Enhancing Gender Equality in the Media in Eastern Africa

A Regional Study by
Eastern Africa Journalists Association (EAJA)
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Preface

The IFJ’s 24th Congress in Seoul, Korea in 2001 was groundbreaking by “Setting Standards” aiming to promote gender equity in journalism. As a global federation of journalists and other media workers unions, the IFJ made gender balance compulsory for delegations to the congress, allowing a great number of female journalists and unionists to attend the congress and debate on gender equality and equity.

The onus is now on IFJ affiliates, journalists and media workers trade unions and organisations to keep up the momentum to make gender equity a value in the daily practice in the media industry. In West Africa, the IFJ supported in 2006 a survey on the status of gender equity and equality in the media; the findings of the survey led to plans by the journalists unions to address gender issues.

The survey in Eastern Africa in 2008 has revealed through the findings that much remains to be done to achieve gender equality in journalism in the region. Eastern Africa is a war torn zone; however in the same region you have the booming media businesses on the continent. The main challenge for journalists and other media workers in the region is to secure their safety and improve their working conditions. In this struggle for safety, better social life and improved job careers, the concern and programmes for gender equity are usually not the priorities for the journalists’ trade unions and the employers in the collective negotiations and career promotion.

I hope that the findings of this survey on gender equity in the countries of the region would address among others, issues such as gender mainstreaming in collective negotiations, introduction of gender responsive policies in the structures and programmes of the media trade unions, associations, institutions and organizations; who has access to information in and through the media; the critical role of the media in the fight for gender justice and women’s human rights; and would lead EAJA to adopt concrete steps, action plans and strategies towards the progressive attainment of gender equality and equity in the media in the region.

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Introduction:

Background to the Study

In 2001 the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) held its 24th Congress in Seoul, Korea. An important aspect of the congress was on gender equality attended by women from the IFJ member unions in the five continents. The conference focused on the results of a survey conducted by the IFJ Secretariat among its membership, titled Equality for Quality: Setting Standards for women in Journalism. In view of the findings of the survey which revealed that much remains to be done for women to achieve equality in journalism, the Congress adopted a policy on mainstreaming equality in journalism through the regional structures of the IFJ, namely the journalists unions and associations, IFJ regional bodies and in its programmes and projects.

It is against this background that the Eastern Africa Journalists Association (EAJA), which brings together journalists unions and associations from nine countries in the region (Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda), and whose headquarters are in Djibouti, conceived the idea of conducting a study with a view to map out gender manifestations and profiling within the media in the Region.

The Eastern Africa is a region defined for the purpose of this study as a region that comprises ten countries namely- Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. The region is also characterised by unending civil strife and political upheavals including the long drawn civil war in the Sudanese region of Darfur, the persistent problem of rebel activity in Northern Uganda, the relentless fighting and militia activity in Somalia, the rivalry between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the fighting in Burundi and the January 2008 political unrests in Kenya.

Apart from issues of security and safety brought about by the conflicts, the region also hosts countries that practise cultures and religions that tend to dominate the personality of the woman. This is in itself reflected in the patterns of employment and practice, especially in journalism which is still heavily dominated by men. However, there is the undying need to correct the situation and ensure gender equality, especially in the face of globalization and the increasing important shift in development policy from women in development to rights, participation and gender mainstreaming.

This Regional gender and media report is as a result of a study conducted by EAJA through its affiliates and it aims at highlighting the shortcomings and violations of women’s rights in the media and the media coverage of gender issues. It also looks at gender representation and situation analysis in media institutions, journalists’ unions and associations with a view to correcting the inequalities revealed by the study.

Today, there’s an increase in the number of women who read newspapers, watch televisions, log onto websites and listen to radios. However, according to the study a majority of women are uninterested and uninvolved in political affairs and development, the economy and other societal issues, therefore making women issues being pushed to the periphery of the media. The contents of general interest and business sections of the media (be it newspaper, radio or TV) are often dominated by men affairs. This confirms that the media in some of our countries in Eastern Africa is still a male bastion.

In Eastern Africa, the status of women remains low, even though there are considerable differences in the position of individual women with regard to country, age, social class and levels of political involvement. Men, as a group, control the means of production and other resources. They have decision-making power within households and within many institutions and because of entrenched gender discrimination, the majority of women, including female journalists, still do not have full access to education, training, health care, credit, a formal wage-economy and political decision-making.
Women journalists face numerous problems in their push for professional rights and to report on gender issues. Notably, discrimination at work as a result of employers failing to adhere to labour rights of women journalists. They do not receive equal opportunities as male journalists do in terms of training and advancement in their career. Some of the media institutions violate rights of women journalists such as presenting them as sexual objects; sexual harassment, intimidation, abuse, undervaluing or ignoring their work, successes, efforts, rights and by symbolically destroying or frustrating them.

Other barriers to women’s successful participation in the media’s activities are awkward and long working hours, long distances to working places, preference over male staff to undertake certain assignments for coverage, lack of access to decision-making roles, lack of relevant and technical skills, intimidation and power play by male staff, and cultural and social attitudes. Thus women are underrepresented in political, social and economic reporting; this results in limiting the freedom of expression caused by self-censorship by a male dominated industry.

Like male journalists, women media practitioners face quite a lot of problems such as lack of resources; lack of training and professional support; political and commercial pressure either not to cover certain stories, or to cover them in a particular way; pressure to reveal sources; people may be unwilling to talk to journalists as they fear repercussions. But Eastern Africa Women journalists are majorly comprised of underprivileged, and poorly employed media workers.

Consequently, it is imperative to expose the vivid role that women journalists can play through their journalists’ organizations in the region and the vibrant role of the media in addressing gender issues. This project therefore, tackles core problems facing women in the media, empower women journalists to fight for their rights and give women and male journalists the opportunity to talk about their weaknesses of reporting gender issues such as violence against women; self-immolation; illiteracy, lack of educational opportunities; traditional values; raising their responsiveness about their rights in the profession; women land politics.

The study was based on key gender planning concepts, namely Sex and Gender, Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming. Under this project, the Eastern Africa Journalists Association intends to achieve the following objectives:

- To promote gender equality in the news media outlets and in journalist’s organisations;
- To promote female journalists’ rights in the workplace and through collective bargaining agreement;
- To empower women journalists to be able to fight and speak for their rights;
- To improve women journalists’ working conditions, the portrayal of women in the media, and women’s access to the media;
- To promote overall gender awareness in the media;
- To advocate for women rights;
- To raise the profile of women journalists in the unions/associations, and their access to leadership positions in the news media organisations and in their local society;
- To Support research into all aspects of women in the media;
- To encourage, recognise and support women in the media for the dissemination of information and exchange of views.

For these objectives to be realised, it is incumbent on all of us, men, women, society in general as well as all the other actors in our countries, our regions and our continent to renew our commitment to mainstreaming gender in our policies and programmes and translate them into concrete actions.
Executive Summary

The Media in Eastern Africa is male dominated. Although women are the majority comprising of about 52 percent of the total human population, they account for less than 20% of all professional journalists according to the study.

In Eastern Africa, few women journalists are in the decision-making mechanisms in the local media since local broadcast media managers and newspaper owners are reluctant to include women in the higher decision making levels. Women’s issues are underreported in the Eastern Africa media. Male journalists are not interested in covering gender issues, and do not take gender issues seriously. Women journalists do not have as many good connections as male journalists. It is difficult for women journalists to exercise investigative work as they are vulnerable to all violations and abuses. Gender equality is hardly considered newsworthy. Men’s voices dominate in all the hard news.

Newsrooms are not well known for gender friendly culture. Sexist jokes and stereotypes are common. Work practices are often not family friendly. The glass ceiling in the media is among the worst of any institution. For example, a bigger percentage of gender related violations, whether sex abuse or other violations, remain unreported in Somalia for fear of discrimination among the society in line with the strict cultural values.

Although not dissimilar from statistics in most other regions of the world, the figures on gender bias in mainstream media in Eastern Africa are disturbing. Only 17 percent of news sources are female (although women make 52 percent of the population), less than 10 percent of the sources for politics, economics and sports stories are women. Only 8% of politician sources are women even though 17% of the members of parliament in the region are women.

To make visible women’s information in the Eastern Africa Region, the print media has gone further to dedicate particular days to women’s information. In Uganda for example, the two leading dailies (New Vision and The Monitor) allocate particular days of the week to women.

This is a creative way for the visibility of women’s information because it is durable and factual. The same scenario is repeated in Kenya where newspapers dedicate pages in the weekend papers to issues that appeal to women. This study found that the media in Ethiopia display more flexibility with women journalists (than they do with males) considering cultural difficulties with regard to women putting more hours in evenings and on weekends.

The study also discovered that the news media either excludes or objectify women, which show insensitivity and poor media ethics. In Djibouti, women earn less than their male counterparts for the same kind of work. Lack of awareness, lack of resources and male domination are some of the main impediments to women’s visibility in the media in Sudan, like other countries in the region.
Summary of Key Findings and Comments

The study aimed at looking at issues of violations of rights of women, opportunities for training, levels of education, the work environment, media coverage of gender issues, portrayal of women, and whether women are equally represented in decision making levels and in leadership positions.

What emerged from the study can be categorised under the following:

- Training and Level of Education
- Career advancement, Conditions of work and work Environment
- Leadership and Decision Making – ‘The Glass Ceiling’
- Portrayal and Giving prominence to gender issues

1. Training and Level of Education

Out of the nine countries where the study was conducted, 8 (eight) of them said a majority of their journalists’ did not have university education or relevant professional training. Training and lack of resources to organise training programmes emerged as the main constraints in professional performance and development of the respondents (71%), followed by political pressure (17%) and commercial pressure/interest (12%). Only 4% recalled the existence of gender specific training programmes by the unions/associations.

It should be noted that the level of training and education are closely linked to recruitment, career development and advancement as well as being able to professionally contest gender injustices. This has an impact on opportunities for women to assume positions of leadership and decision making. The result therefore is the perpetuation of the status quo of having more men in such positions and in media ownership as well. The study also revealed the absence of a structured and systematic training programme both within the media institutions and the professional associations and unions for the staff and members with a well integrated gender component and a human resource development plan that can be monitored and evaluated.

