

"Growing up"

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## CHAPTER 9

# Media, information and communication

## Articles 29-31



Multi-tasking - Stella Kavendjii a Namibian singer goes on air with baby at Base FM.  
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

### KEY POINTS

- The SGDI score of 78% on media is relatively high placing Namibia in fourth position compared to the rest of the SADC countries.
- While the SGDI is based on empirical data, the citizens based on their perceptions of the country progress in meeting the media targets in the SADC Gender Protocol gave the same mark according to the citizen scorecard.
- The Namibian Constitution guarantees its citizens freedom of expression.
- According to a gender and media in education study conducted in 2010, female students comprise 60% of the students in the media department.
- Only 27% of media houses in Namibia have gender policies, while only 36% have sexual harassment policies.
- According to the Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS), women constitute 26% of all images in newspapers in Namibia, compared to 19% of news sources in print media.
- Articles about GBV or that mention GBV account for 4% of topics covered; which is at parity with the regional average.
- Women make up only 27% of sources in stories about or that mention GBV: Men speak for women, even on issues that affect women most intimately according to the GMPS.
- Survivors constitute almost a quarter (24%) 29% of all sources on GBV: this is higher than the regional average of 19% and the proportion of perpetrators whose voices are heard (18%).
- The proportion of women sources on HIV and AIDS has decreased from 42% representation in 2006 has decreased to 26% in the 2010 GMPS

**Table 9.1: Media, information and communications SGDI and CSC scores**

	SGDI	CSC
Scores	78%	78%
Ranks	4	1

At 78%, Table 9.1 shows that the SGDI score is relatively high. Except in the area of women as news sources, Namibia has performed well in terms of promoting gender equality on many fronts in the media sector putting the country in fourth place.

The SGDI score is based on women's representation in the media at different levels, on the board of directors; in management; as teachers and students in media institutions; and the use of women versus men as news sources.

Interestingly citizens gave the country the same score (CSC) as the SGDI, scoring 78%. The CSC is based on perceptions of the country's progress towards achieving the media related targets set for 2015 in the SADC Gender Protocol.

### Background

Citizens' access to accurate information on a diversity of political, economic and social issues is essential for the development of an informed population within a democracy. The mainstream media with their wide reach are a major resource in societies for the dissemination of information, knowledge and ideas and messages, as well as spaces for the public to engage in discourses on current affairs.

The media has been one of the less hotly contested yet critical areas of concern in the lobbying and advocacy on the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. Gender activists have long recognised the critical importance of the media in changing attitudes and mindsets, but have not always been strategic in engaging with the fourth estate.

Figure 9.1 demonstrates the different entry points for gender and the media. This begins with gender aware policies and laws, implemented by regulatory authorities.

Audiences through taking up complaints make these policies and laws a reality. Media education and media development NGOs have the capacity to influence attitudes, skills and knowledge of media practitioners, particularly at the entry level, but also through on going courses.

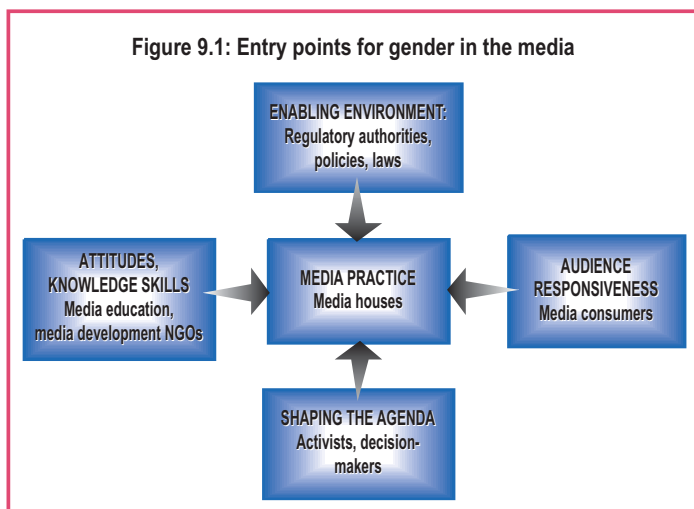
Activists and decision-makers, especially women decision-makers, help to set the gender and media agenda through well co-ordinated campaigns, and a proactive approach to the media. Ultimately the ball is in the court of the media to change. This change needs to be within the media: that is in its institutional make up, as well as in media content.

