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GENDER ETHICS IN JOURNALISM



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EDITORIAL

"A gender lens can reveal whether or not an event or process affects women and men, girls and boys in particular ways, thereby allowing reporters to uncover a possible gender angle that may well add a significant and striking dimension to the story. A gender lens can also facilitate broader and deeper insights into the range of events and issues covered by the media". — *Learning Resource Kit for Gender-Ethical Journalism*. Book 1: Conceptual issues. WACC/IFJ, 2012.

This month marks a new milestone in the quest for gender equality in and through the media. Media practitioners now have at their disposal a unique resource kit to help build expertise in integrating gender ethics in their practice of professional journalism. The kit is a collaborative initiative by WACC and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ).

It became increasingly clear to WACC while co-ordinating the Fourth Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP 2010) process that there exists an appreciable mass of media practitioners motivated to learn how to respond to the critique of gender bias in their output. This said in awareness of the structural constraints in the broader media operating environment that impede radical change.

It was also clear that the building blocks for gender-ethical media practice were already in place in the form of codes of ethics in which principles such as truth, accuracy, objectivity, balance, fairness and accountability are accepted as basic tenets of journalistic professional practice.

It is from this point of departure that the resource kit sets off, articulating the tenets through a gender lens, as a wholistic, multi-dimensional understanding necessarily needs to be infused *also* with reflections about gender, or, how gender difference intersects with professional ethics. Excerpts from the kit are featured in this issue of *Media & Gender Monitor*.

Undoubtedly, civil society are implicated in the change process. To borrow the words of Sandra Lopez (pg.8) "**Our collective efforts must include the task of awareness-raising, [...], as a process of debate and demystification**" of hitherto unquestioned prevailing attitudes and practices underpinning gender bias, inequalities, discrimination and exclusion.

This issue of *Media & Gender Monitor* presents case studies of civil society experiences in working with media. A remarkable case study out of Ecuador demonstrates how one grassroots organisation has mobilized the citizens of an entire city—the local government officials and media included—to

participate in the Citizens'

Communication Observatory running since 2004.

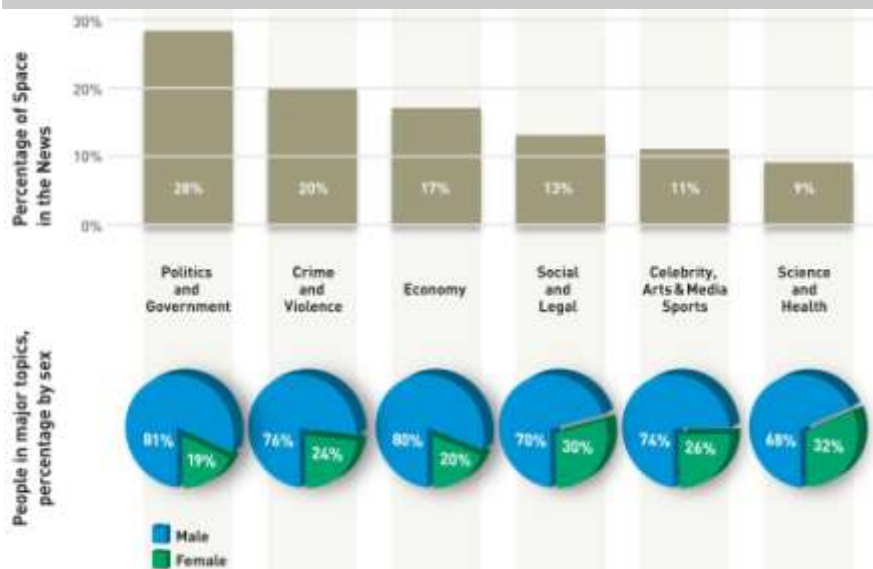
This issue profiles the work of **WACC's partners in Africa, Asia and Latin America** undertaking innovative projects to advance gender-responsive media practice .

Also featured are resources to support media monitoring, policy change advocacy and spaces available for networking.

We hope the stories will not only be inspirational but eye-opening as well in revealing opportunities to evolve our strategies for a continued and fruitful engagement.

Sarah Macharia, Editor

GMMP 2010: Percentage share of major topics in the news, and presence of women and men in each topic



Source: *Learning Resource Kit for Gender-Ethical Journalism and Media House Policy*. Book 1: Conceptual issues. WACC/IFJ, 2012

Learning Resource Kit for Gender-Ethical Journalism and Media House Policy*

The learning resource kit brings together knowledge and insights from media practitioners, educators and communication researchers. It is organized in two books that may be read independently of each other. *Book 1* discusses conceptual issues pertaining to gender, media and professional ethics and presents case studies on experiences from policy processes and practice. This book will appeal to media decision makers as well as to civil society actors interested in gender media policy adoption or improvement. *Book 2* presents gender-ethical reporting guidelines on eight thematic areas. This book will be of interest to media practitioners, educators and civil society engaged in gender-focused work with the media.



Book 1: Conceptual issues

I. Rationale

Why women?; The gender lens; Gender-ethical journalism; Journalism and democracy

II. Gender in journalism today

1. Status of gender in the news media

Evidence from the Global Media Monitoring Project

2. Status of gender in media codes

Survey findings: Gender in media codes and industry guidelines

A typology of codes: Framing gender in media professional ethics

Markers of comprehensive codes

Annex 1. Media policy and codes survey (2011)

Annex 2. Gender in media policy: an assessment checklist

III. Case studies

1. Gender portrayal guidelines in Canadian broadcasting

Historical background; Developing guidelines

Experiences in implementation; Lessons

2. Media Gender Code of Ethics in Tanzania

Historical background; Developing the Media Gender Code of Ethics; Experiences in implementation

3. Getting voice, visibility and impact for gender equality

Strengthening media and civil society linkages

From building capacity... ..To telling stories

A multimedia platform to reach multiple audiences

Editor's checklist

Resources

*Published in 2012 by WACC and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ).