2. Career Advancement and conditions of work and work environment

Career advancement and development has a strong correlation with training and education as well as being aware about your rights and responsibilities. Recruitment is equally important.

It should be noted that the environment under which journalists work in Africa in general is harsh and unfriendly for both women and men. But the situation is worst for women, especially in countries that are in conflict or are emerging from conflict, countries
where the political environment is unstable, where freedom of expression is almost non-existent and where there are still very strong socio-cultural practices that discriminate against women and girls.

In regard to working conditions, the study revealed that journalists work between 8-10 hours average, but in 8 out of the nine countries, most journalists work more than 13 hours. A good number of journalists in the region (up to 51 percent) are on temporary employment. In most cases, the unfair treatment related to gender stereotyping where women are denied assignments, or assigned duties considered to be less challenging or less hard because of their sexuality. Apart from Rwanda and Uganda where the national constitution has ensured that 30% of all public appointments are given to women, there is no clear initiative or policy that would promote gender-friendly environment in the media in all the sampled countries. Even in those two countries, the study has not shown if the national policy has any influence on the media houses and the journalists unions and associations in regard to gender equality.

Some 67% of those interviewed reported experiencing unequal pay and job consideration in relation to male colleagues. Only 47% percent on average said they are aware of their labour rights. The rest is divided between those who are not aware of the existence of such rights and those who are aware but could not benefit from them because either they don’t belong to a union/association. Others attributed it to the political and social environment in their countries.

On average, 84% of the respondents do not benefit from collective bargaining agreement (CBA) because apart from Kenya and Sudan, the rest of the countries are yet to come up with CBAs due to different reasons. Uganda’s union was registered in 2006, Rwanda’s is still an association and is yet to confront labour issues and the same applies to Burundi and Djibouti. Somalia has a very strong union but because of the civil strife in the country it has proved impossible to administer a CBA. In Tanzania, the union is re-organizing itself with a view to enlist the participation of employers in a CBA negotiation. Half of the countries reported paid maternity leave courtesy of legislations in their countries.

It is crucial for gender to be an integral part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Issues of sexual harassment, sexist jokes, and intimidation, verbal and psychological harassment came out clearly in most of the countries studied.

3. Leadership in the Media - The Glass Ceiling

Leadership at the level of Media Institutions

The study clearly demonstrated that in all the countries, women do not occupy positions of responsibility and decision making at the level of the media houses and the journalists unions/associations. The reasons can be attributed to levels of education, training, more men than women in the media especially the print media, male dominance of media business, because they seem to have more access to resources. In most instances, some of the media owners are not gender sensitive and would prefer to give positions of higher responsibility to men as opposed to women due to certain biases, such as women having to disrupt work due to maternal and family responsibilities.

The study clearly showed that women do not occupy positions of decision making or leadership in the media institutions. Only 3 percent of the total number of women journalists sit at the decision-making organs of their media institutions and an average of 27% reported experiencing unfair treatment on the basis of their gender. Across the entire Eastern Africa Region, there are fewer women journalists in senior or decision-making positions, and about 47% of the respondents also said there was performance-based promotion at work, with the remaining 53% citing favouritism and corruption.

Leadership at the level of Journalists Unions and Associations

The study also confirmed the under-representation of women at the level of the executive committees and decision making levels of journalists associations and unions. 70% of those interviewed belong to a union/association although only 28% said they were aware of a gender policy in their union/association. Majority (80%) felt women and men are not equally represented in the unions/associations although leaders are elected and not appointed, and that men dominate the executive boards of the unions/associations because majority of the members are men.
It can be deduced from the above that since the majority of members are men, they would prefer to vote for men to maintain the status quo and as a sign of solidarity. But where the unions and associations have a clearly defined gender mainstreaming policy and programmes, it is likely that both men and women can vote competent and committed women and men into positions of decision making because it is then a policy that all members should adhere to. Of equal importance is the need for women to solidly lobby, nominate and campaign for their fellow women to be elected into such positions, because decision making positions in the media and in other institutions in Eastern Africa continue to be a male bastion.

4. Portrayal of women and giving prominence to gender issues in the media

Two issues came out clearly here: the way women are portrayed in the media and the way the media covers issues of gender.

Regarding reporting on gender issues, it did not come out clearly in the responses what specifically was reported on. However, 96% of the respondents said they report on gender occasionally, and that media houses where they work also do not report on gender issues quite often. 100% of those interviewed were of the view that gender portrayal in the media is heavily skewed in favour of the men and that women are always portrayed as victims. Positive coverage of women’s issues and giving women a voice is yet to be achieved. Most of the coverage centres around what is usually termed as soft stories, culture, health, beauty, and other social issues. The majority of respondents stated that gender awareness and sensitivity is yet to be built into news reporting requirements.

5. Conclusion: Gender Mainstreaming Policy

It can be discerned from the findings that attaining gender equality in the media institutions and the professional journalists unions and associations is an uphill task. This does not however mean that it is not attainable. It can be achieved if the political will and commitment is present. This calls for concerted efforts on the part of men, women and society in general. Gender is not about women and men only; it concerns men, women and society.

Some stark realities came out in the study; the absence of well defined policies and programmes on gender in media organisations and journalists professional unions and associations. It should be noted that professional unions are supposed to defend and promote the rights and welfare of journalists. This implies that in the mission and vision of these structures, in their programmes and activities, gender concerns are not reflected or taken into account. Therefore gender is not part of the overall vision of the institutions and if this is not redressed, the status quo will remain. We have to change the status quo.

It is crystal clear that in the absence of an overall gender policy and framework, there cannot be any serious editorial policy on the portrayal of women in the media and on coverage of gender issues. None of the reports showed any instance of policy guidelines on the portrayal of women in the media and what the policy says on fair and balanced reporting on gender issues.

Another important consideration is whether the promotion of gender equality in policies, programmes and projects is written into job descriptions, contract agreements, recruitment policies, employment policies, constitutions and statutes, roles and responsibilities of members and staff of media institutions and journalists unions and associations. These aspects were not captured well enough in the study.

Of equal importance are issues of training to bridge the gap and career development. This will help develop analytical capacity within the media institutions and the unions and associations with regard to gender. Training is not just about professional training but training in gender and its different components targeting journalists, the unions, the associations and the media gatekeepers and editors. Gender training should be at all levels and should be evaluated in terms of programmes and institutional culture and practices.
Conditions of work in terms of equal salaries and equal benefits for men and women, working and physical environment came out clearly as well as the maternity leave and in some places paternity leave. What was not captured was whether policies are in place in both media institutions and unions and associations against discrimination and harassment based on gender. In the absence of such policies, one wonders how problems arising from such issues are addressed at the workplace and at the level of the unions and in whose advantage. In terms of work environment, most of the time, basic amenities that impinge on gender are not taken into account.

Issues of gender management systems, such as governance leave much to be desired. If there is no policy, if the executive committee and management structures do not regard gender mainstreaming as a priority and do not commit to it, then only lip service will be paid to the issue of having equal representation in positions of leadership and decision making. At the same time, attention should be paid to build in monitoring and evaluation of gender policies and programmes as well as allocation of resources through gender budgeting to address gender objectives more effectively.

This report further revealed the gender imbalances in the media institutions and the unequal portrayal of women and men in the media. This scenario challenges the principles of democracy, free speech and freedom of expression which journalists profess to defend and promote. It further demonstrates that only a segment of the population is given a voice. It should be noted that where gender stereotypes are propagated in and through the media, they reinforce inequalities in gender power relations and provide justification for the perpetuation of discriminatory practices based on gender. Perpetuation of discriminatory practices based on gender is a violation of human rights. Journalists should therefore advocate for a fair and balanced gender representation in the mass media in recognition of women’s human rights.
Country Reports

Burundi Country Report: Summary

Training and Level of Education

There is no real specialisation in the Burundian media neither in public, nor in private ones. Journalists are therefore obliged to work on every topic available according to his /her skills. Except for very few people, both women and men, learned by doing especially after 1991 when the only journalism training institute was closed. Performance is therefore not achieved as it should be, because of lack of training and resources to do the work.

Career Advancement and conditions of work and work environment

According to the study there is no discrimination in Burundi media as far as fair treatment in terms of salaries and job acquisition is concerned for women and men. They are recruited on criteria of ability and qualification. Women enjoy 98 days paid maternity leave; while men are granted 4 days paid paternity leave according to working rules.

It is important to note that in Burundi women came late in the media as the sector of journalism was considered as a very hard job, therefore restricted to men. According to Louise Kabagema, journalist at Burundi National Radio « Night shifts, night report in Hotels , in a society which scrutinises what a woman does and does not do, very few women were able to take risks for such a job ,fearing to be labelled in a way or called names »

This therefore has impacted negatively on women’s representation in decision making positions and on the way news is selected and directed. Since they are few in their newsroom, it will be very difficult for them to influence the choice on stories to cover.

We may note that even women editors in public media are not sensitized on gender issues since they are appointed according to their political affiliation and not in favour of a real gender promotion. Denise Mugugu ,General Secretary for Burundi Women Journalists Association, also producer at National Television, deplores the fact that whenever there is a gender story which should require media attention, she always need to go and insist towards the editor, a woman, before she decides to send a reporter team. According to the report there may be no apparent discrimination but there are hidden obstacles.

With regards harassment at the workplace, it was not pointed out. But, it doesn’t mean that it is not happening. It may be clouded by the culture of silence. However, the National communication council never registered such a complaint.
Leadership in the Media—“The Glass Ceiling”

Leadership at the level of Media Institutions

The study revealed that there is a weak presence of women in media institutions and professional organizations and associations. Women in both public and private media constitute only 31.7% of the total number of journalists in Burundi. More over media gatekeepers are not sensitised enough on gender issues: As one participant Christine Ngendakumana, editor at Radio Iyvi Ry’ amahoro, a catholic church owned radio (Voice of Peace) puts it « Gender concept is not in our every day life. Whenever you raise a gender issue, a lot of people are directly thinking about women ’ ni vya bindi vy ’ abagore’ (it is women matters), just to look down on issues about gender ». She was referring to the weak coverage of gender issues both at her station and in other Burundi media in general.