There is only one time bound media target in the Protocol: the achievement of gender parity in media decision-making by 2015. The wording of the provisions is careful not to be prescriptive or make assumptions about the extent to which government can regulate or influence the media (especially the private media). However, the provisions are significant in that:

- They cover both media content and the institutional makeup of the media.
- They touch on both policy and training.
- They touch on both the sins of omission (the absence of women's voices and need to give women equal voice) as well as the sins of commission (the perpetuation of gender stereotypes in the way in which women are covered; especially the coverage of gender violence).
- The provisions are consistent with freedom of expression. Indeed, they underscore the argument that gender and media activists have been making: that the subliminal silencing of women in the media is - the world over - one of the worst violations of freedom of expression.

Key research studies that GL and partner organisations have undertaken in the region, that form the basis of advocacy and training efforts, and that make it possible to monitoring progress in this sector are summarised in Table 9.1 on key indicators

**Figure 9.1: Entry points for gender in the media**



## Media regulations in Namibia



*The protocol calls on Member States to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all information, communication and media policies, programmes, laws and training in accordance with the Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport.*

The Namibian Constitution guarantees its citizens freedom of expression. Namibia has often been hailed as one of the continent's most media-friendly countries. But Namibia does not yet have an Access to Information Act thus making it hard for the public to get hold of information held by the state. The confidentiality of sources is not protected by law and court judgments handed down over the years have sent divergent signals. In 2006, President Hifipukunye Pohamba promised legal protection of whistleblowers but no action has been taken.

Although freedom of expression is enshrined in the Namibian Constitution, individual freedom of expression is perceived to be limited. Increasingly government officials, including the former President and recently the SWAPO Youth League, SWAPO Members of Parliament and the SWAPO Elders Council launched frequent verbal assaults on the independent press, notably the Namibian and the weekly tabloid *Informante*. Frequent calls were made by SWAPO cadres including MPs to ban *The Namibian's* popular SMS pages as they are deemed to disrespect the SWAPO party and its leaders. Other calls were made to have the popular phone-in-programmes removed off air from the NBC after Party leaders felt that the callers were being disrespectful towards the former President Sam Nujoma.

After President Pohamba took over from the founding president Sam Nujoma in 2004, the political atmosphere appeared to become more open. Citizens for a while felt more confident to speak out. With the 2009 November presidential elections, the emergence of new political parties and evident divisions within the ruling SWAPO party, political intolerance resurfaced. Popular NBC phone-in programmes were removed from air but reinstated, in a moderated fashion, following a public outcry.

The 2003 draft Communications Bill that was under discussion and was expected to be passed during 2010, will have paved the way for the NCC to be replaced by the Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN). The Bill contains highly controversial provisions that give intelligence agents the right to intercept and monitor telephone and mobile phone conversations as well as e-mail. Communication service providers will have to keep records of conversations at their own cost.

In 2007 the Congress of SWAPO called for government to establish a statutory council to regulate the media. This threat galvanised media groups into renewed action to form an independent, self-regulatory body to develop and uphold a common code of ethics and deal with complaints from the public. The new self-regulatory media body was eventually set up in 2009 and a media Ombudsman was appointed.

### Gender in media training

In 2009, GL and the Gender and Media Diversity Centre

(GMDC) which GL houses conducted the Gender in Media Education Audit in Southern Africa (GIME) - the most comprehensive study yet undertaken of the gender dimensions of journalism and media education and training in tertiary institutions in Southern Africa.



A media student learning the basics of photojournalism.

Photo: Gender Links

University of Namibia (UNAM) and Polytechnic of Namibia (PON) were part of a larger GIME audit that was administered in 25 institutions in 13 countries including Botswana, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe between October 2009 and April 2010.

For this research a total of 34 persons were interviewed comprising five staff members and 29 students. Of that 60% of staff and 45% of students were female.

