



CASE STUDIES

Case 1. The Broadcast Media Regulators: Gender Equality Drivers

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the fact that its role is not well known, the broadcast regulator constitutes – through its mission and prerogatives – a main driver of the promotion of a media landscape that upholds democratic values, including gender equality in and through the audiovisual media. The aim of this position paper is to create awareness on the '*raison d'être*' of the content regulators, in relation to gender equality, through highlighting the Moroccan experience of the High Authority of Audiovisual Communication.

WHO ARE THE REGULATORS OF THE AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA?

As outcomes of the democratic processes and the consolidation of fundamental freedoms, including freedom of opinion and of expression, these regulatory bodies are created and organized by law to accompany the liberalization of the sector. Mainly independent, executive power and from political and economic lobbies, these autonomous bodies act in the interest of the public through the prism of the

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public and private media.¹²⁹ They are accountable to parliaments and jurisdictions of financial control, and their decisions are liable to be overturned by judicial processes.

By their *raison d'être*, the regulators watch over the balance between free competition and the principles of public interest, such as media pluralism and the diversity of media content. Additionally, they uphold freedom of communication, as a fundamental principle, by making sure that media respect human dignity, protect the young public, promote pluralism of thoughts and expression, as well as of cultural diversity, and contribute generally to the promotion of human rights, including equality of the sexes.

Of course, the institutional posture and the extent of powers of the regulator, and its fields of intervention, differ from one country to another. However, apart from the prerogatives of granting authorization of frequencies to radio and television stations, the majority of these bodies are endowed with the prerogatives of decision-making on regulations, monitoring and sanctions when necessary, alongside their capacity to make propositions.

WHAT IS THEIR PRESENCE AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL?

The majority of the audiovisual regulatory bodies came about in the years 1980-1990. They number about 100 bodies¹³⁰ today. They are organized into, more or less, ten formal networks on a geographic basis (Africa, Europe, Mediterranean), linguistic (francophone, ibero-american, lusophone), or cultural (Islamic world).

These networks meet frequently (annually or bi-annually) to touch base and establish road maps; they constitute platforms for common reflection and exchanges of experiences, expertise and good practice.

¹²⁹ UNESCO adds the category of *Community Media* alongside public and private, as an holistic vision of broadcast pluralism.

¹³⁰ Some bodies, such as the HACA, belong to more than one Network.

The question of gender equality is one of the main thematic areas on which the exchanges have resulted in the adoption of solemn Declarations of Commitment, as well as working groups for follow-up. These are:

- REFRAM (Réseau francophone des régulateurs des medias / the French Network of Media Regulators): Declaration of **REFRAM** on equality between men and women in media (Brussels, 2011)¹³¹
- RIRM: Declaration of **RIRM** (Mediterranean Network of Regulatory Authorities) on fighting gender-based stereotypes in audiovisual media (Lisbon, 2012)¹³² ;

WHAT CAN REGULATORS DO TO FAVOUR GENDER EQUALITY?

First of all, owing to the peculiarities of the audiovisual sector and of the role of the regulators,¹³³ the latter are entrusted with a strategic mission vis-a-vis the stakeholders: it is about broadcasters exercising their editorial freedom and respect of fundamental liberties and freedoms, including the right of women not to be discriminated against.

It is in the vein of that basic paradigm that gives freedom and equality the same normative and ethical values as founding principles of human rights that the regulators can and should: ¹³⁴

¹³¹ http://www.refram.org/sites/default/files/REFRAM_20110919_declaration_egalite_hommes_femmes_finale.pdf

¹³² <http://www.rirm.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Declaration-on-the-fight-against-gender-stereotypes-2012.pdf>

¹³³ https://www.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/REFRAM_20110919_declaration_egalite_hommes_femmes_finale.pdf