The under representation of women in decision making positions can be attributed to several factors. First of all, press enterprise owners, mostly men, are reluctant to appoint women in such positions, fearing that family and maternity responsibilities could affect their performances. Even though there is no law that is excluding women, but practically, hidden obstacles exist whether for the appointment of women in decision making positions or for their recruitment. Even women in positions of recruiting also share those prejudices and stereotypes. Alice Hakizimana is editor at Bonesha FM, a private radio station. She is saying that as long as she is in that position, she will think twice before recruiting a woman. « In current affairs, we have 2 women on maternity leave, we have to wait for them 3 months of maternity leave and 3 other months for light schedule: duty; we cannot rely on any of them when it comes to night shifts since they have to feed their babies; I can understand why press enterprises owners are reluctant to hire women. »

On the other hand, women themselves seem to accept that such heavy social and family responsibilities cannot be assumed with professional ones at the same time. Therefore balancing work with family and social responsibilities is a major issue that needs to be addressed. Inès Kidasharira, journalist at a private radio station, Isanganiro, laments that even if women are demonstrating their know-how, they are playing back roles « As long as we are presented as incompetent, we end up thinking it is right and we don’t care. »

The reality is that even if many women are nowadays joining the press sector, they find themselves in the back ground. They are not many in decision making positions; Very few editors, very few directors, even though there are some in public media. No woman is heading a private media. The glass ceiling is still high.

Leadership at the level of Journalists Unions and Associations

In press organisations, professional associations and trade unions or journalists unions, a very small number of women are in executive committees. Even there, they are elected deputy chairman or treasurers, positions in which they cannot influence meeting decisions because they have no power or authority. The weak representation of women in the media, the lack of a clear gender policy in favour of women’s promotion, the lack of commitment for women to fight for their own rights are some of the major challenges to Burundi women’s visibility in the media. Commenting on the Executive committee of Burundi Journalists Association, Pascaline Biduda, Burundi Press Agency Director remarked that « For a long time, there has never been a committee with more than 2 women out of 10; and they are not in leadership positions ».

Little progress though has been made in this area because even with the current ABJ executive committee there are only 3 women and one of them is the second vice president. But the lack of a gender promotion policy cannot be solely responsible for the weak presence of women in the Associations decision making organs. According to many people interviewed, whether men or women, women are not presenting their candidacy during elections. « During the last General Assembly session of ABJ, there were only 5 women; men were 100, they are not participating in assemblies, how should they expect to be elected? » says Alexandre Niyungeko, General Secretary in ABJ.
However, different reasons explain this lack of interest. Some blame it on the Burundi Culture which confines women in the backyards, blocking their initiatives. Others are questioning the low educational level as a reason for weak performance.

However, the National Communication Council whose role is to regulate media in Burundi is composed of 15 members of whom are women. The National Communication Council’s executive bureau is made up of 4 members, 2 are women including the president. This National Communication Council was not welcomed by professional media associations not because it is led by a woman, but because it is composed of people, most of them, from outside the press area.

**Portrayal of women and giving prominence to gender issues in the media**

Gender issues do not have a particular favour in Burundi media. People interviewed reported that they work on them if stories are available, occasionally. In the print media, there is no special attention given to gender in terms of providing a column or a section. Gender promotion policy is not very clear in professional organisations, they don’t organise trainings on gender issues as they don’t have financial resources to do so.

According to the study the image of women in the media is pathetic and vulnerable. In spite of women being present in various sectors of national life, political actors and other opinion leaders are pictured in the media as men. It is very rare for the media to focus attention on or consider giving the right coverage to women leaders who could be role models for the society. In news, very often, women are portrayed as victims of rape, violence, abuse, hunger etc. One of the participants in the study, Nathan Ntahondi, Director of an electronic newspaper « Burundirealite.org » which never works on gender issues, underlines the very negative image of women in the media in Burundi « She appears as a weak human being as she had always been presented, but she is actually, the real engine of Burundi economy ».

Even though journalists contribute to the exclusion of women from media coverage; part of the blame should be borne by the women themselves. Another participant in the study recognised that women are not expressing their point of views due to cultural and traditional obstacles. According to Louise KABAGEMA, a journalist at the National Radio, « a woman leading a department prefers to ask her deputy director, a man, to speak on her behalf, although she is the head and is primarily responsible for the department ». In such cases, journalists prefer an easy way and hand the microphone to those who are available. « We can easily spend a whole month without hearing any woman’s voice in our news programmes, especially the educated women » says Alice Hakizimana, editor at Bonesha FM, a private radio station.

The study also revealed that even women editors in public media are not sensitized on gender issues since they are appointed according to their political affiliation and not on the basis of their commitment to the promotion of gender issues. Denise Mugugu, General Secretary for Burundi Women Journalists Association, also producer at National Television, deplores the fact that whenever there is a gender related story which requires media attention, she always has to go and insist on the editor, who is a woman, before the decision is taken to send a team of reporters.

Despite the problems, women have all the potential to promote gender issues in the media to achieve behaviour changes. The current situation could be reversed because young women are showing more interest in the media sector. Apart from news and current affairs focussing on women and prepared by women, women should promote shows focussing on issues that have always been considered as men’s issues such as political debates.
Djibouti Country Report: Summary

Training and Level of Education

The illiteracy rate in Djibouti is estimated at 65%. Due to this low literacy level and the lack of financial resources for training, the study found out that very few women are working in “traditional media” i.e. print press, Radio and Television. The study therefore, was extended to Djiboutian women working in other communication sectors such as women working in press service of ministries. But, for the time being, few women are working in the press area; very few are decision makers in the press sector. Consequently, women are unable to make any change on editorial policies, to move forward in their fighting for the working rights of women; many of them are in executive positions.

Career advancement, Conditions of work and work Environment

The low level of literacy has a very close relation to an educated and skilled human resource, especially women. Women who work in the media in Djibouti comprise only 25% of the total workforce. Less than 6% are in the decision-making organs of the media institutions, making them unable to influence or change editorial policies and slants.

Out of 230 employees, only 76 are women, 23 are producers (journalists, current affairs reporting, continuity announcers, editing staff etc.). Very few women are working in the Technical department presently, there is no labour union in the press sector throughout Djibouti, and the newly formed Djibouti Journalists Association has very few women in its membership. Only 3 women are members of the executive committee of the Djibouti Journalists Association (ADJ).

The study revealed that since 2005, there has been some small improvement in hiring new journalists with gender considerations. Out of 20 new hired journalists in the Djibouti National Television station, seven (7) are women. Even if the situation is still far from the general standard of parity in gender approach, the current situation shows clearly that the media in Djibouti are taking into account the gender question.

The study also noted that Djibouti Radio and Television broadcasts in 4 languages, Arabic, Somali, Afar and French. If we try to calculate, we find that for each language, we may have 4 women for both the Radio and the Television. This is very insufficient. However, this stands as a paradox in a country which records in the last decade a very significant evolution as far as women matters are concerned in every social sector. We can explain this with the fact that the media sector has been dominated by men on one hand, on another one, by the fact that the media sector needs such a permanent availability and mobility, this poses serious problems with their multi roles as spouse and mother.

Besides, the permanent stress related to news and breaking news treatment which is not considered when it comes to salary (there is no difference between a salary of Djibouti civil servants and journalists) this is discouraging women who prefer to operate in none risky professions.
The study also revealed that there is little discriminatory treatment between men and women in terms of Salaries and other advantages (equal diploma, equal salary); even though there are instances when women earn less than their male counterparts for the same kind of work, Maternity leave is paid 100% for women working as civil servants and 50% for those who are working with particular agreement conventions; Promotions often relate to the capability or output and not according to gender issue;

**Leadership and Decision Making – ‘The Glass Ceiling’**

**Leadership at the level of Media Institutions**

Only one person sits in the decision-making organ of her institution. The respondents highlighted that a very small number of women are holding senior level positions in the media, and there is a very small number of them in intermediate positions. This implies that women are not well represented at decision making. Promotions are often related to the capability or and experience, not according to gender.

**Leadership at the level of Journalists Unions and Associations**

With regards the Unions / Associations for the time being, there is no labour union in the press sector throughout Djibouti; Djibouti Journalists Association has very few women members with only 3 women as members of the executive committee: The report stated that the lack of women’s visibility in the Djibouti Media is due to their very limited number; very unfair media coverage in favour of men.

**Portrayal and giving prominence to Gender Issues**

Respondents stressed that most difficulties facing women journalists in the media are lack of financial resources, lack of educated women as human resource, difficulties for women to access decision making-positions, insufficient gender-specific programmes, weak content of messages and information broadcast/printed on gender equity. There are no specific programmes on gender issues.

**ERITREA: Special Case**

Although Eritrea falls within the constituency of EAJA, it proved impossible to conduct a study in that country because journalists in Eritrea are not allowed to interact with journalists outside of their country. Actually Eritrea has effectively been cut off from the rest of the region and there is very little information flowing out of the country. Any journalist found interacting with foreigners is considered a traitor and can be severely sentenced and punished. Many Eritrean journalists have fled the country, while others died while attempting to cross to neighboring countries. The attempts by EAJA to conduct this gender survey proved impossible.
Ethiopia Country Report: Summary

Training and Level of Education

In Ethiopia there are few people with degrees in journalism because there is no school of journalism. What exists is the Ethiopian Mass media Training Institute which restricts its training to journalists working for the government media. This is the only institute in the country accredited to give diplomas in the field of journalism. With such limited access to training, it therefore becomes very difficult to develop ones career.

However, a number of initiatives have been undertaken recently aimed at making journalists more professional, more objective and independent. These include short training courses, workshops and seminars conducted in Addis Ababa by the embassies, international organisations and agencies for journalists working for both the government and the private media. Some programmes are also organised by journalist associations like the Ethiopian Media Women’s Association, EMWA.

Since the media is one of the low paying jobs in the economy, employees, regardless of gender, work in resource-strapped condition and lack relevant training to upgrade skills and improve their professional ethics. Economic questions are behind the frequent moves of journalists, both men and women, from one media house to the other seeking better pay and benefits. Neither sex is particularly committed to one media house because payment is meagre and reporters tend to pull a stronger bargain as their professional capacity expands.