The key findings of this audit are:

### Institutional policy framework

**Neither institution had a gender policy but UNAM recently held a workshop in September 2012 to develop one.** Presently there are slightly more female than male students. Points earned in matriculation exams, qualifications, industry experience and performance in interviews are among the criteria used to assess students for entry into the programmes.

**Gender is not covered in curriculum policies at institutional or departmental level.** There are no institutional or departmental policies, guidelines or procedures for incorporating gender into the curriculum and/or course content of the institutions' media education and journalism training programmes.

**There are no stand-alone policies on sexual harassment at PON or UNAM.** Sexual harassment can be found within the institutions' Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Code and Procedures but not as a stand-

alone policy. Evidence of application of the code in sexual harassment cases was not obtained during this research.

### **Gender within the media studies departments**

**There is almost gender parity among staff at both institutions:** Women make up 47% of staff at both PON and UNAM, which is slightly more equitable than the regional average of 38% for female staff. This places the country within the top five in the region, with Mauritius (79%), Lesotho (67%) and South Africa (50%) leading the pack.

**The Heads of Department at both PON and UNAM are female:** and while there are more female full-time lecturers than males at PON, the two full-time lecturers for media education and journalism training at UNAM are both men.

**There are slightly more female than male students:** Females comprise 60% of the media education and journalism training departments at PON and UNAM, similar to the regional average of 61%.

**There is a disparity between the percentage of female staff (47%) and students (60%) in Namibia:** This shows that while more work can be done, Namibia is progressing much better in terms of an equal staff to student ratio than the rest of the region. For example, DRC has a high proportion of female students (77%) compared to a low proportion of female staff (18%).

### **Curriculum development and course content**

**No gender specific courses:** There are no gender specific media modules in the media education and journalism training diploma and degree programmes offered by PON and UNAM. However, following this research both institutions have placed gender in the curriculum for entry level courses.

**But theoretical underpinnings are provided at UNAM:** Media studies and journalism students at UNAM are introduced to theoretical courses on gender through a core requirement for all first year university students, and because of a dual degree programme. Students at UNAM major in media studies and in another discipline such as Politics, Sociology or Psychology. They are introduced to gender issues in these courses, as well as in the content of their media education and journalism programme.

**There is some gender incorporated into course content:** At both PON and UNAM, gender is incorporated into the content of courses such as Specialised/Advanced Reporting, Language for the Media, Media Ethics, Contemporary Social Issues, and Advertising. However, the attention given to gender is dependent upon the

lecturer's personal knowledge and commitment to mainstreaming the topic into lectures, readings and assessments.

**There was no marked difference between PON and UNAM in the incorporation of gender into the entry-level media education and journalism departmental programmes:** Although PON's Department of Media Technology participated in a pilot project (2001-2004) with Gender Links to mainstream gender into entry-level journalism education, both institutions performed the same in this area. The PON's reasons for not sustaining the pilot project included staff turnover; resistance from one lecturer who had been part of the process and the lack of mechanisms to manage this and an absence of orientation or other programmes to take new staff through the original process and thus build their understanding of how to mainstream gender into their courses and work.

**Yet both institutions serve as models for mainstreaming:** However, the UNAM HIV/AIDS Policy and PON's pilot project with Gender Links on mainstreaming gender into entry-level journalism education both serve as models for mainstreaming gender in teaching, research and other activities of media education and journalism training departments. The findings of this research have inspired both institutions to move gender into a more prominent place in departmental programmes and policies.

**Strategic entry points are possible with both institutions:** There are strategic opportunities to work with the two institutions between 2010-2011 to mainstream gender into media education and journalism training. UNAM begins its curriculum review in 2010, while PON will conduct its next review starting in 2011. PON and Gender Links have also recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding and entered into an official partnership.<sup>1</sup>

### **Teaching/learning**

**There is a fair degree of gender awareness among staff:** Departmental staff highlighted knowledge of how to mainstream gender and how to counter gender fatigue. They also noted the lack of an institutional gender policy; unseen attitudes, prejudices and biases that exist amongst some staff; and no monitoring and evaluation or other mechanisms to systematise how gender is mainstreamed, as key challenges to incorporating gender into their work.