¹³⁴ These examples are based on the experience of the HACA of Morocco

- Contribute to the legal recognition of gender equality in the media by consistently giving their opinions on all bills that the government and parliament consider on the media sector.
- Set the legal obligations of broadcast stakeholders in terms of gender equality in their bill of specifications. The bill of specifications is the contractual base between the regulator and the stakeholders, such as in licence conditions.
- Monitor *gender mainstreaming* in the adoption of norms in different fields authorized by law, such as happens with the norms that are specific to the treatment of political pluralism.
- Monitor the progress of implementation of the bill of specifications by stakeholders in line with the law, including the monitoring of sexist stereotypes and efforts to promote gender equality. The shortcomings observed during the monitoring can be sanctioned.
- Assist stakeholders and media professionals by setting up a methodological framework, such as a grid of gender indicators to be applied to different types of programmes (information, fiction, entertainment, advertisements), as well as tools of sensitization, training, monitoring, etc.
- Produce gender sensitive data in relation to the representation of men and women and their relationship across the overall programmes and audiovisual services in terms of a mechanism for monitoring reception, storage, archiving, follow-up and treatment of the overall programmes broadcast by stakeholders.
- Establish partnerships targeting the promotion of gender equality:
 - At national level (beyond the broadcaster stakeholders) with other actors such as advertisers, producers, journalists training institutes, academic institutions, civil society, etc.

- At international level: intra and inter-network relationships, as well as with actors of the media sector.

MOROCCAN AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION HIGH AUTHORITY

The Regulator has been instrumental in the integration of the question of gender equality through adopting a conceptual framework based on a Gender/Rights approach.

1 - AUDIOVISUAL ACT (2015- 2016):

The law obliges the stakeholders to:

- ‘Promote the culture of equality among women and men, as well as fighting gender-based discrimination, including stereotypes that affect the dignity of women’ (Art. 8);
- ‘Uphold the principle of parity in all political, economic, social and cultural programmes’ (Art. 8).

Additionally, the law forbids:

- ‘Any programme inciting, directly or indirectly, violence, exploitation or harassment of women, or likely to affect their dignity’ (Art.9);
- ‘Any advertisement that is likely to affect women, that contains a negatively stereotyped message to them, that suggests their inferiority or calls for their discrimination based on sex’ (Art. 2).

2 - REORGANIZING THE HIGH AUTHORITY OF AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION ACT (2016):

Among the missions of the HACA,

‘Contribute to the promotion of the culture of equality and parity between women and men, as well as fighting discrimination and stereotypes affecting the dignity of women’ (Art 3, Paragraph 7).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The objective of promoting gender equality in and through the audiovisual media is generally shared by all regulators. In order for the role of regulators to be meaningful, three types of recommendations can be considered:

1. General recommendation:

Explicitly acknowledge regulators as stakeholders able to have an added value in

advancing gender equality in and through the media (such as advocacy for a new paragraph in existing legislation).

2. Recommendations for states to strengthen the role of regulators:

- Integrate explicitly and transversally the principle of 'men/women equality' in the laws that organize regulation bodies and other laws in relation to the sector.
- Integrate gender equality information into the principle of parity for conditions of election/nomination into the deliberating organs of the regulatory body.
- Endow the regulatory bodies with the explicit prerogative of combatting sexist stereotypes and promoting parity and equality in and through audiovisual media.
- Entrust the regulators with the elaboration of annual reports addressed to parliaments on the state of gender equality in and through the media, with the objective of evaluating and analysing the progress, constraints and making recommendations.
- For actions of regulators of broadcasters and other media actors to be efficient and meaningful, the conceptual framework of that action should be reviewed. In terms of objectives to achieve, it is a question of the basis of the imperatives of a legal approach and gender tools to move from the 'improvement of the image of women in the media' to the 'fight against sexist stereotypes and the promotion of a culture of equality between men and women'. Behind simple terminologies lies a worldview of gendered social relationships that media have the power to reproduce or deconstruct.

Case 2. African Union of Broadcasting: Gender Integration in African media

Evelyne Faye ¹³⁵

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Conference on women, held in 1995, underscored the essential role of media in the promotion of gender equality in all domains. The stakeholders agreed on the necessity of pooling their efforts to fight the stereotyped images of women and their unequal access and participation in all systems of communication.

In 2003, during the second African Union summit in Maputo (Mozambique), the *African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa*¹³⁶ commonly known as the 'Maputo Protocol' was adopted.

With the Maputo Protocol, the African Union had adopted an instrument aimed at correcting the precarious legal situation of women by engaging the countries that ratified it to take concrete measures to ensure equality of men and women. Thus, it was the first time that there existed a contractual document that responded to all arguments and critics pretending that equality of the sexes was only a western preoccupation, and that any effort in that sense would constitute an 'interference in the culture and traditions' of the peoples in the South.

