



Global Alliance On Media And Gender

GAMAG Gender and Media Position paper

A call to action

- Strengthen language on media and ICTs in the draft post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Add targets on gender and the media under goal five which focuses on gender equality.
- Ensure that Section J of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) remains at the centre of global gender equality discourse.
- Beijing Platform for Action, which the UN General Assembly adopted in 1995, remains a valid document in the campaign for gender equality.

Synopsis

The Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG) bemoans the absence of a stand-alone goal on Media, freedom of expression and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the draft post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As such GAMAG encourages the inclusion of specific and measurable global targets on gender equality in the media in the post 2015 SDGs and the recognition of Section, Women and the Media Diagnosis as central to sustainable development.

GAMAG further calls on the UN to strengthen the language of goals 9 and 16 which refer to media and ICTs to include a gender responsive monitoring framework and to take into account the rise in cyber violence and gender violence in cyber space.

One of GAMAG's strategic objectives is to campaign for the achievement of the targets of section J of the Beijing declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA). 2015 is a significant year as it brings the Millennium Development Goals to an end and also marks twenty years of the Beijing declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA).

The suggested indicators for ICTs do not take into account the rise in cyber-crime and gender violence experienced in cyber space. The draft SDGs document leaves it to countries to consider complimentary indicators that include media.

Rationale

The Beijing declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA), adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly back in 1995 remains a valid and relevant instrument in the quest for gender equality. Despite the huge importance placed on Section J, its strategic objectives remain unachieved. The Beijing plus 20 review is therefore an opportunity for gender and media activists to review progress made since the historic adoption of the BPFA in 1995 as well as put forward strategies to strengthen this ground breaking instrument which opened doors for gender and media discourse globally.

Gender and media is integral to participation, voice and democratisation. A global set of targets and indicators will contribute to Section J strategic objectives.

- 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-stereotypical portrayal of women in the media.

Clause 234 of Section J in the BPFA highlights that “advances in information technology have facilitated a global communications network that transcends national boundaries and has an impact on public policy, private attitudes and behaviour, especially of children and young adults. Everywhere the potential exists for the media to make a far greater contribution to the advancement of women.”

Right to communicate

Media access and the right to communicate is a basic human right, espoused in article 19 on freedom of expression and access to information. Media and freedom of expression are therefore enablers to the achievement of development goals.

The media has the potential for awareness creation and education which promotes equality and diversity, and advances an ethic of freedom of expression and social justice. The media also has and does have the potential of doing quite the opposite, by perpetuating an ethic of discrimination and prejudice, fuelling a culture of silence and exclusion, and serving only the voices of some and not others.

Gender equality is intertwined with freedom of expression, participation and human rights. Nothing is more essential to this ideal than giving voice to all segments of the population. UNESCO and WSIS stipulate that ‘Access to information and the capacity to be able to enjoy the “right to communication” are essential to the realization of greater equity in a global society. Information and communication are both “resources” whose ethical usage and distribution create the conditions for democracy and greater well-being.’¹

Progress towards attaining BPFA strategic objectives

The International Women’s Media Foundation (IWMF) 2010 Global Report on the Status of Women in the news media reveals that globally, men occupy 73% of the top management jobs compared to 27% occupied by women. Among the ranks of reporters, men hold nearly two-thirds of the jobs, compared to 36% held by women. However, among senior professionals, women are nearing parity with 41% of those newsgathering and editing.

The findings of the global study mirror those of the 2009 Glass Ceilings in Southern African newsrooms. The study showed that whilst women make up 41% of those working in the media, they constitute just 23% of those in management.

¹ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/unesco-and-wsis/implementation-and-follow-up/wsis-forum/wsis-forum-2011/high-level-debate-on-the-right-to-communication-18-may-2011/>

The structural gender gaps in media institutions are equally reflected in content where women's voices are grossly under-represented with news often being told from a male gaze. Women continue to be portrayed in a narrow range of roles, which misrepresent and limit their role in society.

The World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) coordinated 2010 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) shows that women constitute a mere 24% of news sources globally and 19% in Africa.

The 2010 Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS), which focused on Southern Africa corroborates the GMMP findings revealing that women constitute just 19% of news sources in the sub-region.

Likewise governments across the globe have not put in place strategies to promote the non-discriminatory portrayal of women and girls. Stereotypes still abound in media, with governments leaving the watchdog role to civil society. Civil society and non-governmental agencies have been at the forefront of mainstreaming gender in media content.