**Likely accounting for reasonable gender and media literacy among students:** Students in the media education and journalism departments at PON and UNAM are aware of the importance of incorporating gender into their degree programmes, and can apply their basic

<sup>1</sup> Signed in September, 2010.

gender and media understanding to identify gender biases and stereotypes as consumers of Namibia's media.



Salmi Hangula (NBC journalist), interviews Councillor Franco !Gomseb, Deputy Mayor of Outjo. Photo: Sarafina Shindumee

### Prescribed texts/readings/learning materials

**Gender is missing from course material:** The wealth of gender and media literature, research and training materials that has been published internationally and within the Southern African region is missing from the prescribed texts, readings and course materials used in PON and UNAM curriculum.

### Assessments

**Gender is not incorporated as a standard in any systematic way in the media education and**

**journalism training department's assessments or curriculum:** Gender is not incorporated in the assessment criteria used by the Namibian Qualifications Authority, the body which certifies and sets the standards for higher education. Relevance to the Namibian media industry's needs, and a good balance between theory and practical application, are the main criteria used by the journalism and media studies departments to evaluate their programmes. Gender is not incorporated into these assessments, nor is it a criterion used by the Namibian media sector when providing guidance and input to the departments on the course content and orientation of their media education and journalism programmes.

**Gender as a criteria for assessment is left up to staff and students:** There is some evidence of gender being incorporated into exam assessments and special projects for final assessments in some courses by both lecturers and students at PON and UNAM; but this is dependent on the lecturers' and students' interest in gender and media issues.

### Research/Publication

**Academic research could be improved:** While there are examples of students' theses and special projects on gender and media issues, as well as projects on women's representation and gender stereotypes in the media, gender and the media has not become an area of academic research and scholarship among the lecturers within the institutions' media education and journalism training departments.



### Giving equal representation women and men by 2015

*The Protocol urges Member States to take measures to promote the equal representation 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.*

Table 9.2: SUMMARY OF KEY QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS FOR NAMIBIAN MEDIA HOUSES

CATEGORY	% NAMIBIA		% REGION	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Percentage of employees by sex	40	60	41	59
<b>OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS</b>				
Non-permanent	24	76	36	64
Semi-skilled	57	43	55	45
Unskilled	47	53	29	71
Skilled technical	42	58	45	55
Professionally qualified	33	67	31	69
Senior management	35	65	28	72
Top management	42	58	23	77
Board of directors	39	61	28	72

CATEGORY	% NAMIBIA		% REGION	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
<b>CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT</b>				
Freelance	21	79	43	57
Part-time	33	67	23	77
Full-time, fixed term contract	48	52	37	63
Full-time open-ended contract	42	58	42	58
<b>DEPARTMENTS</b>				
<i>Percentage of women and men in:</i>				
Finance & administration	70	30	54	46
Editorial	44	56	42	58
Advertising/Marketing	56	44	57	43
Human resources	67	33	44	56
Production	39	61	30	70
Technical/IT	5	95	16	84
Design	44	56	31	69
Printing & distribution	23	77	24	76
<b>BEATS</b>				
<i>Top beats covered by women</i>				
Disaster/war/conflict	100	0	35	65
Education	100	0	54	46
Gender equality	100	0	71	29
Gender violence	100	0	71	29
Lifestyle	100	0	55	45
Religion	100	0	52	48
<i>Top beats covered by men</i>				
Agriculture	0	100	41	59
Courts	0	100	37	63
Crime	0	100	37	63
Human rights	0	100	42	58
Media	0	100	42	58
Science and technology	0	100	39	61
<b>POLICIES</b>				
	<b>Namibia</b>		<b>Region</b>	
Existence of a gender policy	27		16	
Existence of a sexual harassment policy	36		28	
Need for or improving existing gender policy	45		68	

The audit of women and men in Namibia media houses is part of the *Glass Ceilings: Women and Men in Southern African Media* conducted by Gender Links (GL). The findings will be used in a global study being carried out by the International Media Women's Federation (IMWF) through the Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC).

