

‘Mission Possible’: A Gender and Media Advocacy Toolkit

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Introduction - A New Agenda for Who Makes the News?

*“We were in uncharted territory. And taking on the Jamaican media was close to being a “Mission: Impossible”. But what needed to be done was clear every time Jamaican women switched on their television sets, read newspapers or listened to the radio.”*¹

Women’s Media Watch Jamaica began in 1987 with only six volunteers. Its mission: to improve the representation of women in the media as one way of reducing violence against women.² Improving how women are seen, heard and listened to in the media continues to shape the organization’s work more than 15 years later. Its arsenal of activities include public education workshops, media monitoring and lobbying campaigns, research, as well as the production of audio-visual materials and teaching aids.

Taking on the media has become a mission not only for Women’s Media Watch Jamaica. Women (and men are joining in) engaged in various forms of political, social, cultural, economic and gender activism worldwide soon came to see the media as a key institution in the fight to achieve women’s equality and human rights.

It is often said that the media holds a mirror up to society. How often women are seen in the mirror and what they look like when they do appear or speak has been the focus of a growing movement focused on changing the stereotypical representations and portrayals of women and men in the news.

The United Nations first International Decade for Women (1975-1985) was a catalyst for women’s activism and research on the media which, since the 1970s, has revolved around:

- A critique of the ways in which media content projects women as objects, rather than as active subjects or participants in many diverse roles
- An analysis of the institutional and social structures of power through which women are systematically marginalized within media organizations³

Women working at the country and regional levels in the 1970s and 1980s developed their own tools to gauge the media’s discrimination against women in content and in the workplace. Their ongoing work received a significant boost in 1995 with the first Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), which has become a global tool of analysis of gender representation in the media.

GMMP was one of the key resolutions of a 1994 conference on Women Empowering Communication, held in Bangkok, organized by the Women’s Program of the World

¹ Revisioning the Jamaican Media: The Experience of Women’s Media Watch 1987-1996 by Melody Walker and Hilary Nicholson in Women’s Experiences in Media, edited by Rina Jimenez-David, Isis International-Manila and WACC, 1996

² Revisioning the Jamaican Media: The Experience of Women’s Media Watch 1987-1996 by Melody Walker and Hilary Nicholson in Women’s Experiences in Media, edited by Rina Jimenez-David, Isis International-Manila and WACC, 1996

³ Gender Setting, New Agendas for Media Monitoring and Advocacy, Margaret Gallagher, ZED Books and WACC London, publishers, 2001

Association for Christian Communication (WACC) in cooperation with Isis International and the International Women's Tribune Center (IWTC).

GMMP 1995 (which took place in 71 countries on January 18, 1995) and GMMP 2000 (which took place in 70 countries on February 1, 2000) have become important tools for gender media activists. The findings of both have been used to show the media the problems with the representations and portrayals of women and men in the news and to stimulate discussions on how these might be addressed.

Why this toolkit?

Working to bring about change in the media does not have to be a "mission impossible" as Women's Media Watch in Jamaica, as well as other groups, have learned. Approaching media owners, publishers, editors, advertisers, journalists, among others, with findings which reflect the mirror back onto the media itself, can open the door to change.

GMMP is an effective tool for gender activists to use in their work to change the media. For example, lobbying with the GMMP 2000 findings led to the Jamaican Broadcasting Commission developing its own guidelines for gender sensitive reporting. And in Malta, the Gender Advisory Committee of the Broadcasting Authority uses the GMMP2000 in its training program for media professionals.

The third Global Media Monitoring Project took place on 16th February 2005. Seventy-six countries took part. GMMP 2005 provides a unique opportunity to bring together the experiences of gender activism targeted at the media into a toolkit that seeks to build on these successes, among others. This toolkit seeks to de-mystify the media and gender and media advocacy by illustrating through concrete steps, case studies, pointers, tips and information, that we can all take action to change gender representation and portrayal in and through the media. From writing a letter to the editor to planning and implementing a year-long campaign focused on changing how the media portrays gender violence for example, there are many ways to engage the media in the ultimate journey of achieving gender equality.

Who is it for?

This toolkit is targeted primarily at:

- Organizations and individuals who participated in GMMP 2005
- Gender focused groups and media organizations (such as media councils, editors' forums, journalists' unions, media women's associations, among others) working with (or who wishing to begin working) with the media on gender and media issues
- WACC's constituencies and partner organizations in Latin America, the Caribbean and North America, Eastern Europe, Africa, the Middle East and in Asia and the Pacific engaged in some form of media activism

How to use the toolkit?

This toolkit can be used in the following ways:

- To train activists on how to build gender and media campaigns using the findings of GMMP 2005
- To illustrate and train activists on the various approaches that can be taken to do gender and media advocacy
- As an information tool on the media, and gender and media advocacy
- To learn how to work with and through the media to put gender on the news agenda.