Career advancement, Conditions of work and work Environment

Female journalists in the Ethiopian media houses especially print media spend less time in the newsroom than their male counterparts due to many reasons, culture and family responsibilities being the major ones. The culture of Ethiopian families (even in cosmopolitan areas) doesn’t allow women to put extra hours at the office or to stay late on and prior to production day. This presents a big challenge for women journalists in the newsroom. Married women also claim that their spouses are unhappy about field assignments and irregular working hours. Interviews conducted for this study with members of the private media found that editors at many print media, both state and private, display more flexibility with women journalists (than they do with males) considering cultural difficulties with regard to women putting more hours in evenings and on weekends.

Duties of women journalists are usually associated with what is termed as “soft stories” that include topics like life style, fashion, shopping, HIV/AIDS; issues considered natural territories for women journalists (while hard topics are politics and business). The only exception in this case, as indicated in a media study done in 2007, has been the government owned Amharic weekly Addis Zemen which uniquely introduced equal representation of men and women in coverage of issues of economy and politics. Women members of the media and media researchers are of the strong opinion that women journalists experience unfair treatment in their workplaces because of their gender. Women media consultants contacted for this study recounted a number of cases where they and their colleagues were deprived of equivalent financial advantages concerning salary and periodic increments in government run media in the last five years.

One woman journalist interviewed for this study claimed that she was recruited with a lower salary at a government broadcast media five years ago though her resume was equally good like those of the male candidates. She recounts her experience in these words: “My bosses then believed that the amount offered for me was “enough for a woman since the men had more responsibilities inside and outside of the house”. She argues that such an attitude was normal even for the other women who were recruited and who accepted being treated in an inferior manner. “We were openly told that we were wanted just for our voices than any content matter in our respective duties.” Though the situation with government outlets has commendably improved...
following policy measures to encourage women’s participation in management positions including the media, unfair payment practices still exist with the majority of the private media who believe (in the words of one woman journalist) that “women are less motivated and weak to provide the required quality and volume of editorial work required in the newsroom”.

With regards the level of sexual harassment faced by women in the media, the study shows that it is no different from other human rights’ violations that take place in all other professions in the country. However, since the profession requires frequent field assignments and night shifts, these women are particularly vulnerable to assault by sexual offenders. Instances of sexual offences that took place in offices have been recounted by women members of the media circle, during the course of this study. They spoke of an alleged rape case that took place at a well known media house in Addis Ababa. The case was apparently covered up by the management of the organisation but the trauma of this woman journalist didn’t come to an end with the sexual offence committed in the office. She got pregnant after the assault and reportedly left the profession completely. The alleged offender, as told by a media professional at a media research organization, was never charged and remains in his position to date.

Many women journalists are aware of the labour rights under which they work mainly due to the fact that they have access to information on labour laws than their counterparts in other fields. But they are faced with many constraints such as lack of resources, inadequate professional skills and issues that touch on ethics as their male colleagues. Such difficulty is by no means different from the one faced by men journalists in the country. Maternity leaves are usually paid for and exercised in both private and government outlets. Highly subjective criteria are put in practice regarding salary and other financial benefits provided for men and women in the private media.

The issues of political pressure and commercial interest that affect professional freedom are not particularly limited to women in this profession. In fact, taking into consideration that most women journalists stick to non political and non sensitive business coverage, their chances of getting caught up in either political or commercial battles is rare compared with men practitioners. Given the unfavourable legal, media and human rights environment in Ethiopia, it becomes increasingly difficult and risky for women journalists to venture into areas that are termed as hotspots, such as press freedom, human rights and other issues that question or challenge the status quo.

**Leadership and Decision Making –‘The Glass Ceiling’**

*Leadership at the level of Media Institutions*

The study revealed that there are policies in many governmental media outlets to encourage women to join the media. Attention is currently paid to gender equality at all levels of federal and local institutions. However, gender mainstreaming is generally lacking in the editorial policies of media houses.

A closer look at the roughly 25 editors in chief positions in 2008 finds that only two are women, one of whom also owns the publication, and only one deputy editor in chief exists. Out of the more than 424 women journalists working with the four big news agencies in the country, (ENA, EPA, ETV, and WIC) in 2007, only 72 were women. Apart from one editor in chief at ENA, 3 senior editors, 13 editors, 8 deputy editors, 12 senior reporters, and 30 reporters were women.

At the six private media houses that currently control the largest circulation (‘Reporter’ Amharic, ‘The Reporter’ English (both printed by Media and Communication Centre), the Amharic Addis Admas, the Amharic Addis Neger, English weekly Fortune...
and Capital, out of more than 75 journalist working there, only 20 are women. 11 of these women are from Media and Communication Center which publishes the Amharic Reporter and the English The Reporter. Two editor and three senior reporter posts are the only middle management positions assumed by women at these organizations.

With regards the state monopoly, for the Ethiopian Television, 195 journalists were working in four sections (News, Program, Entertainment and Sports) in five languages in 2007. Out of this, only 43 were women and only 30% of these women were working on news desks while 35% of the men are assigned on news desks. The entertainment section is found to be reflective of “the soft territory category” as it was comprised with 21% of the women journalists in the organization while men only make up 11% of that staff. Women have fairly closed the gap in the programme section by making up 47% of the staff compared with 49% men.

Concerning media houses, women in Ethiopian media houses are extremely underrepresented and their influence on both structural and editorial decision-making can be termed as non-existent or extremely minimal. Only two women currently work as editors-in-chief of one of the English and one Amharic weekly’s in the country. The situation has, however, started to improve with such government-run media houses as more posts opened for qualified women to join in the profession. Of recent, more women recruits are working at the newly opened FM stations in Addis Ababa and regional towns as programme producers, news anchors and hosts. However, it should be noted that women still don’t make up even 25% of the total number of journalists working in the country which is suggestive of the need to give special attention to bring in more women into the profession and decision-making organs in the media houses.

The criteria for the promotion of women at media houses have been blamed for putting women at a disadvantage. Women journalists say that the perception by top management that women cannot devote their time to personnel management and editorial responsibilities makes deserved promotion a difficult and slow process for so many qualified women.

**Leadership at the level of Journalists Unions and Associations**

Women journalists are not members of currently functioning unions in the country except with the Ethiopian Media Women Association (EMWA) established by women media practitioners 10 years ago. EWMA addresses among other things issues of women in leadership in the media and in society in general. It recently launched a book which deals with women in leadership. The book entitled “Candace” aims to enforce the roles and positions of Ethiopian women leaders with the view of recording the history, challenges, and achievements of Ethiopian women inside different walks of life beginning from the 20th century, it also publishes a newsletter and has organized a media campaign during the 2005 elections that highlighted female candidates and the importance of voting for them.

The Ethiopian Women’s Media Association promoted the candidates using different media outlets, through radio, TV and billboards, and some of the female candidates won seats in Parliament. The Ethiopian Media Women Association (EMWA) in association with their Kenyan, Tanzanian and Ugandan counterparts also launched a regional media code of conduct on reporting child sexual abuse and exploitation.

Despite the efforts and gains made by EMWA, the study however revealed that current performance of Journalists’ associations and unions in the country could be fairly characterized as dysfunctional. They have failed to gain the trust of the main stakeholders in its establishment; journalists from expanding private press. The situation is more rightly disturbing when one sees that journalists from the private print media hold a strongly negative attitude towards the only existing union. One reason arises from their belief that the very establishment of such unions and other similar forums is politically motivated and the problem of non-accountability to their members.

Such low opinion of the private press towards media associations is not limited with the three year old union. It traces its root to the now defunct Ethiopian Free Press Journalists Association that was headed by exiled president Kifle Mulat. Though this former association used to confront the government on issues of press freedom violations, political affiliation with opposition
politics, mismanagement and alleged corruption have put the integrity and professional capacity of the leaders under a big question mark. It has also weakened the credibility of the activities and created suspicion among the very journalists whom the association claimed to represent. Subsequent corruption scandals and vested political interests have further eroded any remaining hope among the private media that strong and independent press associations would prevail in the country.

**Portrayal and giving prominence to gender issues**

The Media in Ethiopia and indeed in any other country is a reflection of the society, its norms and values. Gender sensitivity is not developed in all spheres of social, economic and political life in Ethiopia. Since women are largely deprived of decision-making or influencing positions in public life, the media has hopelessly fallen prey to the same gender-polarised portrayal of women in its coverage of issues. Women are perceptibly missing in news priority lists in the media while women in the informal sector are at a particular disadvantage as they assume the lowest coverage of programs, despite the fact that there are many women producers in the radio stations. The fact that expert voices addressing women’s issues and violation cases are usually performed by men also highlights the acute absence of women in the very cases that relate to them personally and professionally. Some women journalists blame the media for focusing too much on portraying women as sex objects (especially in arts and entertainment productions like films, music, commercials, etc) and stories of women as victims rather than women as expert voices on gender and development issues.

A primary impediment to women’s visibility in the Ethiopian media is culture which dictates that women should assume ‘backstage positions’ in almost all domains of life. Competitive salary could well be a secondary reason as financial certainty in the media is way below what is offered in other employment areas. Inconvenience of work place atmosphere, irregular working hours and daily pressure have all combined to produce a strong repellent to prospective women journalists to seek comfort in taking up public relation and other communication posts at international organisations.

The Media in the last years has seen a steadily increasing coverage of gender issues with diverse content and more interactive approach on the broadcast media. Rapid expansions of regional radio stations undertaken by the government (mainly FM) are ideal illustrations of a positive trend as interactive approach on gender issues have become more common. The ease and flexibility of these programmes have allowed participants to take active part in programmes, share experiences and forward suggestions on rights violation, reporting practices and relevant judiciary procedures though the impact of such interactive gender-related programmes is yet to be evaluated and seen.
Kenya Country Report: Summary

Training and Level of Education

In Kenya, out of the 14 people interviewed, 4 had post university education and training, 4 had university education and 6 attained diploma education and professional training. This study focused on media workers and journalists of both sexes of different age groups, who work in print and broadcast media, both private and public or government owned, and Union members and officials. Those interviewed included public relations officers working with the government, editors and media managers, reporters and information officers who are also government employees.

Career advancement, Conditions of work and work Environment

As far as employment and hours of work are concerned, 9 of the respondents were in full time employment, 2 were freelance while 3 worked part time. The longest serving respondent had worked for 10 years while the shortest serving one was only 3 months into the profession. 78 percent (11 out of 14) of the respondents reported working over 9 hours a day. Nine out of 14 said there was a gender friendly environment initiative in their workplace but women have to compete with men because there is no preferential treatment for any gender. The remaining five (35 percent) said No.