This centre is a partnership between media development organisations and training and higher learning institutions to “collect and connect” knowledge, and

collaborate to advance gender equality and diversity in the media across the globe.

The GMDC has also facilitated partnerships around the fourth Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), and second *Southern African Gender and Media Baseline Study* (GMBS) being undertaken in 2009/2010.

The study was made in the context of the August 2008 Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development, urging the media

and all decision-making bodies in the region to achieve gender parity by 2015. The gender protocol also calls for the mainstreaming of gender in all media laws, policies and training. It exhorts the media to give equal voice to women and men, challenge gender stereotypes and ensure balance and sensitivity in all coverage - especially on gender violence.

In Namibia the study is based on research carried out in 11 media houses, with a total of 815 employees. Researchers conducted in-depth case studies of two media houses and interviewed six journalists/senior managers/editors for their perspectives on the results. A further 44 senior staff responded to perception questionnaires.

In total 125 media houses (about half of all media houses) in 14 of the 15 countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), representing 23 684 employees, participated in the research. Some 463 respondents filled in the perception questionnaires. Relevant regional comparisons are made throughout. This report should be read in tandem with the regional report: *"Glass Ceilings: Women and Men in the Southern African Media."*



Irene Hoaes, a Namibian journalist writes up story at the Gender Links Gender and Media Summit 2010.  
Photo: Trevor Davies

## Gender in media content



*The Protocol calls on Member States to 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 and that challenge gender stereotypes. The Protocol urges member states to 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.*

The GMPS took place in Namibia from 19 October to the 16 November 2009. It covered ten media and 1604 news items. The study is part of a regional survey that covered 14 countries in Southern Africa and 33 265 news items.

It is a follow up to the GMBS conducted in 2003, as well as the HIV and AIDS and Gender Baseline Study (2006)

and the Francophone Gender, HIV and AIDS and Media Study (2008). Comparisons are also made where relevant with the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) that has been conducted every five years since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, with the fourth such study conducted parallel to this regional study in 2010.



**Table 9.3: Summary of key findings**

GENERAL MEDIA PRACTICE	GMBS NAMIBIA	GMPS NAMIBIA	GMPS REGIONAL	GMMP GLOBAL
<b>Topics</b>	%	%	%	%
Economics	N/A	15	12	17
Gender equality	N/A	0	1	N/A
Gender violence	N/A	1	1	N/A
Politics	N/A	21	19	28
Sports	N/A	16	18	N/A
<b>Geographic scope of stories</b>	%	%	%	%
International	N/A	29	22	26
SADC	N/A	10	8	N/A
National	N/A	49	42	N/A
Provincial	N/A	3	10	N/A
Local/community	N/A	8	18	N/A
<b>Type of sources</b>	%	%	%	%
Primary sources	N/A	81	69	N/A
<b>Anonymity</b>	%	%	%	%
Anonymous sources	N/A	7	18	N/A
Diversity of sources	%	%	%	%
Single source	N/A	58	67	N/A
GENDER IN THE MEDIA	GMBS NAMIBIA	GMPS NAMIBIA	GMPS REGIONAL	GMMP GLOBAL
<b>Who speaks</b>	% women	% women	% women	% women
Overall	19	20	19	24
Private media	N/A	20	19	N/A
Public media	N/A	21	20	N/A
Community	N/A	23	22	N/A
<b>Who speaks on what topic</b>	% women	% women	% women	% women
Economics	13	12	15	21
Education	30	18	24	N/A
Gender Equality	68	82	43	N/A
Gender Violence	17	60	41	N/A
Political stories	12	18	13	18
Sports	20	11	12	N/A
<b>Sex of sources by medium</b>	% women	% women	% women	% women
Print	N/A	20	18	24
Radio	N/A	16	20	19
Television	N/A	22	25	26
<b>Who is seen</b>	% women	% women	% women	% women
Images in newspapers	N/A	26	27	N/A
<b>Ages sources</b>	% women	% women	% women	% women
35 - 49 years	N/A	36	37	N/A
50 - 64 years	N/A	13	20	N/A
65 years or older	N/A	0	0	N/A
<b>Ages - images</b>	% women	% women	% women	% women
35 - 49 years	N/A	19	28	N/A
50 - 64 years	N/A	5	14	N/A
65 years or older	N/A	10	4	N/A
<b>Occupation</b>	% women	% women	% women	% women
Beauty contestant	100	100	73	N/A
Business person	11	14	15	14
Government official	5	14	14	17
Health worker	22	44	27	31
Home makers	0	36	63	72
Politicians	6	12	11	17
Sex worker	0	100	62	39

