty, HIV and AIDS and domestic violence. It is crucial to have women's perspective on these issues.
- It is right that women who form more than half of the population have a voice – that is good journalism.

A discussion followed on an article in which the female police chief was interviewed about the Domestic Violence Bill. The headline said "The law will free women of men".

The journalists' views were:

- Most agreed the headline did not reflect what the police chief said, which was a thoughtful argument about the need for the laws. She also noted how the cases of domestic violence were increasing with women as the main victims of such violence. She did not mention women being free of men.
- Is it justifiable to have a provocative headline to capture the interest of the reader, especially the men, who may not have bothered to read such an important article? Most felt it was not and that it was alienating and could turn more people against the law.
- The stereotypes of women politicians were discussed; most agreed that this would be unacceptable in the Mozambican press. The one local paper that tended to use sexual innuendos, *Fim da Semana*, had closed down.
- Journalists agreed that reporters need to avoid non-inclusive words such as "prostitute".
- Should age of a woman be mentioned? Most participants believed it is relevant in an African context to discuss ages of candidates because an older person is seen as wiser.

Story ideas



A workshop participant takes notes.

- How are political parties responding to the challenge of increasing women's representation in their parties?
 - Do women politicians promote gender issues?
 - What are women politicians doing to promote the SADC Protocol?
 - What is the role of the Organisation of Women (OMM) in promoting the SADC Protocol?
 - What are the causes of the weak representation of women candidates in this election?
 - Post elections: how have women fared?
 - Profiles of prominent women who have successfully entered politics.
- Do electoral manifestos reflect gender issues?
 - What are the political parties doing about the SADC Protocol?
 - How do women influence electoral campaigns or party politicians?

Media coverage of the workshop

- Miramar TV interviewed the facilitator about the workshop. The interview was broadcast several times.
- *Noticias*, a daily newspaper, ran an article about the workshop.
- Radio Mozambique interviewed the facilitator for its main news programme.
- Radio Mutayana interviewed the facilitator on the workshops and the *Glass Ceiling* report. The *Glass Ceiling* research report was launched in Mozambique around the same time.

Newsroom visits



Journalist at the *Independent* newspaper in Maputo

Four media houses were visited: *Globo*, Radio Mutiyana, *the Independent* and Radio Terra Verde. Sessions ran between one to two hours and participants included journalists, editors and managers.

Issues discussed

- The editors and directors talked favourably about encouraging more women journalists into their media houses. For example, Radio Terra Verde editor said, "I prefer to give assignments to women journalists because they are more enthusiastic". *The Independent* staff members also commented that the rising star at the newspaper is a woman. Radio Mutiyana (a community radio) has more women journalists than men. However, they conceded that women were not in the top jobs.
- Story ideas for the election and also coverage of the domestic violence bill were discussed. Journalists said they intended to highlight the challenges of the SADC Protocol in their coverage.
- Similar to the media workshop, journalists, both men and women, complained that women were unwilling to be interviewed. Different ways of encouraging women, especially those in the rural communities, were given: for example, first interviewing the man of the household; interviewing woman in local languages or, if possible, interviewing her away from the men.

Editors and journalists seemed to give a commitment to take up these issues. They said they felt this type of training was useful and would like follow-up media house training.

Women in politics training



Women politicians stressing a point at the Maputo training workshop

Gender Links organised a two-day workshop in Maputo from 6-7 August 2009. The workshop focused on women in politics and the media and its aim was to build relationships between female politicians and the media, as well as to empower women politicians and give them practical skills for dealing with the media.

Women's political participation is one of the most problematic areas of reporting and the views of women are underrepresented and sometimes misrepresented in the media. The tension between women politicians and the media is also due, to a certain extent, to the fact that women have not had the same level of exposure as men and are often reluctant or wary in their dealings with the media.

The workshop provided an invaluable opportunity for women to acquire media skills and see how best they can utilise the media in their political career. The timely and relevant workshop helped women politicians gear up for the 2009 elections.

More than 30 women politicians attended the workshop and maintained a lively presence throughout each session. At first the women politicians were overtly conscious of who was with which political party, but as the day progressed, party divisions were overcome and the women bonded around the challenge of better representation in the media.

Chapter three: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter summarises the key findings of the Mozambican gender, media and elections workshops and proposes some recommendations for the way forward.

50/50 campaign

A total of 98 women were elected into parliament in the October 2009 election. In 2004, 87 women made it into parliament. This represents an increase of 4.4 percentage points from 34.8% in 2004 to 39.2 in 2009.



Journalists discussing the headline about domestic violence

The Mozambican election illustrates the need for ongoing lobbying and advocacy for the 50/50 representation of women and men in politics. Pushing for legislated quotas is key to increasing and maintaining women's representation in government.

Women in most African countries have found it difficult to venture into politics because of male dominance and the masculine face of politics. Some have found it even more difficult to participate because of a lack of resources for campaigning. The 50/50 Campaign has therefore bridged the gap and made it possible for women to participate.

While gains have been made, there is still a lot of work to be done to achieve the 50% target. A concerted campaign needs to start towards making substantial gains in women's representation before the next election.

The media

The media needs to ask representatives from political parties about what mechanisms they had put in place to promote women into leadership positions. The election was a lost opportunity for the media to level the playing field so that the voices of both women and men are seen and heard.

Mainstreaming gender in news coverage is an area which is problematic owing to various factors. Among them is rampant gender stereotyping which has become institutionalised after years of sexist socialisation, coupled with little understanding of gender issues. Media practitioners still fail to bring in varied and gender-sensitive perspectives to their stories and they still neglect to equally include women as sources.

Fostering gender mainstreaming in news coverage requires both short- and long-term measures. Short-term measures should include the introduction of short courses on gender reporting, targeting both junior and senior journalists, including editors. The long-term solution is to change the curricula of media training institutions to include gender reporting components so that students internalise these important skills early in their careers. It will also encourage women to take part as well as increase the number of women reporters and radio presenters on radio.

Empowering women politicians

Media skills are critical to women politicians because they interact with the media on a regular basis. Hence, there is need to have frequent training so that they understand the media better and build better relationships. The training will also be relevant to any new women MPs elected in 2009.