While the primary audience for this toolkit are organizations outside of the media that target the media for their gender activism, the toolkit can also be of value to professionals within the media as a means of self-reflection and analysis on how the gender biases of those who work within and own the media can and do find their way into media content and workplace conditions and practices.

Structure of the toolkit

This toolkit is divided into two key sections.

Section One – defines the conceptual issues on gender and media advocacy; looks at why the media should be a focus of gender and feminist activism; highlights the key issues for gender and media advocacy using the findings of the GMMP 2005; and discusses the various target audiences key to achieve change.

Section Two – provides the tactical information on the steps, tools and strategies that are useful in gender and media advocacy; provides tips and pointers on how to engage with the media and how to put gender on the news agenda.

Information boxes, case studies and discussion points are provided in the various chapters.

At the end of each Section, the user will find a glossary of key terms used in the chapters, and a summary of the key pointers and issues that have emerged from the chapters.

Section One: Putting Gender on the Media's Agenda

This Section defines the conceptual issues on gender and media advocacy; it looks at why the media should be a focus of gender and feminist activism; it highlights the key issues for gender and media advocacy using the findings of the GMMP2005; and discusses the various audiences key to achieve change.

Objectives

To examine the role of the media and key gender and media issues.

To build an understanding of what gender and media advocacy is and what the key issues are.

To highlight the target groups for gender and media advocacy.

Chapter One: Why focus on the media?

*“The media do not merely represent; they also recreate themselves and their vision of the world as desirable, salable. What they reproduce is chosen, not random, not neutral, not without consequence.”*⁴

Media are in the business of providing information. Women and men read watch and listen to this information daily which is in the shape of what we know as **news**.

The media’s focus on the current issues and events of the day and the collection and editing of this information for presentation through the news media – newspapers, television and radio – is the practice of **journalism**.

Journalism, however, is not a flawless exercise. In his 1978 speech to collect a Pulitzer Prize, David Broder of the Washington Post, said:

“I would like to see us say over and over until the point has been made...that the newspaper that drops on your doorstep is a partial, hasty, incomplete, inevitably somewhat flawed and inaccurate rendering of some of the things we heard about in the past 24 hours...distorted despite our best efforts to eliminate gross bias by the very process of compression that makes it possible for you...to read it in about an hour. If we labeled the paper accurately then we would immediately add: But it’s the best we could do under the circumstances, and we will be back tomorrow with a corrected updated version...”⁵

Likewise, the events and issues that become news each and every day, also go through a process of selection which is not without its own imperfections. News is a choice, an extraction process, saying that one event is more meaningful than another event. The very act of saying that means making judgments that are based on values and based on frames (*mental structures that shape the way we see the world*).⁶

In simple terms, the media, when asked, define their role as:

- To inform
- To educate
- To entertain

The radio, TV and newspapers give us information through news, current affairs programs, and talk shows. They also entertain through TV soaps, films, game shows, music and sitcoms. It is through advertisements on radio, TV and in the newspapers, that we know about goods and services for sale.⁷

⁴ Patricia J. Williams, *The Rooster’s Egg, On the Persistence of Prejudice*, Harvard University Press, 1995

⁵ Alan Rusbridger, *The Truth About the Truth*, in *Newsweek International*, 2005

⁶ David Murray, Joel Schwartz, S. Robert Lichter, *It Ain’t Necessarily SO, How the Media Remake Our Picture of Reality*, Penguin Books, 2002

⁷ *Whose Perspective? A Guide to Gender-Sensitive Analysis of the Media*, Women’s Media Watch Jamaica, 1998

The media do this by providing information that is collected and edited based on the media guiding principles of **accuracy**, **fairness** and **balanced** representation.

The media also see their key role in any society as a 'watchdog' of the government and all entities to ensure accountability in a society in the public's interest.

The media's ability to carry out this role depends greatly on whether the media operate within political and legal environments which enable free speech, reasonably unfettered access to information, free media, and economic and political environments which encourage and promote the development of a diversity of media.

Because the process of collecting, editing and choosing what is news is not purely objective, media and communications researchers and analysts have identified several other key roles the media play in any society:

- Shape public opinion and attitudes
- Determine the public discourse and thereby shape our political, cultural and economic priorities
- Influence public policy through the news agenda
- Reinforce or challenge gender, racial and other stereotypes and norms
- Serve as the channel through which the public communicates to policy makers and through which policy makers communicate to the public
- Media can act as catalysts for social change through coverage of injustices and the marginalization of populations in society which often have little access to expression in the public sphere. In other words, the media can give a voice to those who often find their voices marginalized

Box One: Types of media

The form of media that reaches large audiences daily is what is known as **mainstream** or **mass media**. Newspapers, magazines and the broadcast mediums of television and radio fall into this category. Mass media is often general in its content in order to cater for a diverse audience. There also are trade and specialist magazines – fashion and beauty, home design and interior, sports, computer, science, foreign affairs and policy analysis, among others – that are produced for mass consumption, but which may be more targeted at specific audiences within the larger population. Mass media view audiences as both consumers of information and of goods and services. Advertising is essential to the sustainability of the mass media. Mass media can be owned and operated by the state (often in developing countries worldwide), public or private interests.