Sportsperson	21	12	8	11			
<b>Personal identity</b>	%	%	%	%			
Women	6	6	10	N/A			
Men	1	3	5	N/A			
<b>GENDER IN NEWSROOMS</b>	<b>GMBS NAMIBIA</b>	<b>GMPS NAMIBIA</b>	<b>GMPS REGIONAL</b>	<b>GMMP GLOBAL</b>			
<b>Who does what</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>			
All reporters	N/A	42	29	N/A			
TV reporters	56	58	42	44			
TV presenters	47	62	50	52			
Radio reporters	21	75	30	37			
Print reporters	21	32	25	33			
<b>Who reports on what</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>			
Economics	18	33	28	40			
Gender Equality	38	50	32	N/A			
Gender Violence	18	25	38	N/A			
Political stories	17	48	24	33			
Sports	7	39	18	N/A			
<b>Sources and sex of reporter</b>		<b>%W</b>	<b>%M</b>	<b>%W</b>	<b>%M</b>		
Female sources by sex of reporter	N/A	41	9	31	15	28	22
<b>GENDER VIOLENCE AND THE MEDIA</b>	<b>GMBS NAMIBIA</b>	<b>GMPS NAMIBIA</b>	<b>GMPS REGIONAL</b>	<b>GMMP GLOBAL</b>			
GBV stories compared to total	N/A	4	4	N/A			
Advocacy and protest stories	N/A	0	11	N/A			
<b>Who speaks on GBV</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>			
% women in stories on and mention GBV	N/A	27	27	N/A			
<b>Function of GBV sources</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>%</b>			
Victim/survivor	N/A	24	19	N/A			
Alleged perpetrator/perpetrator	N/A	18	11	N/A			
<b>Who reports on GBV</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>			
Percentage women reporters	N/A	46	35	N/A			
<b>GENDER, HIV AND AIDS AND THE MEDIA</b>	<b>2006 STUDY NAMIBIA</b>	<b>GMPS NAMIBIA</b>	<b>GMPS REGIONAL</b>	<b>GMMP GLOBAL</b>			
	%	%	%	%			
HIV and AIDS coverage compared to total	4	3	2	N/A			
<b>Sub topics</b>	%	%	%	%			
Prevention	52	17	26	N/A			
General	13	45	37	N/A			
Treatment	10	12	12	N/A			
Care, support and rights	18	12	14	N/A			
Impact	6	14	12	N/A			
<b>Geographical scope</b>	%	%	%	%			
International	10	2	12	N/A			
Regional	13	11	8	N/A			
National	68	83	56	N/A			
Local	9	2	15	N/A			
<b>Function of sources</b>	%	%	%	%			
Official and UN Agencies	41	0	19	N/A			
Civil society and NGOs	36	23	18	N/A			
Experts	6	10	17	N/A			
Traditional and religious leaders	5	0	2	N/A			
People living with HIV and AIDS	1	3	7	N/A			
Person affected	5	63	36	N/A			
<b>Sources</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>			
Who speaks on HIV and AIDS	42	26	20	N/A			
<b>Reporters</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>	<b>% women</b>			
Who reports on HIV and AIDS	58	64	37	N/A			

The key findings may be summarised as follows:

### Gender in media content

**There has been a marginal increase in the proportion of women sources from 19% in the 2003 GMBS to 20% in this study.** This is slightly higher than the regional average of 19%. But at 81% of all news sources, men in Namibia still predominate in the news.