Download at: www.whomakesthenews.org

Book 2: Practical resources

1. Climate change

Key concepts, Sample story analysis; Special focus: The gender dimensions of climate change; Guidelines: Reporting on climate change

2. Disaster reporting

Sample story analysis; Special focus: A journalist's personal experience in reporting disaster through a gender lens; Guidelines: Reporting on disasters

3. Economic news: Accounting for women

Sample story analysis

Special focus: Women's work in the unorganized sector

Guidelines: Reporting stories on the economy

4. Health: Sexual and reproductive health

Sample story analysis; Special focus: Considerations for inclusive and diverse journalism; Guidelines: Reporting sexual and reproductive health, including voluntary interruption of pregnancy

5. Women's human rights: Human trafficking

Key concepts, Sample story analysis; Guidelines: Women's human rights – reporting on human trafficking

6. Peace and security

Sample story analysis; Special focus: Learning from feminist media initiatives; Guidelines: Reporting on peace and security

7. Politics and government: Women in public office

Sample story analysis

Special focus: Facts, trends and impacts of media coverage about women in government

Guidelines: Reporting stories on politics and government

8. Violence against women: Reporting sexual violence

Sample story analysis; Special focus: Challenges to reporting on violence against women; Guidelines: Reporting on (sexual) violence against women

Resources

Gender-**focused citizens' communication** observatory

A case study from Cuenca, Ecuador

Sandra Lopez, GAMMA

A gender-focused citizens communication observatory seeks to change societal worldviews that sustain inequality. It provides a space for citizens' critical engagement with media, leads them in analyzing the impact of media messaging on discrimination, violence, abuse and exclusion of women. An observatory combines: media monitoring research; training in critical analysis and interpretation of media content; dissemination and awareness-raising, and; enabling citizen input into local policy debates.

Following below is a case study of the Citizens' Communication Observatory coordinated by GAMMA¹ in Ecuador, drawing lessons for civil society organizations wishing to learn from this experience to build constructive partnerships with their local media.

The GAMMA experience

GAMMA began producing a live radio show in 1996 to stir public reflection on discrimination against women. While the broadcast made small local contributions possible, the potential influence is limited in the face of large corporations and powerful individuals that have the mass media at their feet to disseminate their messages.

Thus, in 2004, in the framework of the Ecuadorian Plan for Equal Opportunities between women and men, GAMMA established the Citizens' Communication Observatory as a means to broaden the field of influence through communication.

The objective of the Observatory is to improve messages transmitted in the mass media to ensure that they promote the construction of equitable relations between women and men.

Key concepts

- "Observatory" is a reference to its mission to study carefully and at length. Note that observing or watching is not the same as simply detached 'seeing'.
- "Citizens" refers to the broad base and diverse representation. This is not an academic or specialized observer, nor is it solely a technical activity – above all, this is a civic approach to exercising one's rights.
- "Communication" is a reference to a mandate that is broader than the mass media. The observatory engage with all entities related to communication and to the creation, production and dissemination of messages.

In this light, we adopted the name "Citizens' Communication Observatory" (OCC).

A gender-focused citizens communication observatory is a space for civic and political networking.

The observatory enables collective reflection on media content and its consequences on gender relations, on violence, abuse and exclusion of women.

The observatory engages citizens in media monitoring, critical analysis and interpretation of media messages and raising wider public awareness of the issues.

The observatory actively supports citizen participation in local policy debates.

Strategy

We decided not only to monitor sexism in the media but to broaden the observatory's work to address all forms of inequality and discrimination in an effort to create cross-cutting approaches: interculturality, the environment and human rights.

From the beginning, the OCC was understood not only as a space for external observers, but as one that also implicated the protagonists of the messages, that is to say the mass media. Local authorities also needed to participate in the OCC since they are responsible for defining and creating public policy.

The observatory has a Steering Committee which serves as its body for political representation, and its members are the OCC's spokespeople. This committee is composed of different bodies and institutions that are strategically placed to influence various fronts: local authorities, the media, journalists, human rights organizations and women's rights organizations, technical spaces for local gender-based public policy, and citizens councils. Currently, 11 different institutions and networks compose this political committee.

This composition has a particular strength: all those who participate on behalf of their institutions or networks can express their opinions from different angles.

We do not seek to place blame because we know that the current social structure upholds inequalities and that all institutions are part of this social structure. In this sense, there is no room for seeking or condemning guilty parties. To the contrary, we seek to observe others and to observe our own roles in order to discover the key elements that sustain the existing collective worldview and to outline strategies for change.

We seek to find the decisive cruxes and the foundations of collective perceptions in order to build a diversity of strategies to respond to the diversity of

our institutions, people and life itself. If we recognize how things are, we can change them if each one of us puts forward her or his knowledge, experience, willpower and effort.

Each sector analyzes the results of the technical studies and proposes activities in order to increasingly reach more sectors: advertising agencies; the media; college students majoring in communication, graphic design, advertising, sociology, psychology and medicine; grassroots organizations; local authorities responsible for public policy; secondary education institutions; young adults, adolescents, girls and boys; teachers; and countless other actors who are involved in this collective fabric where each person makes her or his unique stitch which is interconnected to the rest to make a global design.

Since its inception, the observatory has carried out 13 technical studies on advertising, 3 on television entertainment programs, and 3 on news programs. The first study on human mobility and another study on media coverage of violence on women are currently underway. We have shared our methodology with the national Council on Children, which has just finished its first study on press coverage of children from a rights-based approach.

We have held 7 sessions for professional publicists/ad designers and local journalists in order to raise their awareness and train them in the production of messages that promote social and gender equality. Since 2004, we have organized more than 200 workshops on critical analysis and interpretation of media messaging with different audiences.

In 2009, as the technical observatory team, GAMMA coordinated the Latin American component of WACC's Global Media Monitoring Project. The results were disseminated through [audiovisual media](#) in both English and Spanish produced by GAMMA's technical communication team.

The observatory was understood not only as a space for external observers, but as one that also implicated the protagonists of the messages, that is, the mass media.

What do the citizens say?

On many different occasions, in the training workshops or debate sessions with media professionals, college students majoring in graphic design and communications, or with advertising agencies, people have openly expressed that the media is giving people what they like and that advertising or other kinds of programs (entertainment, news, etc.) adapt their content and messages to provide what people are asking for. The spaces for direct participation created by the Observatory, such as the Communications Room have proven that this claim to be false.

Each year, in the context of activities carried out for International Women's Day on March 8th, the Observatory has organized the Communications Room². Participation has grown with hundreds and then, thousands, of people in attendance, saying that the experience has changed their relationship with the media: "Since I visited the Communications Room, I haven't looked at advertising again without analyzing it"; "When I saw that advertising and I analyzed what's behind it, I stopped buying that product"; "When I see all of this publicity together I can't believe that we see this every day and we don't do anything about it." These are just some of the opinions we receive during this event. "Starting now, I'm going to pressure so that my agency listens to people's opinions..." and "Now I understand why our product doesn't sell in Cuenca," said a designer who received one of the awards in 2009.

People do have an opinion, they reflect upon and can make proposals about media messaging. With the presentation of messages outside of regular media programming, in a "neutral setting", the Observatory provides an important space for public participation and debate. In this case, the people, rather than the technical study, have the final word: What should we say in the face of these messages? What should we do when we see and hear words that are offensive, that bother or harass us, or

Communications Room participants analyze and rate media samples.



Source: GAMMA, Ecuador 

images that distort reality and are abusive? As an OCC technical team, such as GAMMA in Cuenca, we are convinced that citizens are the only ones who can and should decide what kind of messages they want to receive.