13 out of the 14 respondents said they were aware of labour rights. Only one (who is very young and new on the job) said no. 35 percent (or 5) said their work was being hampered/constrained by lack of resources, 3 said - resources/commercial interests, 3 highlighted - commercial interests, 1 said - resources/training/politics, while 1 pinpointed - resources/training.

11 out of 14 (78.5 percent) said they do not benefit from any Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Only 21.5 percent said they benefit from a CBA. Some of those who do not benefit from CBA said their organisation/s is yet to sign one with the union, were freelancers, or the media owner has been stifling CBA initiative.

10 (71 percent) said there was equal pay for men and women where they worked, while 4, or 29 percent said No. Half of the number said there is paid maternity leave provided at their workplaces while another half/50 percent said no. 9 or 64 percent said there is paid paternity leave provided. Some of those who said No said there was no such policy at their workplaces despite the existence of such a law in Kenya.

50 percent felt men and women are equally represented in their workplaces. Fewer women, as compared to men, were reported to be serving in senior positions. In more than half of the institutions, all senior and middle level positions are occupied by men, while only 2 out of the 14 media institutions are headed by women. This applies to the core staff which is dominated by men (62 percent). 10 out of 14 said that gender was not considered in promotion but performance and merit, 4 said, gender, experience and performance are considered.
Leadership and Decision Making – ‘The Glass Ceiling’

Leadership at the level of Media Institutions

5 of the respondents sit on the editorial board (decision-making organ), while 9 perform duties as assigned to them by editors/ managers. Nine out of 14 (or 64 percent: five of them men) said they have not experienced unfair treatment due to their gender while five (35 percent) said they have been treated unfairly because of their gender. One said her boss wanted sexual favours, another 1 said she was unfairly treated through unequal pay, while three reported discrimination in duties assignment.

Leadership at the level of Journalists Unions and Associations

8 said they were members while 5 said no. Those who said No cited many reasons including there is no strong union, yet to make up mind to join and, does not know how to join the union (lack of information).

6 said there was a policy on gender, 3 said No, 8 were not aware. Of those who said yes, one said she is not aware of its content. For sexual harassment policy in the union/association: 7 were not aware, 3 said Yes with one saying she is however not aware of its content. 4 said no.

100 percent reported that policies are formulated in their media houses through consultations, with only 2 saying both sexes are not consulted/involved in the process equally. Six of the respondents have fulfilled leadership roles in the union/ association, while 8 said No. Nine of the respondents have participated in union/association elections/meetings, with 6 voting in elections, 2 contesting elections, 1 as an observer. Those who responded with a No are not union members.

12 (or 85 percent) said women and men are not equally represented in the union/association. The union has a membership of about 200 members, 152 of them being men and 48 women. The Union uses both election and co-option method to elect its members into decision-making positions (executive committee). The executive committee is comprised of 7 members, 5 of them men. Only 2 are women. The chairperson is a man, vice chairperson is a man, the treasurer is a woman, the Secretary General is a man, the Assistant Secretary General is a woman. Other positions are: Organizing Secretary (man), Assistant Treasurer (man). The Union does not embark on gender training due to resources constraints.

It should be noted that in Kenya, there also exists an Association of Media Women in Kenya, (AMWIK). It is a national media Association established in 1983 for women journalists from the print, electronic media and other areas of communication prior to the United Nation’s Third World Women’s Conference held in Nairobi in 1985. AMWIK’s primary focus is women, and it promotes gender equality and equity.

Its programmes include among others, conducting campaigns against gender based violence, female genital mutilation/ cutting, child labour, organising regional exchange programmes etc.

In 2004, the association set up the AMWIK Scholarship Fund to assist member’s access higher education for their own benefit and that of the entire community. The scholarship fund is revolving funds meaning that those that benefit from it will pay back at least a certain percentage to enable other members get the opportunity too. This is all aimed at addressing the training and development needs of women in the media thus empowering them for leadership positions.

Portrayal and giving prominence to gender issues

6 out of 14 or 42 percent of those interviewed said they cover all kinds of issues, 21 percent cover politics, 20 percent cover business and development issues, and only 8 percent cover gender issues, with the remaining 9 percent covering health, science and other issues.
Gender issues in the media is not a priority like other issues and only 28 percent said they report gender issues quite often, and another 28 percent said they do that regularly. 14 percent said they do not give considerations to gender issues. Only 6 out of the 14 said their media houses report on gender issues quite often. Another 6 said they do that occasionally, with 1 saying weekly, and another 1 saying monthly.

100 percent (all respondents) said there was no fair gender portrayal in the media, with some pointing out that the media tends to give more attention to male issues/voices, which they attributed to bias by male media practitioners. Some also attributed this to inferiority complex exhibited by some women media practitioners. They pointed the impediments to women’s visibility in the media as: stereotypes, domination of decision-making organs by men, cultural and traditional beliefs and practices, and that there are very few women opinion leaders.

If gender awareness and sensitivity built into all reporting requirements, 78.5 percent (11) said No, while the rest said Yes, but were not adhered to in practice. All the respondents said media coverage does not give fair and equal space/time to women’s and men’s voices. All respondents said gender issues rarely make front page stories, and this only happens mostly when the story is negative.

71 percent reported societal imbalance each time they see/listen to or read any gender issue in the media. 29 percent said they get the impression of abuse and unfair treatment. 71 percent reported noticing gender biases in how events are portrayed by the media, while 29 percent said they can only notice that sometimes.
Rwandan Country Report: Summary

In Rwanda, there is only one television station (TV Rwanda). For all press organs, be it print or broadcast media, the Rwanda Press High Council has already distributed 300 press cards and the activity is going on. There are 36 women out of 300 journalists, representing 12% of the total workforce.

In Rwanda, political news dominates the other sectors like justice, health, economy, society, etc. The gender dimension is feebly considered in collecting and publishing news, especially in the private media. In public media, gender issue is considered in line with the government policy on gender. Besides, the public media has employed a bigger number of women compared to the private media. For example, in Radio Rwanda, women journalists represent 41.1% of the whole staff. The questionnaire was distributed to 15 people whose experience ranges from one year old and 15 working years, presented as follows:

Training and Level of Education

The study in Rwanda did not indicate the level of education and training of the respondents. However, those interviewed have a work experience ranging from one year to fifteen years. The study pointed out that the printed press either public or private is not yet able to deliver mass information because of a very strong oral communication culture. There is a very high rate of illiteracy for the adult population in Rwanda, 35.5%, according to population census in 2002.

Career advancement, Conditions of work and work Environment

Most of the respondents say that they work 8 hours per day. Some can go up to 12 hours because of a serious lack of human resources. In terms of journalist rights, the study revealed that the journalists are aware of their rights and are claiming them. However, most of them are convinced of the specificity of their work. « If it happens that we work more than 8 hours per day, this is related to the nature of our job as journalists », said most of the respondents. But this poses an obstacle for women who would like to join the press sector, as it was pointed out by one of the respondents. Night shifts, early morning work, coverage of events which take long hours, long absence of the women from the family, Rwanda’s culture which for a long time presents women as inferior to men are the main obstacles to women’s visibility in Rwandese media and constitute, according to correspondents many factors for women to join the journalism sector.

Leadership and Decision Making – ‘The Glass Ceiling’

Leadership at the level of Media Institutions

With regards the representation of women in media institutions, the public/state media respects this trend. Women constitute 30% based on the provisions of the Rwandese Constitution, article 9, indent 4; which states « Rwanda state is committed to build a nation based on people’s rights, democratic regime, equality between all Rwandese and equality between women and men by allocating to women 30% in decision making posts ». For example, the Executive Council of Information in Rwanda...
(ORINFOR) is composed of 7 members; 2 of them are women. The only National Television channel is managed by a woman whereas the National Radio and the 2 government newspapers are headed by men.

Four (4) women out of 13 journalists working for ORINFOR throughout the country are women and these positions are considered as editors in chief. Elsewhere, only two newspapers Kinyamateka and Rugari and Radio Maria Rwanda have women as editors in chief.

In many private press enterprises, decision making positions are held by men. Women representation varies from one enterprise to another. One of our respondents who says he works at the Rwanda Radio mentioned that out of a total of 34 journalists comprising reporters and producers, 14 are women. At radio Izuba, a community radio based in eastern Rwanda, there are 3 women out of 8 journalists. In The New Times, women are 11 out of 56 journalists. In commercial Radio stations, at Radio 10 for example, all the 5 reporters and producers are men.

There is no policy on gender within the media houses.

**Leadership at the level of Journalists Unions and Associations**

With regards representation and participation of women in decision making in the unions and associations, this remains an area that requires much attention. Women’s presence in the unions and associations is very low. For example, the Rwanda Journalists Association is composed of 400 journalists; only 50 of them are women that means 12.5%. But there are other specialised journalists associations that are composed of journalists who cover specific issues. The Media Women’s Association (ARFEM) has a membership of 36 people, all of whom are women. There is also an association named Club la Voix du genre (Voice of Gender club) which is interested in gender issues. However, their activities are not visible due to lack of financial means.

Out of a membership of 82 persons; 57 of them are women. The study also discovered other associations where women are poorly represented. For example, the Association of journalists against HIV/AIDS (ABASIRWA) is composed of 20 men and 7 women, i.e. 25%.

In order to elect people to positions of decision making in the journalists associations, the following criteria are used: ability, experience, education level, good behaviour, good will to promote media professional associations. But the study discovered that none of those professional associations has a gender policy. All of them are at a beginners level and do not possess sufficient human, financial and material resources; consequently, they are not able to organise training on gender issues for even their members. There is no gender policy in any of the associations or union.

**Portrayal and giving prominence to gender issues**

According to some respondents gender issues are reported in a subjective manner. Very often, the media portray women as victims of rape or other physical abuse. The lack of sufficient visibility of women in Rwanda is not only limited to the media but also to their participation as key sources of information because of the Rwandese culture which restricts women from expressing themselves in public. They dare not make public statements; they dare not take part in phone in radio programmes and they dare not write articles for the press.