Community media, on the other hand, are limited to certain geographical areas and targeted at smaller groups of people. This media caters for people in towns, rural areas, close-knit communities which seek to keep themselves informed on issues of interest. Unlike in the mainstream media where the control of information and messages is vested in the hands of the media practitioners, there is more room for people within a local community to participate in the governance and editorial operations of this form of media.

New media is the term used to refer to the New Information and Communications Technologies (NICTs) which include web sites, web portals, e-mail, e-mail news alerts, listservs, and blogs. The new technology is used by those involved in mainstream media in that many of these media have web-based editions of their information and news products. But the information technology revolution also has opened the space for civil society, special interest groups, as well as individuals to create their own sites for disseminating information and viewpoints. Outside of the mainstream media sites, one of the major concerns surrounding the use of new media is the accuracy and credibility of the information provided.

Box Two: In the Public's Interest

The dominant form of broadcasting worldwide is **public broadcasting** (same as **public service broadcasting**). This form of broadcasting is defined as 'public' when radio, television and other electronic media outlets receive funding from the public – either through individual donations, fees, or indirectly as state subsidies that originated in taxes or other national funding sources.

Some public broadcasters supplement this with contributions from corporations which may be granted a limited amount of advertising time in return.

There is no standard definition of what public broadcasting is, but there are defining characteristics:

- Public service broadcasters generally transmit programming that aims to improve society by informing viewers
- The stations' broadcasts are available nationwide and generally aim to cater for all interests and tastes including minorities
- They have a concern for national identity and community which leads to the commissioning of programs from within the country, rather than from abroad
- They tend to be more detached from vested interests and government-impartial programming that does not cater to the desires of advertisers or government
- Quality of programming rather than number ratings is the basis for competition
- Guided by guidelines that do not restrict program makers - these guidelines can be backed by hefty penalties

Source: Wikipedia Encyclopedia at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_broadcasting

Understanding the media's various roles, its power and sphere of influence and the role it can play in bringing about change are essential for any type of advocacy that aims to change the media.

Activity – Discussion points!

1. Make a list of the major media in your country. Divide them into print and broadcast media, mainstream and community (where appropriate). Find out from each media's marketing and circulation department, the numbers of readers, listeners and viewers so that you have an idea of the media's reach and influence in your community.
2. Find out who owns the various media?
3. Find out if there is a public broadcaster and how it is funded?
4. Find out how many community media exist? Who owns these media and how do they operate?

It is important to understand that the media do not just provide information and reports on news events and current issues. Through the selection of types of news stories, choice of words and language used, choice of people interviewed to give their views and perspectives, selection of images to illustrate stories and decisions about where stories should be placed (on what pages or which item in the news line-up heard on radio or television), the media also **communicates** and sends a **message**.

Activity – Discussion Points!

1. What are some of the key messages transmitted through your media about women's roles in society? What are some of your media's messages on men's roles in society?
2. What are your media's messages on the struggle for gender equality?
3. Look for specific examples of newspaper articles, radio or television talk shows or programs to illustrate the messages you have identified.

Chapter Two: Why Should Gender be an Issue for the Media?

In the small country of Lesotho in Southern Africa, where there are only weekly newspapers, the national office of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), consistently monitors and puts out reports on how the weekly papers report on gender violence; MISA's national office in Zimbabwe trained its media advocacy workers across the country on 'why gender and free speech' are two sides of the same coin; and at the regional level, MISA has developed a gender policy and is a key partner with gender and media activists throughout the region to provide gender training to journalists, work with editors and managers to develop gender policies and guidelines and as a sponsor of the region's first gender and media awards to recognize reporting that makes a difference.

MISA is not a women's organization, nor is it a feminist organization. It is a regional organization, with national offices, that fights for a free and independent media, media pluralism (a diversity of print media and broadcast stations, public and privately owned, within a country) and for the protection of the rights of journalists to report without fear of repression.

But the men and women who work within MISA know that the media cannot be "free" and "independent" as long as women who work within the media experience injustices that range from discrimination in promotion and hiring to sexual harassment in the newsrooms, and as long as the news is told day in day out through the voices and perspectives of men. These are **gender** issues.

Gender is the way in which society assigns characteristics and social roles to women and men. The roles, functions and characteristics of men have been given greater value than that of women, creating unequal gender power relations which perpetuate discrimination against women in both the public and private spheres. **Sex** (the biological difference between women and men) becomes the basis for discrimination and the violation of the rights of women and girls in all societies.