We believe that it is an obligation of the State, as the protector of human rights, to contribute to critical consciousness. This is why we have continued to organize the Communications Room as a

People have openly expressed that the media is giving people what they like ...
The spaces for direct participation created by the Observatory, such as the
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democratic space for exercising our right to participation, as the only existing mechanism for giving media an opportunity to contribute to development and the promotion of human rights.

During the training sessions with the media or college students, participants have spoken of the harmlessness of media messaging or the lack of a direct connection between the messages and people's behaviour. Participants have argued that we cannot affirm that the audience reacts like a robot to these messages, that there is a reason why human beings have the capacity for discernment and freedom of choice. They argue that saying otherwise is offensive to human reasoning.

Unfortunately, in unequal societies like our own, where access to knowledge and quality human development is an exception and which tend to foster robotic learning instead of reflection and free thinking, we cannot say that discernment and free will truly exist. Some essential requirements so that media messaging does not automatically influence people's behaviour are the guarantee of true human development through education, the existence of a variety of sources of information and of reliable references, in addition to the possibility of consultation and selection. At present, we do not have this combination of conditions; in this context, media messaging has greater influence than we would like and more than we should accept.

For this reason, the Observatory has privileged the creation of spaces for creating public awareness and providing training, carrying out dozens of workshops on critical analysis and interpretation, as well as producing a variety of pamphlets that disseminate the results of the technical studies to different audiences. These have been permanent components of our proposal.

In sum, the OCC programme of work consists of the following components:

Media research and monitoring: To date, we have carried out 20 different studies that offer conclusions and specific recommendations which have been sent to the media and advertising agencies. We also publish and disseminate the results using different print and audiovisual means.

Training and awareness-raising : Based on the results of the technical studies and GAMMA's

experience in facilitating processes for critical reflection, throughout the year we develop workshops on critical analysis and interpretation of the media so that citizens begin to see media messaging from a thoughtful and analytical viewpoint. We also hold trainings for college students majoring in communication and graphic design at different universities throughout the city, as well as professional workshops for journalists.

Public participation and opinion: All year we solicit and receive complaints about sexist messages in the media. Each year, we organize the Communications Room as a privileged space for direct civic participation. This exercise is a public exhibit of advertisements selected through statistical product analysis from the technical study and our media monitoring; it is also based on the complaints received through phone reports or other kinds of direct contact with the general citizenry.

At the Communications Room, people can vote for the most sexist advertising or commend the advertising that is contributing to a different kind of society, one which embodies equality and respect for human rights.

Political Advocacy: The OCC's technical team, GAMMA, counts the votes and based on the results of the technical study and the media monitoring, that are now reinforced by direct public opinion, emits a verdict. The results are published by the media. While both awards and (ethical) sanctions for advertising messages exist, the awards are privileged. At a local level, the municipality has created a special award for the agency or media that is best contributing to equality between women and men; this award was requested by the OCC.

Contributions to local and national regulations: The Observatory has also contributed to creating specific ordinances to regulate local media production and to recognize concrete contributions in regards to gender and communication.

Spaces for debate and discussion have been opened in order to contribute to the drafting of the new law on communication and to disseminate Constitutional rules which, in Article 19, specifically regulate media production.

Lessons learned and future challenges

1. "An observatory of this nature should not be an isolated effort. It is necessary to sustain inter-institutional efforts so that all bodies and organizations jointly recognize and assume their responsibility for creating a just and equal society. This creation requires breaking down old ways of thinking that have sustained discrimination, exclusion and subordination as something normal."
2. "An observatory calls for public pronouncements so that women and men consumers of media products can express our opinions about what we see, hear and read in the mass media. We should be able to expound what we find to be appropriate and what we find to be threatening or prejudicial for individual and collective human development and growth. Direct participation is a key component."
3. "Citizens' demands or participation do not necessarily imply opposition to the media. First, because although citizens denounce what they consider to be harmful for the social collective imagination, they also give recognition to what they find to be positive and constructive. Secondly, because both people who work in the media, as well as media consumers, are part of the same society; if society worsens and violence and discrimination abound, then it will be worse for all of us as women and men. Thirdly, because just as we are interested in constructive media production that appeals to our best qualities as human beings, the owners of the media and their workers are interested in people being connected to their services, whether radio, TV or print media."
4. The mass media and social media are not living beings, nor are they functional bodies on their own; they are composed of people who have structured their thinking in the same way as the rest of society: in the framework of a patriarchal, androcentric and discriminatory society. Thus, our collective efforts must include the task of awareness-raising and human development as a fundamental component, as a process of debate and demystification of untouched realities that have prevailed in our society like dogma."

The Citizens Communication Observatory of Cuenca is one of the few experiences in this field that combines all of these areas of work, within a framework of advocacy to create political influence. Hence, it has become a reference both within the

country and abroad. In 2012, the Communications Room was exhibited in other cities of Ecuador as well, leading us to envision a leap towards the national arena.

The people who come to know what the Observatory proposes to do are surprised by its complexity and, at the same time, by its freshness, by its creativity and by its achievements to date. The strong work commitment and militancy of its members are key factors for ensuring daily functioning. The national Communications Room has allowed for networking with other regional organizations who wish to replicate this experience.

The media provides a huge opportunity to the Citizens Communication Observatory: the media is one of the channels for exercising all human rights, including the right to participation. We believe that participation is the only path for strengthening democracy: "The task is not about seeking out the guilty parties, rather about using debate and proposals to jointly build urgent solutions for making our society a healthy, friendly and habitable space."

Notes

¹GAMMA is the *Grupo de Apoyo al Movimiento de Mujeres del Azuay* ("Support Group for the Women's Movement of Azuay"). GAMMA has served as the technical team for the Citizens Communication Observatory since its creation in 2004.

²A public exhibition with a sample of advertising messages seen in the press, radio, television and on billboards; each piece of advertising is assigned a number and the people participate by voting for the one that they find the most sexist and for the one that best contributes to a equitable society between women and men. This past year almost 4,000 people participated in the 2012 Communications Room.

All quotes are from the "*Medios de Comunicación: una enorme oportunidad*." Multiple authors; Cuenca, Ecuador; GAMMA, 2009.

CIVIL SOCIETY EXPERIENCES IN WORKING WITH MEDIA

Civil society and media in partnership

The ASMITA (Nepal) experience

Manju Thapa, ASMITA

Over the past 20 years, Asmita Women's Publishing House Media and Resource Organization (ASMITA) in Nepal has been engaged in work to encourage the local media to become more accountable, democratic and gender sensitive. ASMITA has built a strong rapport with mainstream Nepalese media through continued advocacy for gender sensitive content and various interactions and media literacy campaigns with the media persons. It has gained some success in this regard.