**There are differences in the way that print, television and radio access women sources:** At 22%, television has the highest proportion of women sources followed by print at 20%. Radio, a non-visual medium, has the lowest proportion with of women sources (16%).

**Women are more likely to be seen than heard:** Women constitute 26% of all images in newspapers in Namibia (27% in the regional study) compared to 19% of news sources in the print media.

**There are differences across individual media:** Windhoek Observer (29%) has the highest proportion of women sources followed by NBC TV (25%). Base FM, a community radio station, comes in third with 23% women sources. New Era, The Namibian and One Africa TV are lowest with only 18% women sources. Republikein has 19% women sources.

**Women's voices are mostly likely to be heard in the "soft" areas:** These include gender equality (82%) and gender violence (60%). Women's voices are least heard in topics such as land and agriculture (9%), sports (11%) and economics (12%). Women's voices are glaringly absent even in topics like crime which have a marked impact on women's lives.

**The voices of women start to disappear when they reach the age of 50:** The majority of women sources are in the 35-49 age group; after this age women virtually disappear from the news.

**Gender biases in occupational categories are pronounced:** Women predominate as social workers and beauty contestants with no men appearing in these occupations. The proportion of women sports persons interviewed in Namibia declined from 21% in the GMBS to 12% in the GMPS. However the proportion of women business people interviewed increased from 12% to 14%.

**Women are more likely to be identified by a personal tag than men:** 6% of women sources are identified by personal tags such as mother, wife or daughter as compared to 3% of men being identified as father, son or husband.

**But there are some interesting gender benders:** For example men make up 64% of those in the homemaker category in Namibia, a role often associated with women.



Gwen Lister, then Editor of the Namibian addressing women politicians in the Namibian Newsroom, Windhoek, Namibia.  
Photo: Gender Links

## Gender-based violence



*The Protocol calls on Member States to 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.*

The GMPS found that:

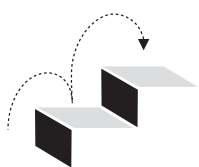
**Gender based violence and stories that mentioned GBV accounted for 4% of the topics covered**, despite being a pre-election period. This suggests that GBV is not regarded as a major political issue in Namibia.

**Women make up only 27% of sources in stories about or that mention GBV:** Men speak for women even on issues that affect them most intimately.

**Survivors constitute almost one quarter (24%) of all sources on GBV:** This is higher than the regional average of 19% and of the proportion on perpetrators whose voices are heard (18%). This suggests that GBV in Namibia is beginning to be covered more from the perspective of survivors and that the training on covering GBV from a human rights perspective offered by GL and other partners over the last seven years has made a difference.

**Domestic violence and femicide receive the most coverage in Namibia each making up 21% of the total number of stories.** There are no advocacy and protest stories or those relating to care and support of victims/survivors.

**There is gender parity in the coverage of gender based violence:** Women and men reporters cover the topic equally.



### Next steps

- **Deepen engagement with media decisionmakers:** Many of the policy changes that need to take place continue to be at newsroom level. The Glass Ceiling report provides a major impetus for this work.

- **Focus on specific targets:** The COEs for gender in the media, as well as gender in media education, provide a roadmap for attaining the targets of the SADC Gender Protocol.
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- **National monitoring:** Countries should be monitored to ensure that their laws on access to information make a difference for both women and men. This will enable women and men to make informed decisions on development and participate fully at every level.
- **Engaging with media regulatory authorities:** Until recently media regulatory authorities have largely been excluded from gender and media debates.

### What governments can do

- Pledging to mainstream gender in all information, communication and media laws.
- Pledging statutory regulatory authorities, and encouraging self-regulatory authorities, to use whatever leverage they have at their disposal, especially in relation to publicly funded media, to ensure gender accountability. This could include requiring gender balance and sensitivity in institutional structures as well as editorial content part of licensing agreements, as well as annual reports stating progress in this regard.
- Pledging to ensure that gender will be mainstreamed in all publicly funded media training institutions, and encouraging privately funded media training institutions to follow suit.