Therefore, if we look at the media, gender inequalities, biases and prejudices show themselves in the following ways, among others:

In the newsroom:

Opportunities in the workplace - Women often comprise the rank and file of journalists and presenters in the print and broadcast media but few are in the top leadership positions.

Equal professional opportunity. Women reporters are often assigned to health, education, and social issues, while men are given the political and economic assignments which are seen as part of the career path to senior editorial and media management positions. [*More women are seen in the international media, such as CNN, BBC as war and political correspondents, but this has only emerged in the last five to 10 years and is not the norm in the majority of media worldwide.*]

In the content:

Who speaks in the media? - If we read, listen to and watch those who are speaking in the media – those who are quoted in stories on events of the day – the majority are men,

although women and men live in the societies reported on and both have views on the events and issues. Women are made 'invisible' by the media's omission of their voices and images.

Gender stereotypes - When women do appear in the media, they most often are portrayed as sex objects, beauty objects, as homemakers, as victims (of violence, poverty, natural disasters, war and conflict, etc.); or they become front-page and headline (main story) news when they engage in activities which are not in line with society's prescription of what women 'should' and 'should not' do [E.g. *Mothers who kill or abuse their children are often portrayed as 'unnatural' women and these stories often are given lots of prominence in news pages and broadcasts*].

What is considered newsworthy? News on the violations of women's human rights and discrimination against women are few and far between. When the media does cover gender issues such as violence, sexual and reproductive health, women in decision-making, these articles are often confined to special pages and segments in the media and tagged as 'women's issues', rather than being placed on the news pages as issues of concern to everyone.

Invisible women: Certain categories of women receive even less attention in the media, such as elderly women, women from minority ethnicities and religious groups, the working class, and women with different sexual orientations.⁸

While the media worldwide fight tenaciously to guard, protect and obtain legally the right to be free from government censorship; free from political and economic interests and controls, the media has been unable to detect, analyze and change alone, the gender biases, prejudices and inequalities that influence and impact on its operations and content.

Gender biases and prejudices in the media emerge through the 'choices' media managers, advertisers, and media professionals [editors, journalists, sub-editors, news photographers, etc] make each day. Decisions about who will be promoted; who will not; what will make news; what will not; who will be interviewed; who will not; etc are decisions affected by media professionals' beliefs about where women and men 'should be' in society.

The fight to free the media of gender biases and inequalities has come largely from gender activists who have identified the media as a key institution in the struggle for gender equality. Gender and feminist activists see the media as:

- The mediums through which messages are transmitted (through editorial content, images and adverts) about the gender roles of women and men in any society. The messages can either reinforce, or challenge gender stereotypes and sex-based discrimination;
- As news and communications channels that can put women's rights and gender equality on the agenda of public policymakers. One way the media can do this is

⁸ Shivas, M. 2000. Alternative Assessment of Women and Media based on NGO Reviews of Section J, Beijing Platform of Action, cited in *Whose News? Whose Views?*, Colleen Lowe Morna, 2001

by holding governments accountable to many of the international and regional women's rights conventions and instruments they have signed in the same way the media holds governments accountable to conventions on torture, political rights, labor rights, etc.

- As institutions that practice sex-based discrimination, and therefore also sites where the struggle for gender equality must be confronted.

Activity – Discussion Points!

Use the following questions to do a simple and quick gender analysis of your national media

1. Look through the daily or weekly newspapers. How many images of women do you find? What roles do the women pictured appear in? How many images of men do you find? In what roles are they seen?
2. How many women reporters or correspondents do you see on the local television prime time news? (Do not count the women and men who present the news or read it, known as 'presenters') What issues do the women report on? What issues do the men on television news report on? Is there a difference?
3. Look at the bylines (reporters' names) on political and economic stories in your national newspapers. Can you identify how many of the writers and reporters on these issues are male, and how many are female?
4. Which women, and men, are rarely seen in your national media? Which women, and men, are seen most often in your national media?
5. Look at the adverts on television and in the newspapers. Which adverts have women in them? Which adverts have men in them? How are the women portrayed? How are the men portrayed?

Box Three: Why Gender Equality Makes Good Editorial and Business Sense for the Media

Freedom of speech: Giving equal voice and air-time to women and men, representing both in their multiple roles in society is intrinsic to freedom of expression and speech.

Good governance: 'Do as I say and not as I do' can no longer be the mantra of the media which is being more and more scrutinized by all sectors of society. As much as the media has a duty to serve as a watchdog on society, the media itself must lead by example and practice good governance in its own operations.

Respecting women's and men's human rights: The media's editorial content, through images, language, portrayal and absence of a diversity of voices and views, and its workplace should not be the site for the violation of women's rights to voice, equal opportunity, integrity and dignity. Language used by the media should not perpetuate stigma, discrimination or sexist attitudes against women or men.

Women are a large growth market for the print media: In most countries, women constitute the highest potential growth market for the print media and have also been shown to be among the most loyal readers. Segmenting readership by gender and responding accordingly, would, in all likelihood, reveal that gender sensitivity is a good business proposition.