Media literacy campaign

Influential media producers argued that they would be willing to listen to comments on their media products if the comments were raised by common media consumers too, and not only by the experts and analysts (1). Such feedback helped shape the idea of developing a media literacy campaign to groom conscious and active media consumers. Media content analysis and subsequent regular interactions with media producers on the basis of the findings are the major components of the campaign.

In the interactions, the evidence collected through regular monitoring of mainstream media support our advocacy against unfair portrayal of

Influential media producers argued that they would be willing to listen to comments on their media products if the comments were raised by common media consumers too, and not only by the experts and analysts.

Media consumers developing skills in news writing at an ASMITA workshop



Source: ASMITA. 

women, gender-biased representation, stereotyping and insufficient and discriminatory coverage of issues of importance to women. The monitoring results are disseminated through ASMITA's print magazine and directly to the media concerned. The interactions discuss the impact of such coverage on women, men and society. The regular advocacy has resulted in some improvement in local media content and positive changes in media trends (2).

Advocacy has raised awareness among reporters, editors, other media producers and media consumers. The

achievements have become gradually visible in FM radio and local newspapers. After a continuous lobby, news on activities in which women are involved is being published or broadcast in important news pages and on prime time. Gender-related news items are gaining importance as main news and content for editorial. Some sexist advertisements are no longer aired. Qualitative coverage of women's issues and writing from a gender perspective have increased. Media producers quote and interview more women now as resource persons. Advocacy has also increased awareness and sensitivity of media producers about other marginalized people.

After the latest campaign, the ASMITA team realized that regular interaction with media producers is always necessary. Though they respond positively to the issue of gender sensitivity, they need regular and updated feedback from the consumers to understand the points of concern and missed opportunities to integrate a gender approach in their work.

Most effective strategies

Of all the strategies ASMITA has adopted to encourage fair representation and balanced portrayal of women in media, media monitoring and interactions between the media producers and consumers have proved to be the most effective.

Such programs enhance the understanding of media producers towards weaknesses and biases in their outputs and their responsibility for addressing the expectations of 50% of their audience – the women. Collaboration between civil society and media makes all stakeholders accountable to each other.

In our experience, targeting advocacy programs only for the reporters/correspondents is not enough. Rather, demands for change should be directed to the officials at decision-making level such as owners, executive board members, editors, news chief, station managers and others. If they are not sensitive enough, they do not allow publication or broadcast of comprehensive and gender-aware stories prepared by their reporters.

Civil society should be prepared to respond convincingly to questions raised by the media practitioners in reaction to demands for fair and gender sensitive journalism.

Besides, it is imperative to lobby decision-makers to formulate and implement self regulatory laws like in-house policy, guidelines or code of conduct required to institutionalize gender sensitivity.

It is not easy to lobby media in our experience. Civil society should be prepared to respond convincingly to questions raised by the media practitioners in reaction to demands for fair and gender sensitive journalism. Questions and arguments we encounter regularly include: "How can changes in local media be meaningful when at the same time we have globalized media that is sexist and gender biased? Isn't demand for media regulation contrary to press freedom? What are our alternative sources of funds if we reject lucrative advertisements that are replete with sexist images of women? Media reflects good and bad social realities, so how is it justifiable to conclude that violent content for instance impacts society negatively? Naked photographs of women are not only important for media's economic survival but they also respond to consumers demands. Your demands infringe on the rights of the women who allow themselves to be photographed".

Advocacy activists should have logical answers to these important questions and other counter arguments in order for media producers to understand that social responsibility is one of their major obligations. The likelihood of change towards positive portrayal and fair representation of women increases as the media producers become convinced with credible arguments.

See the *Learning Resource Kit for Gender-Ethical Journalism and Media House Policy*, Book 1, for an assessment checklist on gender in media policy.

The checklist covers issues such as selection of media interviewees, representation and portrayal of women and men, images, broadcast content, advertising and accountability mechanisms.

Beyond conviction: other constraints

Conviction in theory and demonstration of commitment is not enough; media producers encounter hurdles in fully implementing the demands for fair representation, non-stereotyping and gender sensitivity. The problems include: limited resources, lack of trained staff, lack of continuous feedback from consumers, dominance of national and global media, lack of precise understanding on social responsibility of media and its real impact on people's lives.

In spite of these problems, the local Nepali media we have worked with have proved to be fairly willing to engage in dialogue with civil society and activists. They are receptive to dialogue on expectations and issues raised by civil society. Once there was a time when media used to accuse civil society and its activists as farming foreign money and raising issues according to donors' whims. Presently, the trend has been receding at an encouraging rate.

Gender policy in media should be formulated to institutionalize and sustain the new understanding and commitments of media producers. The following practices might be useful to spur media to adopt gender policies: Gather evidence for advocacy through media monitoring research; Launch continuous discussion with local and national level media industries about the need of gender policy in media; Organize regular debates with media related bodies, such as the Federation of Journalists, Press Council, Association of FM radios and Televisions, NGOs working on the issues; Conduct media literacy campaigns for audiences, particularly women; Encourage women rights organizations to provide regular and rigorous feedback to media, and; Provide training to media audiences and women in particular on basic news writing and advocacy.

5 strategies to encourage media gender policy adoption

1. Gather evidence for advocacy through media monitoring research.
2. Launch continuous discussion with local and national level media industries about the need for gender policy in media.
3. Organize regular debates with media related bodies.
4. Conduct media literacy campaigns for audiences, particularly women.
5. Encourage women rights organizations to provide regular and rigorous feedback to media.

Notes

- (1) Nepali Mahilahruma Televisionko Prabhav, (research report) published by ASMITA, Nepal, 2003.
- (2) Media Literacy Bulletin Nos. 1,2,3 & 4, published by ASMITA, Nepal, 2008-2009.

Editor's Checklist *

Does the story:

1. Illuminate some aspect of gender relations?
2. Have fresh data to back it up?
3. Quote a diversity of voices?
4. Try hard to talk to women who are invisible in the media?
5. Challenge gender stereotypes?
6. Recognize race, ethnicity, class and age differences?
7. Use inclusive, non-sexist language?
8. Use terms and concepts understandable to a lay audience?

9. Have context, analysis and an attractive lead?
10. Use interviews with people as sources rather than relying purely on publications or other written materials?
11. Use a gender lens throughout?
12. Ask why?

Bonus question: Ask why not?

**Adapted from the Inter Press Service (IPS) Editor's checklist for stories on the Millennium Development Goal 'promote gender equality and women's empowerment' (MDG3)*

Source: Learning Resource Kit for Gender-Ethical Journalism and Media House Policy, Book 2. WACC/IFJ 2012.