The fact that very few women are specialists in various sectors contributes to weak visibility for women as key sources of information. Very few women are specialists in political science, very few medical doctors, very few historians, specialist in volcanology etc.
Gender dimension is really taken into account by the public media. For example, reporting on an accident, a public media points out how many women were involved; among students who succeed in national exams, the number of girls is always published. In private media especially commercial ones however, profit making is the main criteria when it comes to selection of stories to report on. They are doing business.

Are gender stories put on front pages in newspapers and other media? The study found out that this depends to a large extent on the news hierarchy that the newsroom has adopted in terms of prioritising news. But most of the time, news reported on gender issues are put in the middle of the newspaper or news broadcast. We only can find gender news on front pages in case of breaking news.

Priority is always given to politics as compared to other topics like justice, social issues, economy and health by both the public and private audiovisual media. The other programmes, like live phone in programmes, focus on sports, music, as well as sexual and reproductive health issues. Gender dimension is weakly considered in collecting and publishing news, especially in private media. In the public media, gender issues are more or less considered given that these media must popularise the government’s policy on gender. The public media have a considerable number of female journalists compared to the private media. For example, at radio Rwanda, the women journalists and producers represent 41.1% of the total staff.

3 out of the respondents acknowledged that they deal with gender issues on a daily basis. Others said that they do it occasionally, when there are gender related events such as on International Women’s Day on March 8th.

The Rwanda case is particular, in the sense that its national constitution makes provision for gender mainstreaming and 30% representation by women in positions of decision making. This is a very important basis on which women can claim their rights, both in public and private media on the basis of the provisions of the constitution.
Somalia Country Report: Summary

Training and Level of Education

Journalists in Somalia work in very difficult circumstances, filled with turbulence, crisis and insecurity. The study found out that journalists complained of inadequate training opportunities and they lack the skills and know how to report on conflict stricken areas and to tell the society what actually exists in the country. Nonetheless, the study found out that despite the difficulties and constraints that journalists encounter, Somali women journalists put in a lot of effort to include gender issues in their coverage especially in terms of the crisis and insecurity, even sometimes when they report about the truth they can be victimised by being sacked or otherwise.

All the respondents complained of lack of training as a hindrance to optimum performance, saying as a result of that they lack requisite skills to do their work. 100 percent of the respondents said they report frequently on gender issues, but that the reporting does not necessarily satisfy the quest for gender mainstreaming. They pointed out the need for training of women journalists on gender equality and means of addressing unequal payment through Collective Bargaining agreement (CBA). Usually, it is the administrators at media houses who make the final decision on whether or not to report on gender issues. Women journalists don’t know their rights as workers. They also do not know what they need to do to improve the situation.

Career advancement, Conditions of work and work Environment

The ongoing state of anarchy and civil conflict has dismantled Somalia, causing death, suffering, displacement and a lot of chaos to the country and its people. The conflict has not only affected the people alone but it has had a debilitating effect on the media environment as a whole. Eight Media workers were intentionally killed in Somalia in 2007 alone, and killings, arrests, harassment, intimidation and death threats always face the media professionals during their line of work resulting in mass exodus of journalists who flee to neighbouring countries such as Djibouti, Kenya, and Uganda. Others also flee to Europe in search of better living conditions.

Women journalists are not spared either, besides being faced with inequality challenges posed by the gender imbalance in the country. A bigger percentage of gender related violations, whether sex abuse or other violations, remain unreported for fear of discrimination among the society in line with the strict cultural values. Women who get raped or those who get involved in sex scandals are ostracized and discriminated against. In addition, they are out-casted and will not be married.

Somali women journalists work in extreme and dangerous situations. During the study, fifteen women journalists were interviewed in different parts of Somalia from different media stations and union /associations. 3 out of the 15 women work part time, while the rest work full time. Most of them have worked for over 5 years, normally covering gender issues; all of them work more than 6 hours a day. The women said they work without benefitting from maternity leave. This is not known in Somalia at all but employers give the leave as they decide or deem fit. Some of the women have been killed, wounded, divorced or punished while searching for news or because of their journalistic activities in the country.

Their work is generally affected by lack of security and bad leadership. All of those interviewed do not benefit from the Collective Bargaining Agreement at their workplaces, and salaries and benefits are not equal. Male journalists are better paid compared to their female counterparts. There are no initiatives in place to promote gender equity, and most of them know that they are losing what is rightly theirs. Somali women journalists have persistently tried to raise the issue of gender discrimination
in their places of work but more often they get reprimanded or are fired from their workplaces. This problem persists due to cultural and political pressure coupled with ignorance/lack of relevant information or awareness.

Three of the respondents narrated their ordeal of discrimination, threats and assaults while executing their work as journalists. Deeqo Muumin is a journalist at radio Banadir, who encountered this incident while going to work. At the entrance of her place of work a fire broke out accidentally.

“It was in December 2007, I was going to the Banaadir Radio station which is in the north side of Mogadishu, I had a tragedy. The Ethiopian troops and insurgents used hand bombs. I was injured on my face and shocked. I did not get adequate medical care or assistance from my media house. I like my profession but I now forget things very easily” she lamented.

Ms. Yaasmiin is a mother with 6 children she works with Hurmo Radio, which is part of the FM Radios that exist in Mogadishu. She said she was divorced because of the reports she was doing. She complained that her aim was to become part of the core staff of the station, but, not to be divorced.

Seynab Abuukar is also a journalist who works for Horary Radio, she mostly reports on the political affairs in the Government areas like the parliament of Somalia and the most dangerous areas. She always comes across hazardous actions from the Authorities. She disclosed that she was slapped publicly and mishandled by Somali troops in Mogadishu.

**Leadership and Decision Making –‘The Glass Ceiling’**

**Leadership at the level of Media Institutions**

The media in Somalia has grown despite the chaos that ensued after the fall of the military government of Gen. Siad Bare. Currently, there are over 20 independent radio stations, more than 60 privately owned newspapers and more than 100 Somali websites on the internet, but the actual ratio of women professionals who hold management positions or editors is less than 1%. In addition, there are a number of papers which are run by women editors and women managers. These papers were established by female journalists who dedicated themselves to promoting their professional and gender issues through the media. Meanwhile, they neither sit at the decision-making organs of the media institutions nor work as managing directors, editors and owners. None of the respondents said they participate in the editorial meetings of their media houses, and none of them sits at the decision-making organ of their media house. 100 percent of the respondents said they have experienced unequal treatment in their work place.

**Leadership at the level of Journalists Unions and Associations**

There is no equal representation in the unions and associations, though 3 of 9 members of the executive committee of the National Union of Somali Journalists are women. The study did not report of the availability of training programmes at the level of the union on gender issues or if a gender policy is in place.

**Portrayal and giving prominence to gender issues**

All the respondents agreed that the media reports on gender issues when women suffer from tribulations as a result of war and brutal confrontations in the country. For example, the local radio station airs women’s voices pertaining to an issue affecting them like when their families/community are faced with crisis, and they talk emotionally about such things especially when food prices are up.

Getting women’s voices as role models is almost impossible and non-existent. In politics, women are not really involved, except very few members in the parliament who wield no power with regards to the country’s political leadership, the respondents stated. Economically, the women are neither recognised in the development agenda of the country, nor are they consulted in the face of the regional conflicts that are hurting the country’s economy.

Although there are more women who are involved in business and women entrepreneurs who can invent or create new businesses, they have no skills and technical knowhow of how to promote their businesses.
Sudan Country Report: Summary

Training and Level of Education

Journalism started in Sudan in 1896, issuing from the beginning of the last century when writings by women appeared in the daily newspapers. However, at that time the women wrote using pen-names because of social and traditional constraints. It was against the culture and religion for women to appear in public, including their names being read in print.

But 1947 witnessed the birth of the first women’s magazine published by a Sudanese lady of Armenian origin. It is in the same year that women started working in broadcasting houses (radio) and two decades later they joined the TV.

More generations followed suit, working in all the fields of the mass media and particularly in journalism.

Currently, the number of female journalists is approximated at one third (30 percent) of the total number of media practitioners in the country. They are 1119 women out of the 3885 journalists in Sudan.

Though all of these journalists are eligible to work professionally in all types of the media, some of them do not have the same opportunity or chance to practice because all newspapers are owned by private enterprises, in accordance with the law. Private ownership is predicated on profit and the media owners would only employ a small number and maximize production and profit.

12 people responded out of 14 reflecting all types of media, experiences and age. With regards their levels of education, 5 of them have bachelor degrees in communication, and 7 of them have post graduate studies while 2 among them have PHD degrees.

Two of the respondents said political pressure forces them not to cover certain stories. Three chose training as an impediment, while one pointed an accusing finger at all the factors (politics, training and resources, commercial, and cultural and religious interests). Six of them said (lack of) resources is a real impediment to their work.

Career advancement, Conditions of work and work Environment

The study revealed that all participants work on full time basis, their working hours per day varies from 6 hours to 14 hours. One of the respondents, Gata for example, works 14 hours in two publication houses at the same time as she is responsible for the public relation and advertising section in Ajrass – El-huriya daily, and an editor in Juba Post daily also. In their work they cover current affairs, local, international, political, economic, social, population, technical and children’s issues.

Half of them (50%) confirmed there was no initiative in place to promote a gender friendly work environment. 11 of them said they were aware of their rights. Only one participant said she doesn’t know her rights because she works in the non-governmental sector, which is not included in the public sector laws, as she thinks. However, actually the private sector has its law too that safeguards the interest and rights of a worker.

Ten out of 12 said they benefit from collective bargaining agreement and that with regard to their work, salaries were equal in accordance with the country’s labour law. Paid maternity leave is provided for all women workers, but the law does not include any item about paternity leave, and if it’s included it will not be socially accepted in the community.
Leadership and Decision Making – ‘The Glass Ceiling’

Leadership at the level of Media Institutions

Only 3 of the participants do not sit in decision-making positions in their media institutions. 5 out of 12 said they witnessed some sort of unfair treatment like unequal pay, or getting the same opportunities for promotion. 7 reported experiencing unequal pay, or not getting the same opportunities for promotion compared to men. One said she was not having the same opportunities to cover events outside the country. She attributed this to the domination of decision-making organs by men.

Most of the respondents felt that women and men journalists are equally represented in media institutions, only three of them said no. It is obvious that though women are the majority of workers in media houses, they are not holding senior positions.