The UN Conference on Women in 1995 denounced stereotypes in the media and called on media professionals to define and adopt codes and/or editorial guidelines that are gender sensitive to give an impartial and accurate image of women.

¹³⁵ African Union of Broadcasting

¹³⁶ An additional protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1986

African governments indicated commitment to promote the equality of the sexes and the self-reliance of women by ratifying the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*.¹³⁷ Recently, the African Union declared 2010-2020 the decade of African women. This commitment put the African audiovisual media at the forefront of translating that responsibility into action. There is a huge gap to bridge in the media and journalistic works in order for women to enjoy the same rights as men. The media should truly reflect the image of a society where gender equality is a fundamental human right.

Over the past decade, the question of 'women and the media' has been the topic of many works and seminars in most of sub-Saharan African countries. International organizations such as UNESCO, researchers, national authorities, academic bodies, media organizations and women's organizations have, at different levels, raised the question of the presence of women in the media.

While the number of women employed in the media has considerably increased, that increase has not translated into their presence in leadership positions in the media and has not impacted on the representation of women within content. They are confined within the roles of news bulletin anchors and are less present as reporters where men are mainly assigned. The so-called 'soft' thematic reportages are usually reserved for women.

Women's level of representation in leadership positions is very low in relation to men (see Table below).

¹³⁷ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, 18 December 1979. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>.

**GENDER BALANCE IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS
IN THE MEDIA: NUMBER OF CADRES**

Broadcast media in:	% Men	% Women	N
ALGERIA	61%	39 %	1847
BENIN	88 %	12 %	103
CAMEROON	73 %	27 %	379
KENYA	66 %	34 %	171
SENEGAL	70 %	30 %	452

Source: Survey of member organizations of African Union of Broadcasting

Within the context of modernization and democratization of society in general, it is necessary that governments bring about the necessary reforms to legal instruments for equal chances between men and women with the same qualifications, but also the freedom of thought and of opinion, and to ensure visibility and equal access to media.

Women have long since organized into associations and NGOs, not only to defend and to uphold their rights as professionals, but also as drivers of development within their respective countries. The integration of gender equality in the media is a reality in Africa. Women are well represented in media outfits and newsrooms. They are usually even more numerous than men.

However, they do not occupy the same place as their male colleagues in the newsrooms and in leadership positions. Notwithstanding important progress in terms of conditions of service, equal salary treatment and within the work environment.

The in-service training of professional journalists on the integration of the gender dimension in policy is essential to the definition of editorial guidelines. That approach would contribute to seriously reduce the stereotypes that are still ever-present in the practices of the media.

RECOMMENDATIONS

GOVERNMENTS SHOULD:

- Define policies and processes of the institutionalization of gender equality.
- Guarantee freedom of expression of the media and their protection within the framework of institutional instruments.
- Request governments to take into account the gender dimension in sectoral policies by adopting legal instruments with the objective of achieving gender equality.
- Strengthen the institutional powers of regulatory bodies in regard to gender equality.

UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES SHOULD:

- Note that it is 23 years after the Beijing conference, and time to update the declaration.
- Encourage audiovisual media organizations to build capacities of their human resources on a gender-equality basis in order to achieve SDGs in 2030.

- Systematically disseminate and share reports of gender-relevant surveys with the media.
- Support initiatives to implement gender-equality orientation documents of the audiovisual media through financial grants.
- Elaborate tools for sharing good practice in gender equality in and through the media.
- Involve the media at the forefront of the advocacy on the integration of gender dimensions in the contents they provide to populations.

MEDIA SHOULD:

- Obtain the support of the authorities (the board, ministries) for gender equality progress.
- Encourage media organizations to integrate a gender dimension in their general strategy and in their budget activities.
- Monitor effective integration of gender equality in media content.
- Elaborate a strategic orientation document that responds to the implementation of legislation on gender equality within the work environment.
- Define guidelines and codes of ethics that integrate a gender dimension in audiovisual media.
- Consider capacity building as a key factor for the success of the integration of gender equality and encourage all initiatives that contribute to achieve that objective.

- Participate actively in the advocacy for the importance of a gender dimension in the audiovisual media, as mirror of society and gender equality rights.
- Strengthen partnerships with NGOs, regulators and United Nations agencies in order to implement the action plans defined in the framework of strategies for eradication of stereotypes and sexist images in audiovisual content.