Observatorio ciudadano de la comunicación

Estudio de caso, Cuenca, Ecuador

Sandra Lopez, GAMMA

Un Observatorio es un mecanismo de ampliar el ámbito de incidencia desde la comunicación para lograr el cambio deseado y necesario para la sociedad.

El objetivo del Observatorio es aportar en el mejoramiento de la producción de mensajes que se difunden por los medios masivos de comunicación a través del análisis y de la propuesta para conseguir que estos mensajes sean positivos e impulsen la construcción de relaciones equitativas entre mujeres y hombres en lugar de profundizar en mensajes que sostienen un pensamiento que discrimina y subordina a las mujeres.

A continuación es un estudio de caso del Observatorio ciudadano de la comunicación coordinado por GAMMA en Ecuador, extrayendo lecciones para las organizaciones de la sociedad civil que deseen extraer de esta experiencia para construir asociaciones constructivas con sus medios de comunicación locales.

¿Por qué un observatorio?

Desde el año 1996, GAMMA trabajó en el área de comunicación, llevando adelante un programa radial en vivo, cuyo objetivo central era aportar para un cambio del imaginario social que sostiene la discriminación, subordinación, abuso y exclusión de las mujeres. Si bien este proceso aportó para pequeños cambios locales, la incidencia que se puede hacer al trabajar solo desde un medio de comunicación es muy restringida si se compara con un trabajo con quienes producen y difunden mensajes en los medios de comunicación.

Así, en el año 2004, tomando como marco el Plan de Igualdad de Igualdad de Oportunidades entre mujeres y hombres, se propició la creación del Observatorio Ciudadano de la Comunicación, como un mecanismo de ampliar el ámbito de incidencia desde la comunicación para lograr el cambio deseado y necesario para la sociedad.

El nombre fue cuidadosamente elegido, observatorio; pues su misión es mirar con ojos críticos y con detenimiento, aquí radica desde el punto de vista semántico, la diferencia entre ver o mirar y observar; ciudadano, porque la conformación es amplia y diversa en representación, no es un observador académico o especializado, no es una actividad meramente técnica, es ante todo una apuesta ciudadana para el ejercicio de derechos; y, comunicación; no queríamos ser un observatorio que vea solo a los medios sino a todas las entidades relacionadas con la comunicación, desde la creación, producción y difusión de mensajes; así se compuso su nombre: Observatorio Ciudadano de la Comunicación.

Un Observatorio de la comunicación para los ciudadanos con un enfoque de género es un espacio para las redes cívicas y políticas.

El Observatorio permite la reflexión colectiva sobre los contenidos de los medios y sus consecuencias sobre las relaciones de género, la violencia, el abuso y la exclusión de las mujeres.

El Observatorio involucra a los ciudadanos en el monitoreo de los medios, la análisis crítica y la interpretación de los mensajes de los medios y a sensibilizar al público más amplio sobre las cuestiones.

El Observatorio apoya activamente la participación ciudadana en los debates de política local.

Así mismo, se decidió que no se observe solo el sexismo en los medios sino que pueda con el tiempo ir ampliando su ámbito de trabajo hacia todas las inequidades y discriminaciones, en un intento de transversalización de enfoques: interculturalidad, ambiente, derechos humanos.

Desde el inicio, se previó que este espacio no sea un observador externo sino que, integre en su conformación a los protagonistas de los mensajes, es decir a los medios de comunicación; también se definió entre las estrategias, la necesidad de que formen parte del OCC, las autoridades locales, quienes tienen en sus manos la definición y creación de políticas públicas; el Comité Permanente es la instancia de representación política y vocería oficial del Observatorio y quedó integrado por diversas entidades e instituciones de manera que la incidencia política se vea atendida desde varios frentes: autoridades locales, medios de comunicación, gremios de periodistas, organizaciones de defensa de derechos humanos y de derechos específicos de las mujeres, espacios técnicos para la política pública local con enfoque de género, espacios de vigilancia y exigibilidad de derechos (Consejos ciudadanos). En la actualidad, 11 instituciones y redes conforman este comité político.

La fortaleza de este tipo de conformación es que todas las personas que participan en representación de sus instituciones o redes pueden opinar desde un ángulo diverso; no buscamos culpables, pues sabemos que es la estructura social con todos sus mecanismos la que sostiene todas las inequidades; y todas las instituciones formamos parte de esta estructura social, por lo tanto no tiene cabida la condena; la propuesta es, todo lo contrario, observar y observarnos, encontrar los elementos claves que sostienen el imaginario y dibujar estrategias para cambiar la situación, buscar en dónde están los nudos críticos y los sostenedores de imaginarios para construir estrategias diversas como diversas son las instituciones, las personas y la vida; las cosas

están así; no son así, por lo tanto, podemos cambiarlas poniendo cada quien su conocimiento, su experiencia, su voluntad, sus ideas y su trabajo.

Desde cada sector se analizan los resultados de los estudios técnicos y se proponen actividades que permitan llegar a cada vez más sectores: agencias de publicidad, medios de comunicación, estudiantes de comunicación, de diseño gráfico, de publicidad, de sociología, estudiantes de psicología y de medicina; organizaciones de base, autoridades locales responsables de la rectoría de políticas públicas, instituciones educativas de nivel medio, jóvenes, adolescentes, niñas y niños; docentes, en fin, un sinnúmero de actores que se van involucrando en una suerte de tejido en donde cada persona pone su puntada, única pero, enlazada con las otras para sostener el trazado global.

Durante este tiempo de trabajo se han realizado 13 estudios técnicos sobre publicidades, 3 sobre programas de entretenimiento en televisión, 3 sobre noticias, está en marcha el primer estudio sobre movilidad humana y otro sobre el abordaje de las noticias en los medios sobre la violencia contra las mujeres. Se ha compartido la metodología de trabajo con el Concejo de la Niñez y acaban de terminar el primer estudio sobre prensa dirigida a la niñez y el abordaje de derechos; se han llevado adelante 7 jornadas para profesionales de agencias de publicidad y de medios locales con el fin de sensibilizar y capacitar en torno a la producción de mensajes que promueven la equidad social y de género; desde el año 2004, se han desarrollado más de 200 talleres de formación en lectura crítica de mensajes de medios de comunicación con personas diversas.

En el año 2009, GAMMA, como equipo técnico del Observatorio, coordinó en América Latina el Monitoreo Mundial de Medios de Comunicación que llevó adelante la WACC. Los resultados se socializaron por medio de sendos audiovisuales tanto en inglés como en español, producidos por el equipo técnico de comunicación en GAMMA.

En muchas ocasiones se ha expresado abiertamente que los medios de comunicación dan a la gente lo que a la gente le gusta ... Los espacios de participación directa creados por el Observatorio, como el Salón de la Comunicación han demostrado que esta afirmación no es real.