Women's needs as listeners and viewers: Few analyses of programming for radio and TV are gender disaggregated. They fail to take account of women's time constraints as a result of their multiple roles and of their preferences with regard to content. As research elsewhere has shown, gender sensitivity in programming could yield significant business gains.

Women as consumers: Women make many of the decisions on household spending. This is yet to be factored in many countries into the way advertising is designed. Is advertising that demeans and turns women into commodities really enlightened self-interest on the part of advertisers?

Source: adapted from *Whose News? Whose Views?* edited by Colleen Lowe Morna, Gender Links, 2001

Chapter Three: What is Gender and Media Advocacy?

“Just as gender needs to be mainstreamed in government, it needs to be mainstreamed in the media. Now, more than ever before, there is need to strengthen the women’s J spot in the Beijing Platform of Action (BFPA): not to be looking for it!”⁹

In 1995, the United Nations convened the Fourth World Conference on Women. The document which came out of the Conference, the Beijing Platform for Action, for the first time included women and media as a critical area of concern in the form of Section J on Women and the Media.

In 2005, at the 49th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held to review Beijing, women media practitioners began to wonder, whether media, as a Critical Area of Concern (Section J) in the Beijing Platform of Action, had fallen through the cracks. The European Women’s Lobby document for Beijing+10 noted that “women in the media is one of the objectives that is most neglected by the European Union.”¹⁰

Critiquing and challenging the media to change the way it portrays and represents women in its editorial content and programming; the way it also confines women to the lowest positions in newsrooms; the way it uses women, sex and violence against women to attract audiences; and the way it ignores discrimination against women in all sectors of society in the main news pages and broadcasts have been core concerns of gender activists.

Gender and media advocacy includes lobbying, campaigning, research, training, media monitoring, communication and alliance-building activities which seek to advance women’s rights and gender equality in and through the media.

Its roots are firmly grounded within the women’s movement, but the forms that gender and media advocacy may take are grounded in and connected to local struggles [*note the example of MISA in Southern Africa in Chapter Two, where gender and media advocacy is intimately linked to the struggle for a free and independent media in the region*], and take direction from those who are experiencing injustices and inequalities, within our communities [*women within the media, for example, have been the catalysts of advocacy to change how women are systematically marginalized within the media*].¹¹

Box Four: Gender and Media Advocacy – Issues of conflict or opportunity?

There are two angles to gender and media advocacy-

1. Media as target audience: Planned and consistent advocacy for gender equality in the media’s workplace policies and conditions of service, as well as in editorial and advertising content.

⁹ Maria Suarez Toro, *Looking for the J Spot*, in GEM News@B+10, March 10, 2005

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ An Advocacy Guide for Feminists, Young Women and Leadership, No. 1, December 2003, Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID)

2. Media as partner and tool for getting across messages on gender equality: The strategic use of the media as a tool for advancing gender equality in all sectors, especially public policy, and to bring gender justice to the public's attention.

At first glance, it may seem as if two different gender and media advocacy strategies are called for to address these two issues. But, by taking on the media as institutions within which the struggle for gender equality is situated, activists will create also the opportunities for priming the media to be a credible voice when it reports on and covers gender equality issues.

Often gender and media activists are tackling both of these angles at the same time. The media cannot be used as an effective and credible tool to advance messages on gender equality if the messages it sends daily through reports on events and issues are gender-blind or negative about women's roles and contribution in a society. Likewise, the media cannot challenge the lack of women in decision-making in governance structures, if there is a paucity of women in leadership positions within the media.

In targeting the media to bring about more gender sensitivity and awareness to the editorial content and to ensure equal opportunity and equal access for women in media work spaces, gender and media activists are at the same time opening the space to engage more effectively with the media in getting across messages on gender equality.

The Media as a Critical Area of Concern

While gender activism around the media has been ongoing for more than 40 years, the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) which was developed by the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, provided gender and media activists with more ammunition for gender and media advocacy.

The BPFA calls for "increased participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new communication technologies." Governments committed themselves to review media policies and increase the number of programs for and by women and to promote balanced and diverse portrayals of women in the media.¹²

Governments also are urged in the BPFA to create legislation against the projection of violence against women and children in the media and to encourage training for women in using the media. The media are encouraged to establish professional guidelines and methods of self-regulation for the way women are presented, as well as to support and finance alternative media and all forms of communication that support the needs of women.¹³

Section J on Media as one of the Platform's Critical Areas of Concern, recognizes that the media have a role to play in addressing issues of gender inequality, specifically,

¹² Local Action, Global Change, UNIFEM and the Centre for Women's Global Leadership, 1999

¹³ Ibid

women's lack of access to media; the fact that women in the industry are generally not in decision-making positions; and the portrayal of gender stereotypes.¹⁴