Leadership at the level of Journalists Unions and Associations

The total number of members in the executive committee of the Sudanese Journalist Union is 30 members, 26 men, 4 women. In the top leadership, only the assistant secretary-general is a woman. But the women secretariat and social secretariat are headed by women.

Eight out of the 12 respondents are members of the Sudanese Journalist Union, which has in its charter a policy to empower women in the media, raise their awareness and enable them to get better and fair opportunities. However, the charter does not specifically speak about sexual harassment. Policies are formulated collectively in regular meetings of the union where women and men participate equally. Seven respondents have not fulfilled leadership roles in the union as with one saying she is usually very busy with editing and administrative responsibilities to the extent that she finds no time to get involved in such activities. Only five of the respondents said they have attended meetings of the union, and respondents felt women and men were represented equally in the union, according to the study, and elections are open to everyone irrespective of gender.

Manal El Badry who is the chairperson of the Sudanese Women Development Society says that 10% of the members are men while 90% are women and that experience and skills are the criteria they use to choose or elect members into decision-making positions.

The union carries out gender training for its members through symposia and seminars where both men and women participate. Dr. Intesar teaches journalism in the faculty of Information in Omdurman Islamic University- Girls Center. They do report on gender issues when it is necessary, the same goes for their media houses.

Portrayal and Giving Prominence to Gender Issues

7 out of 12 believe there is fair gender portrayal in the media, in a country where culture respects women, and that gender issues are being given enough attention. However, lack of awareness, lack of resources and male domination are some of the main impediments to women’s visibility in the media.

Five out of 12 felt media coverage doesn’t give fair and equal space and time to women’s and men’s voices, and the majority feel that gender stories do not make front page, and the first impression when they see programmes on gender are marginalisation, discrimination, weakness and violence.

Two of participants said: that political pressure forces them not to cover certain stories. Three chose the training as a factor. One said that both political and training factors prevent her from covering certain stories, while six of them said that resources are the real problem; according to one respondent, Intesar Omer, “lack of awareness, lack of resources and men’s domination are some of the main impediments to women’s visibility in the media.”

But on the other hand some participants believe that women are visible in the media, Abla Bakhat says: “religion and good tradition enhance the public role of women for the benefit of the society, a Sudanese saying goes: women are half of society, thus gender awareness is built into all reporting requirements” But five other respondents disagreed claiming that media coverage doesn’t give fair and equal space and time to women’s and men’s voices and that gender stories does not make front pages or headlines.
Tanzania Country Report: Summary

Training and Level of Education

The media industry in Tanzania has grown tremendously especially after introduction of multi-party political democracy and liberalization of the press in 1992. At present Tanzania is proud to have a considerable number of news papers, radio and television stations. The media industry in Tanzania today consists of both government and privately owned companies. Some religious institutions and political parties also own some media companies.

The state of women journalists in Tanzania is tremendously weak due to the fact that many women journalists have low education qualification and lack confidence and think that they are not as capable as men. Also male dominated media industry makes the working environment sexist by using inappropriate language. The study reveals that although gender issues are covered by the media, they do not make front-page stories. This is due to the fact that most of the media houses are political and business oriented.

The study revealed that there is low level of education among female journalists compared to male journalists, country culture, religious ethnicity and lack of self confidence among female journalists.

Career advancement, Conditions of work and work Environment

The study shows that most of the journalists are employed on full time basis and work more than ten hours a day, and tied up with a lot of assignments which lead to the increasingly low participation on union/association activities. In Tanzania, there is no doubt that female journalists are still taken for granted. Females are still considered as bad credit risks, low managerial knowledge and entrepreneurships.

The study shows that men who are in senior management positions force women journalists to go to bed with them in favour of reporting excellence. It happens that most of the female refuse to offer sex; they believe in themselves and understand that they are the most precious beings worth far more than any human currency can afford.

The study revealed that most of the journalists in Tanzania do not benefit from collective bargaining agreement because most of them are not trade unionists. Not forgetting that in the Tanzanian media industry there is total exclusion of gender issue and their linkage in collective bargaining agreements and contracts entered to between the representative of the employers or by themselves and the trade unions in resolving outstanding labour issues. But the good news is that there is no difference in salaries and benefits between male and female employees.

However, something that came out very strongly in the Tanzanian study is the issue of sexual violence which is enclosed in a great wall of silence. The study revealed that women journalists are the ones mainly affected by sexual violence. Two reasons were advanced by the study, firstly that some female journalists are not confident enough of their own capability, or that they are being seduced by those men in senior management positions in favour of getting by-lines. Some of the respondents gave their own personal stories. This makes the work environment increasingly difficult. Examples of such experiences are: M.K.M (MA fine Art) programme officer and producer of Independent television; she was unfairly treated in the workplace because of her gender.
J.M (37 years), editor of radio uhuru who was harassed and threatened with death said that male journalists who are in senior management positions may encourage the prevalence of sexual violence in media industry because of the decision and power vested in them. This gives room to suppression of assignments of female journalists, and those male journalists could put sexual interests ahead of journalism ethics.

J.L (53 years), editor of uhuru newspaper who happened to be discriminated and humiliated due to her gender and age said that a lot of young female journalists have been exposed to HIV, she gave an example of young female journalist who passed away May last year, claimed to have been infected with the virus by an editor. This should challenge female journalists to work harder and be more focused and determined rather than looking for short cuts.

**Leadership and Decision Making – ‘The Glass Ceiling’**

**Leadership at the level of Media Institutions**

The study showed that female and male journalists are unequally represented in media institutions. This is because female journalists are fewer in management positions which corresponds to their smaller number as journalists in the entire field.

**Leadership at the level of Journalists Unions and Associations**

The study showed that most of the journalists are not members of union/association and they know nothing about policies of gender and sexual harassment. They admitted that they do not know how policies are formulated at the level of the unions or associations. Most of them have never fulfilled any leadership role and even participated in union/association’s elections/meeting due to the fact that most female journalists are ignorant about campaigning and contesting procedures and do not have the chance to learn about them because of family responsibilities. Secondly, male-dominated union/associations sometimes make the working environment sexist by using inappropriate language to women. Also job segregation, whereby women are often employed under the supervision of men and find it hard to represent other workers at higher union/association levels.

In addition, family responsibilities and women’s multiple roles limit their active involvement in union activities. The study also revealed that journalists’ unions/associations do not embark on gender training for its members due to lack of funds and manpower. The respondents suggested that unions/associations should organise training/workshops on equal opportunities basis, setting quantitative objective and always reviewing procedures for hiring and promotion that would ensure gender equity.

It is important to point out the existence of an association that regroups women journalists in Tanzania. The Tanzania Media Women’s Association (TAMWA) recently commemorated 20 years of advocacy for women’s human rights including women in the media. As part of the commemoration, TAMWA opened a self-sponsored office building; launched a Fundraising Campaign for a Women’s Media and Documentation Centre; and a book of TAMWA’s story in pioneering social transformation in Tanzania as experienced by members, supporters and friends.

TAMWA was officially launched and registered in 1987 by 10 women pioneers working in the media with two major objectives: to agitate for a positive portrayal of women in the media; and to raise the academic and professional standards of female journalist to enable them to assume positions of influence and leadership in the media with the expectation that they will have a voice with regard media content and output in so far as its portrayal of women. The association has demonstrated its commitment in the struggles against domestic violence and notably wife beating, incest, and family neglect together with sexual harassment at workplaces TAMWA records successes not just institutionally, but also with her membership which comprises of exceptional pioneers. It is one of the foremost advocacy organisations for women’s rights in Tanzania.
TAMWA’s command of the local media is unparallel and stems from years of capacity building and advocacy in various media institutions. It is best known for its work in gender-based violence. TAMWA could be a strong alliance and a strategic partner for any media and gender work that is envisaged to be carried out in Tanzania.

**Portrayal and Giving Prominence to Gender Issues**

There is no air gender portrayal in the media; women are taken as commodities and something that satisfy men’s pleasure. The study shows that the main impediments to women’s visibility in media are; most of them lack confidence which leads to low participation in the profession, and most of the women are not well educated. In addition, family responsibilities and women’s multiple roles limit their visibility in the media.

The respondents had the same impression about gender when they see the articles, view programmes or listen to the radio. They recommended the following; empowering women and strengthening women’s capability in development. Others saw capacity building and promotion of human rights as key to the elimination of sexual and social exclusion which is closely linked to the position of the woman within the social strata.

In order to effectively combat sexism in the media and union/association, unions and associations’ thinking and actions must be gender sensitive. Such approach will enable mainstreaming of gender issues into the policies and programmes of the unions and associations rather than addressing the issue from the perspective that it is mainly women’s affair.
Uganda Country Report: Summary

Training and Level of Education

In Uganda, the broadcast sector is by far the largest and most geographically diverse in the country. It is also the largest employer and because of its relative youth, remains the most challenging in terms of respect for professionalism and labour rights.

While this proliferation of media has opened the way for increased participation by women in the industry, especially broadcast, their representation at the top end of the hierarchy remains an issue.

Perhaps as a result of the political evolution over the past two decades which has seen women allocated a quota of at least 10 percent of all elective political office and the emerging power of women in the economic and social spheres; there is more time and dedicated space allocated to gender issues in the media today. But there appears to be no gender consciousness in spontaneous reporting of news outside this dedicated space, which appears to be aimed at the special interest audience. On the upside however, the choice of stories carried in gender sections and programmes on air is very good, ably highlighting the challenges, problems, success and inspiring stories about women.

The study did not come out with information on education and training of the respondents who took part in the study.

Career advancement, Conditions of work and work Environment

On average Ugandan journalists work 9 hours a day with eight hours being the lowest and 13 hours the highest time spent at work. Forty percent report initiatives that promote gender to be in place while 30 percent were not aware of their rights as workers.

Resources emerged as the major constraint to journalistic work, followed by political pressure and training in that order.

None of the respondents benefits from a Collective Bargaining Agreement although all reported parity in pay for both genders. None worked in a decision making position but only two, representing 20 percent of the sample reported experiencing unfair treatment on the basis of their gender. In one case this unfair treatment related to gender stereotyping where women were denied assignments considered challenging while in the other instance, women were assigned because of their sexuality and the likely impact this was expected to have in terms of softening sources of information.