¿Y qué dice la ciudadanía?

En muchas ocasiones, en talleres de capacitación o jornadas de debate con profesionales de medios, con estudiantes de diseño y comunicación o con agencias de publicidad, se ha expresado abiertamente que los medios de comunicación dan a la gente lo que a la gente le gusta y que la publicidad u otro tipo de programas (entretenimiento, noticieros, etc) se ajustan a lo que la gente pide... Los espacios de participación directa creados por el Observatorio, como el Salón de la Comunicación han demostrado que esta afirmación no es real.



Source: GAMMA, Ecuador



Año a año, en el marco de las acciones por el Día Internacional de las Mujeres, 8 de marzo, se ha llevado adelante el Salón de la comunicación²; la participación ha crecido, cientos, y luego miles de personas han asistido al salón y a decir de ellas, ha cambiado su relación con los medios: “desde que asistí al Salón de la comunicación, no he vuelto a mirar las publicidades sin analizarlas”; “cuando vi esa publicidad aquí y analicé lo que está detrás de eso, he dejado de comprar tal producto”, “veo todas las publicidades juntas aquí, no puedo creer que todos los días veamos esto y no hagamos nada”... estas son algunas de las opiniones recibidas en el Salón; “a partir de ahora, voy a presionar para que en mi agencia tomen en cuenta la opinión de la gente”... “con razón que en Cuenca no se vende nuestro producto”, nos dijo un diseñador que recibió uno de los premios en el año 2009.

Lo anterior evidencia que la gente tiene opinión, que la gente reflexiona y propone frente a los mensajes de los medios; la exposición de mensajes fuera de la programación regular de los medios, en un “escenario neutral”, es un espacio de participación y debate muy importante dentro de la propuesta del Observatorio; así, no es el estudio técnico la palabra

final frente a los mensajes, es la gente; ¿qué decir frente a este tipo de mensajes?, ¿qué hacer cuando vemos y escuchamos palabras de ofenden, que violentan, imágenes que tergiversan y agreden?, desde el equipo técnico del OCC, como GAMMA en Cuenca, tenemos la necia convicción de que la ciudadanía es la única que puede y debe decidir lo que quiere recibir y que, es obligación del Estado como garante para el ejercicio de derechos, aportar para el desarrollo de esta conciencia crítica; por ello mantenemos el Salón de la Comunicación como espacio democrático de ejercicio de nuestro derecho a la participación, como único mecanismo para hacer de los medios una oportunidad para el desarrollo y la realización de los derechos humanos.

También durante los talleres de capacitación o las jornadas de formación con medios de comunicación o estudiantes universitarios, se ha hablado sobre la inocuidad de los mensajes de los medios o a la falta de conexión directa entre los mensajes y el comportamiento de las personas; se ha planteado que no podemos afirmar que la audiencia reacciona como autómatas frente a estos mensajes, que para algo tenemos discernimiento y libertad de elección; que decir esto es ofender el raciocinio de la gente.

Lamentablemente en sociedades de inequidad como la nuestra, en donde el acceso a conocimiento y a formación de calidad es una excepción, en donde se tiende a fomentar la educación masificadora en lugar de la reflexión y el libre pensamiento, no podemos decir que de verdad exista discernimiento o libre albedrío; el requisito fundamental para que los mensajes de los medios no influyan de manera automática en el comportamiento de las personas es la garantía de formación verdadera en la educación, la existencia de fuentes de información diversas y con referencias verídicas, la posibilidad de consulta y de selección, como digo, en la actualidad no contamos con este conjunto de condiciones y en ese contexto, los mensajes de los medios influyen más de lo que quisiéramos, más de lo que podamos aceptar.

Por ello, el Observatorio ha privilegiado los espacios de sensibilización y capacitación, decenas de talleres sobre lectura crítica, muchos folletos de difusión con los resultados de los estudios técnicos socializados en diversos lugares, con población diversa, han sido elementos permanentes dentro de la propuesta.

En resumen, la propuesta contiene los siguientes elementos:

Investigación y monitoreo de medios: Hasta el momento se han realizado 20 estudios con sus conclusiones y recomendaciones específicas que se envían a los medios de comunicación y agencias de publicidad y se publican y difunden por diversos medios impresos y audiovisuales.

Capacitación y sensibilización: Con base en los resultados de los estudios técnicos y en la experiencia de GAMMA en facilitación de procesos de reflexión, se desarrollan durante todo el año talleres de formación en lectura crítica de medios, de manera que la ciudadanía comience a ver de manera reflexiva y analítica los mensajes de los medios.

Se realiza también capacitación para estudiantes de comunicación y diseño gráfico de las Universidades de la ciudad; así como jornadas de profesionalización para periodistas.

Participación y opinión: Todo el año se reciben denuncias sobre mensajes sexistas en los medios. El Salón de la Comunicación: espacio privilegiado de participación directa. Es una exposición pública de mensajes publicitarios seleccionados por análisis estadístico producto del estudio técnico y monitoreo y con base en las denuncias realizadas de manera telefónica y directa por la ciudadanía. Durante el Salón, las personas pueden dar su voto por la publicidad más sexista, o felicitar aquella que aporta para una sociedad diferente, para una sociedad de equidad y de respeto de los derechos humanos.

Incidencia política: El equipo técnico del OCC, GAMMA, contabiliza los votos recibidos y con base en los resultados del estudio técnico y del monitoreo, reforzados por la opinión directa de la ciudadanía, emite el veredicto, los resultados se publican por todos los medios.

Existen premios y sanciones (éticas) para los mensajes publicitarios, sin embargo, se privilegia los premios; en nivel local, la Municipalidad ha creado un reconocimiento expreso que se entrega a la agencia o medio de comunicación que con su producción está aportando para la equidad entre mujeres y hombres; este premio fue solicitado por el OCC.

Aporte a la normativa local y nacional: Desde el Observatorio se ha logrado la creación de ordenanzas específicas para normar la producción mediática local y para reconocer el aporte concreto en el tema de género y comunicación.

Se han abierto espacios de debate y discusión para aportar en la redacción de la nueva ley de comunicación y difusión permanente de la normativa constitucional que regula la producción mediática expresamente en su artículo 19.

La experiencia de trabajo y los pasos dados en este tiempo nos permiten aproximar algunas lecciones y retos hacia el futuro:

1. "Un Observatorio no debe ser una propuesta aislada, es necesario mantener un trabajo interinstitucional en el que todas las entidades y organizaciones, acepten y asuman su responsabilidad con la creación de una sociedad justa e igualitaria, creación que pasa por la ruptura

de los viejos patrones mentales que han mantenido como si fuese normal la discriminación, la exclusión y la subordinación.