CIVIL SOCIETY SHOULD:

- Create national gender observatories to monitor the effectiveness of integration of a gender dimension in policies at a national level.
- Spread good practices in this area.
- Assist the media in their policies of integration and promotion of a gender equality dimension.
- Monitor the implementation of laws and regulations applicable in the media sector.
- Put into place a system of evaluation and motivation of the media on the implementation of gender equality at all levels of media organizations.

The media have a central position and a fundamental role in the promotion and instigation of new dynamics aimed at achieving gender equality in African societies. As the SDG progress report of UN Women testified, though it is well entrenched in the political agenda of the states, in reality, equality between men and women remains an important gap to bridge.

Case 3. Sustaining Women-Led Community Media in the Pacific region; the femLINKpacific Experience

Sian Rolls ¹³⁸

“Whether it is the women who have taken to the airwaves or the development partners who have journeyed with femLINKpacific, they have recognized and supported the role of community radio to enable women and young women in all their diversities to claim their communication rights in our region. Without a media platform of their own women’s rights, peace and human security will remain invisible.” (femLINK, 2016, pp1).

INTRODUCTION

The media is a prime conduit for accountability. Given that ‘communication is the primary process of any social system or architecture’ (Singh, 2008, p.78), the media industry must also keep abreast of shifts within the development paradigm; it must enable a discourse for public consumption that is accessible and relevant ‘for encouraging the accountability of public authorities by offering spaces for citizens to express grievances and make demands on those in positions of power’ (Fantini, Gagliardone and Stremlau, 2015).

With a facilitated two-way discourse, it is expected that decision makers ‘can be held accountable for their actions (thus will be) responsive to their stakeholders’ (Ahrens and Rudolph, 2006). The stakeholders are the public, including the most vulnerable.

¹³⁸ Co-Programme Director, femLINKpacific, Fiji.

especially with regard to the context of a post-disaster situation where community media are vital. Yet, living up to this endowed role of the media as the fourth pillar of democracy, it not always in the interest of media outlets, including their management.

It is within this discourse that models, particularly the People's Communication for Development (PC4D) model, emerged to examine this relationship. PC4D emerged as a 'results oriented communication process(es) based on dialogue and participation' (FAO). This is something critical as 'communication is the primary process of any social system or architecture' (Singh 2008). PC4D was also a response to the leanings of Communication for Development models that 'became the tool for state propaganda... to 'inculcate and defend the economic, social and political agenda of privileged groups that dominate'' (Herman and Chomsky, in Aslam, 2014).

It is fundamental within a democratic society to have information that is 'shared equitably and managed to the best advantage of all members of society' (Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative in Bhim, 2010). The path to such goals requires an empowered, wide-reaching media landscape 'to offer a platform where marginalized people can contest both political and economic power in order to enable them to transform specific development systems to their benefit' (Manyozo 2016). However, realizing models like PC4D is not without challenges.

With any organization, there is a need to financially sustain its operations. While the media is a vehicle of information dissemination (Dave, 2006), the ownership of media outlets through direct investment or through advertising is likely to influence the focus of any media coverage. In addition, the design of the media formats – such as the length of a news bulletin, the amount of page space or when television programmes are aired – are also likely to influence how information is relayed (Ashlin & Ladle, 2007). All of these factors play into just how the media plays its role as 'the 'watchdog of democracy' in society, guarding the interests of the people, fulfilling their socially responsible role' (Robie, in Aslam, 2014). In the Pacific context, this reality is particularly pressing due to the infrastructural limits of both the reach of journalists, impacting the collection of information, and broadcast or circulation,

impacting the viability of the media outlet as a commercial entity. This is where women-led models of communications and use of technology play a role.

The legacy of women's media networks who negotiated for the broadening of the Women and the Media section of the Beijing Platform for Action, to reflect the opportunity for women to be recognized as producers of their own media forms, resulted in the inclusion of the Strategic Objective in Section J. This recognizes the need to increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication.

While there have been advances in certain areas of media across the Pacific region, large gaps continue to exist in both traditional and digital media outlets (Macharia, 2015). Pacific women are challenging the status quo as the producers of our own print and electronic media. This is – both in the production of content but so too with regards to the political landscape that surrounds the media. For example, the Pacific Community notes that “The gender gap in employment rates, as well as the fact that women's political representation in the Pacific Islands region is the lowest of any global region, are also important concerns for gender equality”.(SPC, 2015).