The BPFA proposes that governments promote women's equal participation in the media; encourage women's media networks; and promote research and implementation of information strategies to ensure a balanced portrayal of women and men. The BPFA calls on media organizations and NGOs to develop diverse and balanced representations of women; establish groups to monitor the media; and train women to make greater use of information technology.¹⁵

The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action also states that the impact of the media on women is generally negative:

“...Print and electronic media in most countries do not provide a balanced picture of women's diverse lives and contributions to society in a changing world. In addition, violent and degrading or pornographic media products are also negatively affecting women and their participation in society. Programming that reinforces women's traditional roles can be equally limiting. The world-wide trend towards consumerism has created a climate in which advertisements and commercial messages often portray women primarily as consumers and target girls and women of all ages inappropriately.”¹⁶

At the five-year review of the 1995 Beijing Conference in New York in 2000, out of the 12 Critical Areas of Concern in the Beijing Platform for Action, 53% of the countries cited media as their top priority for achieving gender equality in reports to the United Nations for the five-year review.¹⁷

Box Five: The impact of globalization

The spread of satellite communications and the opening up of the airwaves and other forms of media to less state-regulation in favor of free markets and commercial interests creates new gender and media challenges for activists. These include:

- Corporate ownership of media that has forged powerful political and business links and sets limits on freedom of expression
- Foreign ownership of media that has implications for accountability issues
- The creation and interpretation of news that are shaped and influenced by factors associated with the control of media by governments, advertisers and business groups

¹⁴ Whose News? Whose Views?, edited by Colleen Lowe Morna, Gender Links, 2001

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Only Silence will Protect You, Women, Freedom of Expression and Language of Human Rights, Jan Bauer, International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, Montreal, 1996

¹⁷ Whose news? Whose views? Southern Africa Gender in Media Handbook, edited by Colleen Lowe Morna, 2001

- Existing media codes that do not have a gender concern or address issues such as the portrayal of violence against women
- The presence of transnational media corporations and the consequent beaming of homogenous media images and perceptions of women
- Influx of pornographic material and databanks on women through the Internet, video tapes and DVDs and also through the print media
- Influx of computer and video games that violate women's images and reinforce violence against women

Source: 'Globalization of the Media and its implications for women's expression', Meena M. Shivdas, Media Development 3/2000

Activity- Discussion Points!

1. What media issues are stated in your country's report to the Beijing +5 and Beijing +10 reviews as areas of concern?
2. Which of these areas cited have been the focus of gender and media advocacy in your country?
3. Which issue(s) has not been the focus of gender and media advocacy?
4. Which issues would your organization prioritize for gender and media advocacy? Why?

Approaches to Gender and Media Advocacy

Various strategies are in use throughout the world to promote gender equality in the media. No one approach will suffice given the complexity of the media and the national media landscapes with their own specificities.

To be at their most effective, gender and media activists should not be antagonistic towards the media and those working within. Taking time to learn how the media works, how and why journalists choose the sources they do, how sub-editors do their jobs, and who are the key players in media decision-making (such as chief editors and increasingly advertising executives and media owners), can provide activists with much needed insight into where opportunities for intervention and lobbying lie within the media.

Gender and media activists often use a combination of strategies. These include the following:

- The creation of gender and media networks and associations which push for change through dialogues, discussions, research and media monitoring. Examples include the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Network (<http://www.gemsa.org.za>), Sur Profesionales in Latin America

(<http://www.sitiosur.cl/organizacion.asp>) and the Asian Network of Women in Communication, among others

- Women have created alternative media in the form of newsletters, journals, radio, video productions, and now on-line publications. One of the most important contributions of women's alternative media is to provide a space for serious reflection about the nature of women's exclusion from the mainstream. Examples of women's alternative media include the Women's Feature Service (WFS) based in New Delhi, India (<http://wfsnews.org/>), FIRE radio in Latin America (<http://www.fire.or.cr/>), the Africa Women and Child Feature Service, based in Nairobi, Kenya (<http://www.awcfs.org/>), among others.
- Gender activists have developed tools to monitor the media on its coverage of violence against women, women in politics, women as sources, the portrayal of women, among other areas of concern. These exercises began to provide specific data and analysis that could be presented to the media which highlighted professional gaps in news and other forms of reporting, as well as examples of how the media violates its own principles of accuracy, fairness and balance.

Box Six: Gender and Media Activism

In their recently released study on feminist media activism worldwide, feminist communications and media scholars Carolyn Byerly and Karen Ross pose a Model of 'Women's Media Action'. Based on interviews with some 90 women worldwide, the scholars identify four paths that characterize women's activism and engagement with the media:

Politics to Media – Feminists decide to begin to use media as part of some part of their feminist political work. These women move from being 'feminist activists' to producing media products of some kind.