2. Un Observatorio requiere del pronunciamiento público para que la opinión de quienes nos constituimos en consumidoras y consumidores de los productos mediáticos podamos expresarnos sobre lo que vemos, escuchamos y leemos en los medios masivos de comunicación, podamos exponer lo que nos parece adecuado y lo que nos parece atentatorio y perjudicial para el desarrollo y el crecimiento humano en términos individuales y colectivos. La participación directa es un elemento sustancial.

3. La demanda de la ciudadanía no implica una contraposición con los medios, primero, porque así como existe denuncia de lo que se considera dañino para el imaginario social, existe también reconocimiento de aquello que se considera positivo y constructivo; segundo, porque tanto quienes trabajan en los medios como quienes consumen su servicio son parte de una misma sociedad y, si esta va mal y se profundiza la violencia y la discriminación, a todas y a todos nos irá mal también; y, tercero, porque así como a las personas nos interesa una producción mediática constructiva y que apele a lo mejor que tenemos como seres humanos, a quienes tienen la propiedad de los medios y a quienes trabajan en ellos, les interesa que la gente esté conectada con su servicio sea éste por radio, por televisión o por impresos.

4. Los medios de comunicación social no son seres vivientes, no son entes vigentes por sí mismos, están conformados por personas que han estructurado su pensamiento de la misma manera que el resto de la sociedad: en el marco de una sociedad patriarcal, androcéntrica y discriminatoria. Por lo tanto, el trabajo que hacemos conjuntamente debe considerar la tarea de formación y de sensibilización como un elemento fundamental y como un proceso de debate y de desmitificación de las realidades intocadas que han primado en nuestra sociedad como dogma”.

El Observatorio Ciudadano de la Comunicación de Cuenca es una de las pocas experiencias en este campo que combinan todas las áreas de trabajo mencionadas, en el marco de las propuestas de incidencia política se ha convertido en un referente dentro y fuera del país; de hecho, en este año

2012, se ha logrado exponer el Salón de la Comunicación en otras ciudades del país, con lo que se avizora un salto al nivel nacional.

Las personas que han conocido la propuesta se sorprenden por su complejidad y a la vez por su frescura, por su creatividad y por los logros alcanzados; el compromiso de trabajo y la militancia son elementos claves para que todo funcione. Ahora, a partir del Salón Nacional de la Comunicación, se han establecido nexos también con organizaciones regionales que desean replicar la experiencia.

Para el Observatorio Ciudadano de la Comunicación, los medios de comunicación son una enorme oportunidad: son en sí mismos uno de los espacios para ejercer el derecho a la comunicación, pero son también una vía para el ejercicio de todos los otros derechos humanos, uno de ellos, la participación; y, esta última, pensamos nosotras, es la única vía para el fortalecimiento de la democracia; “la tarea no es buscar culpables sino construir conjuntamente, desde el debate y la propuesta, las soluciones urgentes para hacer de nuestra sociedad un espacio sano, amable, habitable”.

Notas

¹ GAMMA. Grupo de Apoyo al Movimiento de Mujeres del Azuay. GAMMA es el equipo técnico del Observatorio Ciudadano de la Comunicación desde su creación en 2004.

² Exposición pública de una muestra de mensajes publicitarios en prensa, radio, televisión y vallas; cada publicidad tiene un número y la gente que participa da su voto por aquella que considera más sexista o por aquella que aporta para una sociedad equitativa entre mujeres y hombres. En el último salón-marzo-2012, participaron cerca de 4.000 personas.

Las citas entre comillas han sido tomadas de la publicación: Medios de Comunicación: una enorme oportunidad. GAMMA 2009. Varias autoras. Cuenca-Ecuador

Resources for media monitoring, critical media literacy, training and advocacy

free download at www.whomakesthenews.org



Several resources are available for free download at www.whomakesthenews.org, a website dedicated to news and information on gender and the news media. The website is a space to learn, network and share about our work. Feel free to download materials for use in training and advocacy work, participate in the blog, and send us your news and events to share with the global network of individuals, groups, institutions and organizations that are engaged in work to advance gender justice in and through the media.

Action and advocacy resources



Media monitoring resources



Blog



www.facebook.com/Global.Media.Monitoring.Project



WACC partner projects: Reports

Gender and journalism documentaries

Asociación Civil Artemisa Comunicación, Argentina.

Women in Argentina have made extraordinary gains in politics in the recent past and now occupy 39% of seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 36% in the Senate. The election of Cristina Fernandez as President in 2007 heightened public discourse mediated through the mass media, on various questions pertaining to women and femininity.

Analysis of the media messages revealed significant sexism and stereotyping of women in power, and within this context, the Asociación Civil Artemisa Comunicación (ACAC) undertook a media campaign on the portrayal of women in political office. Artemisa produced a documentary *Políticas en los medios* analyzing the portrayal of female politicians in press, audio-visual, radio and digital media. The documentary was screened at public debates with communicators from national media across Argentina.

Proposals emerging from the debates included the imperative for journalists to also seek the opinion of women experts for stories related to politics and economic issues, to address sexist language and to professionalize in-house codes of practice from a gender perspective. Further publicity for the documentary was assured through a telephone campaign to journalists, direct mailing to media houses and information posted on online social networking platforms including YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. The documentary was distributed to media professional networks within Argentina, across Latin America and other Spanish-speaking countries.

The documentary is available for download at <http://www.artemisanoticias.com.ar/site/politicas-en-los-medios.asp>.



ACAC was created in 2005 by female journalists invested in enabling a more rigorous, gender-aware journalism. ACAC's online space contains resources for journalists interested in improving their knowledge and skills on gender-aware professional practice.

Advocacy for gender integration in Burundi media

Association Burundaise des Femmes Journalistes, Burundi.

“Burundi is often cited as a good-practice example of a country in which gender considerations have been effectively incorporated into decision-making posts and political office. Such awareness should flow through all development sectors, including the communications industry”.

These comments were made by Gérard Mfuranzima, Chief of Cabinet, Ministry of Information and Communication to chief editors and media house directors attending a workshop organized by the Burundi Association for Women Journalists (AFJO).

The workshop was part of a larger project by the Association to lobby for the integration of gender in Burundi media. The project aimed to respond to the relative lack of women journalists in positions of responsibility in media houses, the underrepresentation of women journalists in Burundi media and the demonstrated lack of gender sensitivity in media output.

The project enabled AFJO create and maintain a directory of women journalists and increase media professionals' knowledge on ways in which they could incorporate a gender perspective into their work.

The project lobbied for an increase in the number of decision-making positions held by women journalists and for the improvement of media portrayal of women. AFJO launched media awards for best print, television and radio productions from a gender perspective.

Ongoing projects

Creating awareness in young communicators on the portrayal of women and men

Research centre for Gender, Family and Environment in Development (CGFED), Vietnam.