Attention is needed in media environments that have experienced outright conflicts. Robie (2011) reported that Fijian journalists do strongly support investigative journalism as a measure of commitment to being a watchdog on democracy but there is still “the restricted access of information (that has) stopped analysis and opinions in all sections of the community” (Bhagwan Rolls, 2011). This impacts on gender in media. Lisa Horiwapu, a journalist that leads the Rural Women's Media Network in the Solomon Islands supports this analysis, saying “We have lots of women working in the media now, although we still have issues around women managing media houses. Apart from that, at the moment, one of our issues is trying to make the media cover lots of women's stories. We are also doing training for the mainstream media, especially in trying to encourage them to write women's stories. Not only that but be gender sensitive.”(cited in Sian Rolls, 2017).

Women also operate community radio stations, are media correspondents, producers of video documentaries, information providers, communicators and media activists. This includes femLINKpacific's regional media network that started with the 'suitcase' radio station in 2004.

femLINKpacific

femLINKpacific (Media Initiatives for Women) in Fiji launched its 'suitcase' radio femTALK 89.2 in 2004. A suitcase radio is a mobile radio station comprised of a CD, cassette tape players, microphones, controls and the transmitter. Much of the work of femTALK 89.2 radio has been to bridge the inter-generational gap – with young women learning the technology and older women finding their voice, often after years of being told to be silent.

Establishing the community radio platform was 'a bold move because it challenged the status quo of existing decision-making structures in Fiji by enabling women to speak openly on common matters and, crucially, it also involved young women. The suitcase radio has also been used as a training tool to empower women to speak to each other and with their communities' (Bhagwan Rolls & Narayan, 2008). It enables dialogue about issues that people faced on a day-to-day basis, within a context where the political developments in Fiji had resulted in a significant impact on the media environment, including the legislative environment. political developments in Fiji had resulted

femLINKpacific's Generation Next Project supports young women throughout the Pacific region to become community radio producers and broadcasters. Initiated in Fiji in 2005, the project has since enabled a cadre of more than 100 young women to take to the airwaves and use information and communication to bridge the divide between urban and rural women, and their communities and national and local governance structures (femLINKpacific, 2012).

“Outside of femLINKpacific, there aren’t as many young women engaged in the technical aspect of media production. I know just how critical it is to continue to resource women’s media. We need to be setting the agenda, telling our stories and creating the narratives. It’s not as simple as just trying to get a woman to talk to a camera – it’s about investing effort, time and passion to enable someone who’s never been asked her opinion to tell her story.” – Sian Rolls (Evans, 2017).

“Through listening to women, communicating their stories, reading and researching policy documents and policy briefs of women, producing and documenting stories with women, for women, peace and security to enhance conflict prevention and peacebuilding (I am learning from them as women leaders). Another (thing I enjoy) is the radio. Women are able to speak wherever they are, from the comfort of their homes, on the mat or the community hall and with the availability of ICT their voices are reaching out wide and far across the globe.” – Lucille Chute (Waqa, 2017).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Governments must ensure that broadcast policy and regulations support women’s media networks, in particular community media and community radio, and feminist networks who have a demonstrated role to enable women of all diversities, including young women, to use accessible and appropriate media and ICTs bridge the gap in media content in particular via the public airwaves.
- Donors and development partners should earmark specific funding towards the resourcing of women’s media networks, in particular community media networks and feminist media initiatives, which are addressing the persistent societal gender inequalities through the use of qualitative and quantitative research including media monitoring linked to the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP).
- Donors and development partners should re-define sustainability of women’s media networks, in particular community media networks and feminist media

initiatives, by ensuring that at least 30% of all media capacity development funds are ear-marked for young women's development and content creation.

STAKEHOLDERS SHOULD:

- Bring the opinions of women including rural women, women with disabilities as well as young women, into the public media arena.
- Support capacity development of young women community media producers to apply their knowledge of gender, media and human rights commitments to support their role as community media correspondents, including their ability to confidently engage with media and political party structures and leadership.¹³⁹
- Support the capacity of young women to produce content that responds to the gender gaps in media content using the Global Media Monitoring Project to guide content production, as well as engagement with public and commercial media newsrooms.¹⁴⁰

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¹⁴⁰ http://www.femlinkpacific.org.fj/images/PDF/Policy/CommunityRadioSoundbytes_Regional_1_2017.pdf
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