Media Profession to Politics – Women employed in media industries decide to use their vantage point as insiders to expand women-related content or to reform the industry's policies to improve women's professional status. These women are trained media professionals, and at some point in their career, they develop a strong identity (and perhaps involvement) with feminism and begin to explore ways of increasing information about women in media content. Some also seek to make company policies more egalitarian.

Advocate Change Agent – Women who pressure media to improve treatment of women in one or more ways. The outside advocate's path often entails research and analysis about women and media, including publication of reports or articles, or they may mobilize a constituency to write letters or take some action.

Women-owned Media – This path allows women the maximum control over message production and distribution. Examples of this include book and magazine publishing, syndicated radio programming, women's news agencies and independent film and video companies.

Chapter Four: Who Makes the News? - Issues for Gender and Media Advocacy

*“Gender in media is an uncharted path – exciting but also frightening. Frightening because when you dare to challenge the lion in its den, you are likely to encounter extreme difficulties. The world over, the media has defined itself, successfully so, as a ‘law unto itself’. If it is challenged all hell breaks loose – from claims of media freedom, objectivity and neutrality being infringed, to the need to search for hard news.”*¹⁸

The media pride themselves on putting out news and information that is based on facts and evidence. Therefore, when gender and media activists go into the ‘lion’s den’ to challenge gender inequalities, it is important that they build their advocacy on facts that can be illustrated and verified with examples from the media. The first question media managers or editors will ask when complaints are brought is: Where is the evidence?

The 1994 ‘Women Empowering Communication’ conference in Bangkok, which brought together 400 feminist activists, researchers and media professionals from across the globe, has become a landmark event for many reasons. One of which is that it gave birth to a way for women to gather the evidence of gender inequalities in and through the media and to document with media examples many of the gender issues for the media highlighted in Chapter Two, *Why is gender an issue for the media?*, of Section One of this toolkit.

One of the most significant outcomes of this gathering is the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), which has given women a tool with which to scrutinize their media in a systematic way, and a means of documenting gender bias and exclusion. The GMMP provides a set of straightforward quantitative and now qualitative measures of media content that can be universally used and that provide useful research data and documentation for lobbying and advocacy work.¹⁹

The first GMMP involved the monitoring of the news on television, radio and in newspapers on one ‘ordinary’ day worldwide and the first-ever global media monitoring took place on January 18, 1995. The results were launched at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women held later the same year in September. There have been two other GMMP exercises since then – GMMP 2000 and most recently GMMP 2005.

International media consultant and researcher Gloria Bonder says that the GMMP is one of the most successful illustrations of the links that media monitoring presupposes between research, informed citizenship and action.²⁰

In the first GMMP in 1995, groups in 71 countries participated; in GMMP 2000 on February 18, 2000, 70 countries took part, and 52 of these were part of the original study; and 76 countries took part in GMMP 2005. The findings of the one-day monitoring of the media provide gender and media activists with insights into the key issues for gender and media advocacy at the global, regional and national levels.

¹⁸Thenjiwe Mtintso, Chairperson, Gender Links Board, foreword in *Whose News? Whose Views?* edited by Colleen Lowe Morna, Gender Links, 2001

¹⁹ Margaret Gallagher, *Gender Setting New Agendas for Media Monitoring and Advocacy*, ZED Publishers and WACC, 2001

²⁰ Ibid

This chapter highlights the findings of GMMP 2005 as key gender and media issues for activists to consider in both their new and ongoing gender and media advocacy work.

1. Who Makes the News? Sources

Sources are people interviewed by journalists to give their views and perspectives on the news events and current issues of the day. Sources are chosen because of:

- Their specialist knowledge on the issue or event ('experts');
- If they are among those greatly affected by the event or issue (women and men living with HIV should be among those interviewed in stories on access to anti-retrovirals, for e.g.);
- If they are the 'subjects', or 'main actors' of an event or issue.

The GMMP findings, as well as other content analyses at the regional and national level have clearly identified gender gaps. The news is told largely through the voices and perspectives of men.

Who speaks and who does not speak in and through the media remains one of the key issues for gender and media advocacy as the GMMP 2005 findings show:

Women's views and voices are marginalized in the world's news media. Women constitute 52% of the world's population, yet make up only 21% of the people featured in the news. Women are most underrepresented in radio where they are only 17% of news subjects as compared with 22% in television and 21% in newspapers.

Men's voices dominate in hard news. Men are the majority of the news subjects in all story topics. Even when women do feature in the news, they are more likely to be found in 'soft' stories such as celebrity and arts where they make up 28% of news subjects and least likely to be found in 'hard' news stories about politics and government (14%) and the economy (20%).

Men dominate as spokespersons and experts. Some 86% of all people featured in news stories as spokespeople are men. Men also make up 83% of all experts. Women are much less likely to be considered experts in media coverage. Instead they are more often present as voices expressing personal experience (31%) or popular opinion (34%).