Gender stereotyping and imbalanced representation of women and men in the media betray a lack of gender sensitiveness in journalism, whether intentional or not.

The project aims to influence a new trend of communication free of gender bias and discrimination in the professional practice of young journalists. The project is expected to create gender progressive young communicators, who will also design and undertake an awareness advocacy campaign.

CGFED is a non-governmental organisation established in 1993 out of concerns about women's development and gender equity in Vietnam.

Towards gender-aware journalism: creating good practices

Asociación Civil De la Azotea, Argentina.

Mar del Plata city in the Province of Buenos Aires lacks training and resources for future journalists. The gaps are evident in the quality of media reports produced by practicing journalists. This project aims to increase awareness of the impact of stereotypical and biased reporting on women by building journalists' capacities to report stories on violence against women, sexual and reproductive health, trafficking of women and sex work, masculinities and human rights. The project has produced a manual of good

practices to be distributed to journalist unions, local media and schools of journalism.

De la Azotea is a non-profit civil society association established in 2003 by a group of women and men committed to creating alternative media for people and groups marginalized from mainstream media. The Association runs the community radio FM de la Azotea 88.7 and its interventions are anchored in a participatory approach to communication.

Communication that dignifies woman: An Afro-Colombian lens

Fundación para la Educación y el Deporte de las Comunidades Negras e Indígenas de la Costa Pacífica (Despertar), Colombia.

Colombia's Afro and indigenous women have been the subject of cultural stereotyping that is in fact a form of exclusion and violence. The situation is replicated in media, in and through which these groups are re-victimized by a media that remains insensitive about ethnic and gender biases.

The project addresses the media's use of racist and sexist stereotypes against indigenous and Afro women. It is expected to challenge gender and ethnicity-based discrimination against women by building a critical awareness about the issues.

The project will build the capacity of journalists and media managers. It will also produce and broadcast a regular radio programme on these issues.

View project video at: <http://www.whomakesthenews.org/videos.html>

Despertar is an Afro-Colombian women's initiative renowned in Nariño for its work in social mobilisation. Its mission is to stimulate, support and implement actions to educate the Afro-Colombian community.

Promoting Gender-Ethical Journalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Novi Put, Bosnia & Herzegovina

The project's overall objective is to increase media commitment to gender-ethical journalism and to the use of gender-sensitive language (GSL) in Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH) media practice.

The project is building capacity of media practitioners on GSL and gender equality. It also aims to improve the quality of cooperation between media and women's civil society organizations.

To date the project has undertaken media monitoring and released monthly reports on the findings. Several press conferences, interactive workshops, trainings and lectures have been convened. Novi Put has maintained a lobby for increase in media commitment to gender-ethical journalism.

Over 200 BiH male and female journalists, editors from print and electronic media, representatives of women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have benefitted directly from the project activities. and

An important expected outcome is the improvement of editors' media policy from a gender-ethics perspective.

Association Novi Put works on gender equality, violence and human trafficking in BiH. Novi Put is the only BiH member of the European NGOs Platform Against Trafficking, Exploitation and Slavery (ENPATES), a platform of 48 NGOs from 38 European countries.

Capacity building for gender and gender-responsive journalism

Women Empowerment Organization, Pakistan

Gender discrimination and violence against women prevail in the male dominant Pakistani society.

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Interpretations of Islam and patriarchal cultural norms have worked together to create discriminatory legal frameworks and practices that fuel violence against women. The project will build the capacity of women's rights activists and media professionals to highlight gender in their work in order to reduce discrimination and gender violence.

Project activities include training of trainers of women's rights activists, editors and reporters, an open forum for interchange between media and civil society and, an advocacy campaign for gender justice.

It is expected that new gender perspectives in media reporting will generate positive public opinion in favour of eliminating discrimination and gender-based violence.

Women Empowerment Organization is a non-profit and non-political organization established in 2006 by women from grassroots communities dedicated to uplifting the marginalized and oppressed .

Democracy on Air!

Flying Broom Women Communication and Research Association, Turkey.

The project seeks to increase awareness and build capacities of female journalists from across Turkey to increase coverage of issues of importance to women and their voices in the media.

The project has developed gender-oriented media literacy training for women, is strengthening local and regional women's reporter networks and lobbying media to adopt an equity-based approach in journalism.

The project has also developed and is implementing an online program to train local reporters. It is popularizing the idea of 'alternative women's reporting' beyond the metropolis towards the smaller towns. The plan is to write and publish electronically at least 300

news articles . The news will be circulated to mainstream media for wider publication.

The project will benefit local female reporters across Turkey, women's rights and other civil society organisations and representatives of local media.

Flying Broom is a women's organization established in November 1996 to advance democracy and civil society through communication and encouraging women's participation in media and government. Flying Broom seeks to institutionalize and protect women's human rights in media, government and society.

Reconstructing the image of women in media in Ivory Coast

La Plateforme des Femmes pour Gagner, Ivory Coast.

The project's objective is to restore women's dignity in media through portrayal that is more objective, gender-fair and balanced.

The project is collecting evidence on media representation of women across the period 1990-2010 and will apply the evidence to lobby government authorities, public awareness, and to strengthen capacity of women leaders and media professionals.

The project will establish a gender-focused observatory to monitor media portrayal and representation of women over the long term. The project is expected to result in the adoption of gender-aware media codes, and to influence changes in media practice.

La Plateforme des Femmes pour Gagner (PFG) is a civil society organisation established in 2005 in the context of the political crisis in the Ivory Coast. PFG brings together professional associations, unions, women's political organisations and other civil society groups around a common vision for women's empowerment in decision-making and self determination.

Media and justice from a feminist lens:

Improving communication to expand rights

Equipo Latinoamericano de Justicia y Género (ELA), Argentina.

The project's aim is to improve mass media commitment to gender balance. It will develop a manual for journalists which will be widely distributed and placed on a dedicated website and in libraries of communication and journalism training centres.

Awareness-building and discussion workshops will be held for journalists, students, and members of Argentinean judiciary's news agency in order to build bridges between the justice and media spheres.

While the project is being implemented primarily in Argentina, it will reach ELA's partner institutions across Latin America with information about the strategy and achievements.

ELA seeks to improve the social, political and economic situation of women. The team is composed of prominent female lawyers and sociologists.

Project support: <http://www.waccglobal.org/en/programmes/gender-and-communication.html>
Apoyo a proyectos: <http://www.waccglobal.org/es/programmes/genero-y-comunicacion.html>
Soutien financier: <http://www.waccglobal.org/fr/programmes/genero-y-comunicacion.html>

Media & Gender Monitor
WACC, 308 Main Street
Toronto, Ontario, M4C 4X7
Canada

gmp@waccglobal.org
www.whomakesthenews.org