Key imperatives

- United Nations to develop and adopt a global set of standards for gender equality in and through the media.
 - UN to develop a sub-goal on gender and media under goal five on gender equality.
 - There is need for structured and coordinated gender and media interventions, and monitoring and evaluation systems.
 - Advocacy on women's empowerment and gender equality in and through the media to ensure better representation of women in the board rooms and behind editors' desks.
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- Need to put in place strategies and policies that will contribute to women's equal and effective participation and freedom from violence in all areas of media decision-making and practice.
 - Media stakeholders to act better protect women journalists on and offline and on the frontline from abuse and violence.
 - Need to ensure women's equal access to media and ICTs and their benefits:
 - Mainstreaming gender in media and ICT policy and training curricula.

ANNEX A: STRENGTHENING LANGUAGE IN EXISTING GOALS

EXISTING SDG GOAL	PROPOSED LANGUAGE TO STRENGTHEN GOAL	CURRENT INDICATOR	PROPOSED LANGUAGE FOR INDICATOR
Goal 5. Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls including in and through the media		
Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and gender responsive sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.	Mobile broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, by urban/rural	Proportion of male and female mobile broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabits.
			Percentage women with access to ICTs.
			Percentage of women with access to online public information ²
Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels		Number of journalists and associated media personnel that are physically attacked, unlawfully detained or killed as a result of pursuing their legitimate activities.	Number of male and female journalists and associated media personnel that are physically attacked, unlawfully detained or killed as a result of pursuing their legitimate activities.

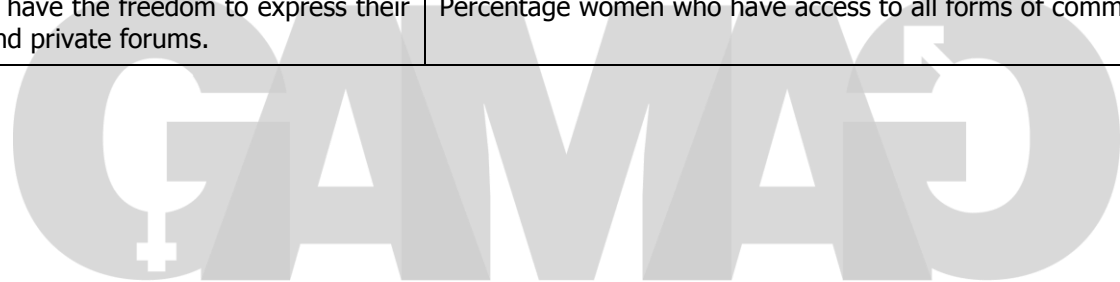
² Global impact study, Demographic survey

ANNEX B: PROPOSED SUB GOAL TO BE ATTACHED TO GOAL FIVE

Ensure gender equality in and through the media and at all levels of decision making, policy, training and responsive coverage of cross-cutting issues such as gender based violence and HIV and AIDS.

Proposed targets	Proposed indicators
1. Promote the equal representation of women as teaching staff and students in institutions of media learning	Female percentage of staff in institutions of media learning
	Percentage of female students in institutions of media learning
2. Ensure that media training institutions adopt gender policies and mainstream gender in their teaching curriculum by 2030	No of courses/modules that mainstream gender
3. Take measures to promote the equal representation of women and men in ownership of, and decision-making structures of the media by 2030.	Women employees as percentage of total
	Proportion of women in management
4. Ensure that media houses adopt gender policies or mainstream gender in their codes of conduct	Proportion of media houses with gender responsive policies
5. Ensure the right to safety and bodily integrity in the digitally mediated public sphere through legislation to govern the ICT industry.	Presence of a gender aware regulatory framework for the cyber space
6. Ensure that media mainstream gender in editorial content and programming	Proportion of gender aware media content
7. Encourage the media to give equal voice to women and men in all areas of coverage,	Percentage of women news sources
8. Take measures to discourage the media from: Promoting pornography and violence against all persons, especially women and children; Depicting women as helpless victims of violence and abuse; Degrading or exploiting women, especially in the area of entertainment and advertising, and undermining their role and position in society;	Proportion of gender based violence stories in news content
	Proportion of gender responsive media articles

Proposed targets	Proposed indicators
Reinforcing gender oppression and stereotypes	
9. Encourage advertising regulatory authorities to adopt gender aware codes of conduct and ethical principles to reduce stereotypical representation of women in advertising by 2030	Number of advertising regulatory bodies with gender aware codes of conduct and ethical principles Percentage gender aware adverts
10. Ensure that half the women (including those in rural areas) have access to public information by 2030	Percentage women with access to ICTs.
11. Ensure that all citizens have the freedom to express their opinions in all public and private forums.	Percentage women who have access to all forms of communication



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