Paid Maternity leave is largely available; only 20 percent reported availability of paid paternity leave although freelance workers don’t enjoy this privilege.

Leadership and Decision Making – ‘The Glass Ceiling’

Leadership at the level of Media Institutions

Across the board, there are fewer women journalists in the profession and even fewer at the middle and top ends of the hierarchy. Half of the respondents report performance based promotion at work; one cites favouritism while 40 percent were
not sure or aware of any system in place. Forty percent reported initiatives that promote gender to be in place while 30 percent were not aware of their rights as workers.

Resources emerged as the major constraint to journalistic work, followed by political pressure and training in that order.

**Leadership at the level of Journalists Unions and Associations**

80 percent of respondents belong to a union or association although only 75 percent of those who subscribed were aware of the existence of a gender policy. Those who did not know about such a policy blamed it on their own lack of effort to find out and no respondent reported knowledge of a sexual harassment policy in the union or association.

A majority, 60 percent, reported meetings as the most common mode of contact with the union/association and women have an equal opportunity to contribute at these events although few have played any leadership role. The majority opinion is that women and men are not equally represented in the union/association although leaders get into position through a democratic process of election. The executive on average has 10 members as reported by most respondents, and men dominate these positions. Nobody appears to have immediate recall of gender specific training by the Union, in recent times, something that highlights the resource constraints unions/associations face.

In Uganda there exists a women’s media association called the Uganda Media Women’s Association (UMWA). It was formed in 1983 by and for female journalists from government and the private media. As an association of professional women journalists, the primary goal is to promote interactive communication and to enhance visibility and status among the less advantaged groups so that equal gender relations can be realised. Its objectives include among others:

- To provide a forum for exchange of ideas and technical skills and resources for media women, and the public at large;
- To promote good governance in this country through the free flow of information;
- To address the concerns of women in all fields through the efforts of women in media, to counter the negative portrayal of women in the media;

UMWA conducts training and advocacy programmes and activities on human rights, media, gender and for some time now has been running a Rural Outreach Program (ROP) in 10 districts in Uganda aimed at sensitising the communities on their rights and on topical issues such as the long felt marginalisation of women in the political, economic and social fields. UMWA could serve as a potential and strategic partner for any gender mainstreaming programme and activities that will be undertaken in Uganda.

**Portrayal and giving Prominence to Gender Issues**

Although there are exceptions, the overall view is that gender portrayal in the media is still skewed in favour of men; gender awareness and sensitivity is not yet built into reporting requirements; but at the same time don’t think there is conscious gender bias in the way events are portrayed.

Though issues remain, the survey shows a wide gap between gender practices in the print and broadcast media. There is also wide variation based on geographical factors with the media based in the capital more likely to make progress towards gender parity than upcountry and resource handicapped broadcast stations that dominate the rural media.

There is also evidence of a positive trend in the print media, largely because it has been around longer and the major titles have reasonable income streams. But lack of awareness of their rights as workers, by far remains the biggest impediment to further progress in this area.
Conclusion

Throughout the nine countries surveyed, women journalists are under-represented and portrayed in limited roles in the media. In the news room, there is a tendency to report on events rather than issues, like gender issues. The country studies reveal that journalism is a profession strongly dominated by male. Women journalists earn less than their male colleagues.

Female media professionals have a lot of challenges in contrast to men. Women face cultural and societal problems that hinder their work. Married women journalists state that their husbands are discontented of their professional tasks. Women journalists mostly associated to report soft stories.

The situation is even more difficult in countries in conflict and in countries where press freedom is gagged. These will certainly have serious repercussions on people taking up journalism as a profession or even daring to cover certain issues that challenge the status quo. More often than not, women will be most affected due to family and societal pressures.

In terms of weakness, there is the problem of low education levels among the female journalists compared to their male counterparts. Other blemishes include country culture, religion, ethnicity and lack of self-esteem among female journalists.

Negative portrayal of women in the media is a threat. In Tanzania there is a tendency of male dominated management and adverts which depict females as commodities.

The existing women’s journalist associations in countries like Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda have been working and making strides in the area of gender, media and development. Journalists’ Unions should try to develop strategic partnerships and strategic networking opportunities with such associations where they exist.
Recommendations for Action

To overcome huge challenges facing the region in its quest to enhance gender equality in the media institutions, unions, associations and the society at large in the Eastern Africa Region, it is indispensable to take a holistic approach to the problems and issues.

1. EAJA should formulate a comprehensive regional gender sensitive policy framework which mainstreams gender into its structures, programmes and processes that would serve as a guiding tool to the unions and associations in the interest of gender equality and equity.

2. EAJA should include training in leadership, management and gender in its training policies and programmes for media institutions, journalists unions and associations;

3. More opportunities should be given to women for training in career development and the requisite professional skills based on a training needs assessment; this will help build the capacity of women and also bridge the gap of representation at the level of decision making and management.

4. EAJA should embark on a review of the statutes, constitutions and collective bargaining agreements of its membership with a view to mainstream gender equality into the operations of the unions and associations as well as promoting gender concerns, in particular issues that are specific to women at the work place.

5. EAJA should come up with specific programmes for media employers and editors, especially in countries in conflict, so that they provide their employees - irrespective of their gender - with a conducive work environment which guarantees their safety and security.

6. All the interventions concerning the media and gender should base themselves on capacity building in terms of education for female journalists. The more the female journalists get educated, the more they will occupy senior management positions in the media houses. The more they are educated the more they will feel confident and the less they will seek for favours.

7. Advocacy and lobbying should be used to get as many as possible female journalists to join the institutions for quality education.

8. Awareness on gender programmes should be taken on board as a strategy taking the advantage of media pluralism in the country.

9. Trade unions rights should be taken seriously in order to achieve balance on media and gender, and to achieve gender-sensitive collective bargaining agreements.

10. Capacity building in journalism trade union rights and collective bargaining agreement should be the hallmark for future plans and development in these countries.
The study in the nine countries clearly demonstration the glaring gender-based inequities and imbalances both in the content and context of what the media produces as well as who is represented in the media and where.

This is very much similar to the results of the third Global Media Monitoring Campaign (GMMP 2005) coordinated by the World Association of Christian Communication, WACC, that brought together gender & media activists, grassroots communications groups, academics, media professionals, alternative media networks and other groups from the world over to monitor their national news media for specified indicators of gender bias and representation. The net result is a perpetuation and reinforcement of certain stereotypes about gender that in turn inform and reinforce practice. Half the world’s population are barely present. Interestingly, the study also found excellent examples of exemplary gender balanced and gender sensitive journalism in some countries. The GMMP of 2005 in particular found that women are dramatically under-represented in the news; only 21% of news subjects are female and women’s voices are rarely heard in topics that dominate the news agenda.

A snapshot of the news in Africa on 16/02/05 (South Africa, Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mauritius, Seychelles, Senegal, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda) shows the following:

- **4,372 people (news actors, subjects, and people making the news) analyzed in:**
  - 150 media (television, radio, newspapers)
  - 1,463 news items
  - 18 countries

**Findings:**

- Over 50% of the population are women, but only 19% of the people featured in the news are women.
- 28% of radio, television and newspaper reporters are women.

- Who reports what:
  - 100% - weather reporters are women
  - 33% - social & legal reporters
  - 28% - science reporters
  - 21% - politics
  - 33% - economy
  - 31% - crime & violence
  - 31% - celebrity news

- Of the news subjects selected by female reporters, 28% are female, compared to 17% male in the case of male reporters.
- 21% of news subjects on TV are female, 12% in radio and 21% in newspapers.
- 19% of female news subjects are identified by family status, compared to 5% male news subjects.
- 4% of the stories clearly highlight equality.
- 3% clearly challenge stereotypes.
- 3% clearly reinforce stereotypes.
- 94% neither challenge nor reinforce stereotypes.
Addressing issues of gender inequality and inequity in the media cannot be done in isolation of what obtains at the level of our countries, regions and the world at large. We need to be au fait with international and regional protocols and conventions that our governments have signed and ratified and to which we should all adhere. Such instruments include the Beijing Platform of Action. For example, Section J1 of the document states:

‘Strategic objective J.1: Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication; Strategic objective J.2.: Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media’ (Section J, The Beijing Platform for Action for the Advancement of Women, 1995)

In July 2003, the Conference of African Heads of state and government, in Maputo, Mozambique, adopted The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. The protocol notes among others, the African Platform for Action and the Dakar Declaration of 1994 and the Beijing Platform for Action of 1995 call on all Member States of the United Nations, which have made a solemn commitment to implement them, to take concrete steps to give greater attention to the human rights of women in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination and of gender-based violence against women; there is adequate provision in the protocol to address gender inequality and the violations of women’s rights;

Article 3.4 on the Right to Dignity says:
States Parties shall adopt and implement appropriate measures to ensure the protection of every woman’s right to respect for her dignity, and protection of women from all forms of violence, particularly sexual and verbal violence.

Article 4: The Right to Life, Integrity and Security of the Person
Every woman shall be entitled to respect for her life and the integrity and security of her person.

Article 9: The Right to Participation in the Political and Decision-Making Process
1. States Parties shall take specific positive action to promote participative governance and the equal participation of women in the political life of their countries through affirmative action, enabling national legislation and other measures to ensure that:
   a) women participate without any discrimination in all elections;
   b) women are represented equally at all levels with men in all electoral processes;
   c) women are equal partners with men at all levels of development and implementation of State policies and development programmes

2. States Parties shall ensure increased and effective representation and participation of women at all levels of decision-making.

Article 12: The Right to Education and Training
1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to:
   a) eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and guarantee equal opportunity and access in the sphere of education and training;
   b) eliminate all stereotypes in textbooks, syllabuses and the media, that perpetuate such discrimination;

Article 13: Economic and Social Welfare Rights
States Parties shall adopt and enforce legislative and other measures to guarantee women equal opportunities in work and career advancement and other economic opportunities. In this respect, they shall:
   a) promote equality of access to employment;
   b) promote the right to equal remuneration for jobs of equal value for women and men;
   c) ensure transparency in recruitment, promotion and dismissal of women and combat and punish sexual harassment in the workplace;
   d) guarantee women the freedom to choose their occupation, and protect them from exploitation by their employers violating and exploiting their fundamental rights as recognised and guaranteed by conventions, laws and regulations in force;
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