Box Seven: Women's Voices in the Media- what other studies show

Two other recent studies also show that women continue to be marginalized by the media as sources.

The Washington, D.C. based Project for Excellence released in May 2005 findings from a study across 45 different news outlets in the United States during 20 randomly selected days over nine months. More than three quarters of the 16,800 news stories

collected featured male sources, while only one-third of the stories collected featured at least one female source.²¹

The 2003 Southern Africa Gender and Media Baseline Study (GMBS), coordinated by Gender Links and the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), in 12 countries covered a total of 25, 110 news items in September 2002. The study revealed that women constituted only 17% of the news sources in a region where women constitute 52% of the population. [See www.genderlinks.org.za for the complete findings of the GMBS]

The marginalization of women's voices and perspectives in and through the media has been documented in several ways. The earlier generation of media content researchers coined the terms 'symbolic annihilation' (George Gerbner and Gaye Tuckman, 1978) to describe the claim that powerful groups in society suppress the less powerful by marginalizing them to such an extent that they are rendered virtually invisible (*and voiceless*) as a representable group.²²

What is at stake as Gallagher highlights in her 2001 book *Gender Setting: New Agendas for Media Monitoring and Advocacy*, is "not just the number of women who appear in the media, but the weight of their voices".

2. Who Makes the News? News Content

Deciding **who** makes news, **when** and **why** are subjective choices made by journalists, editors and producers daily. These choices are often influenced not only by some of the standard criteria used to determine what is news i.e. **prominence, proximity, major disasters, war and conflict, timeliness** (events that happen now), **crime, corruption, an act or event that is out of the ordinary**, among others. The GMMP 2005 findings also illustrate how gender biases and prejudices also are likely to influence the news content.

Women are very unlikely to be the central focus of a story. Only 10% of news stories worldwide have women as a central focus. The proportion of these stories varies widely across different topics. Women are central to the news story in 17% of 'soft' topics such as celebrity news, sports or social issues. Only 3% of stories on economics and 8% of stories on politics and government have women as a central focus.

News stories are more likely to reinforce than challenge gender stereotypes. Only 3% of stories challenged gender stereotypes compared with 6% stories that reinforced gender stereotypes. More generally though, news content reinforces gender stereotypes by depicting a world in which women are relatively invisible.

Gender (in) equality is not considered newsworthy. Some 96% of news stories worldwide do not highlight issues of gender equality or inequality. The stories monitored that do highlight gender equality or inequality make up only 4% of news stories.

²¹ The Gender Gap: Women Are Still Missing as Sources for Journalists, Project for Excellence in Journalism, Washington, D.C., May 2005

²² Mapping the contested terrain of media and gender research, in *Critical Readings: Media and Gender*, edited by Cynthia Carter and Linda Steiner, Open University Press, 2004

3. Who Makes the News? Portrayal

Women are more than twice as likely to be portrayed as victims than men. Female and male victims are common currency in news programs. However, women are disproportionately represented in this way with 19% of women portrayed as victims compared with 8% men.

4. Who Makes the News? Reporters and Presenters

The media still remains a male domain. Men still comprise the majority of the media owners, managers and media professionals in newsrooms. Whoever controls assignments, whoever decides how a story is going to be covered, how the story will be written, who will speak in the story; whoever decides what placement that story gets in a newspaper or over the airwaves, is not only shaping content of news, but is deciding what readers and listeners know and how they know it.²³

GMMP 2005 shows:

News is still mainly reported and presented by men. The only exception is among television presenters: 57% of television news stories were presented by women. Elsewhere women are a minority. This imbalance is most evident in newspapers where only 29% of newspaper items were written by female reporters.

Female reporters are more likely to cover 'soft' news. Men tend to cover the 'hard' topics – news that is perceived as 'serious'. Only 32% of stories on politics and government are reported on by female journalists as compared with 40% of stories on social issues such as education or family relations.

More female news subjects are found in stories reported on by female journalists. In stories reported by women, 25% of news subjects are women as compared with 20% of news subjects in stories reported by men.

It is important to note, however, that being female and being a journalist does not *automatically* make for a gender-sensitive professional and it is often the case that female journalists reproduce gender stereotypes as much as their male colleagues. Female journalists should not be thought of as *automatic* allies when trying to change the media.

Box Eight: Does the News Have Gender?

Many women journalists assert that the news is not defined by gender. "The news is the news," they say, whether it is reported by a woman or a man. They argue that standards of accuracy, fairness and ethics apply equally to all journalists, regardless of gender.

But could women journalists simply be taking their lead from male journalists who have set the atmosphere and standards of behavior in newsrooms? One editor from the United States thinks so. "Often women are conditioned to respond to news in a 'male' pattern. It's how many of us avoid being labeled 'too soft' and get the positions we have,"

²³ Leading in a different language: will women change the news media?, International Women's Media Foundation, December 2000

she said. Women who want to cover politics and economics say they must follow the avenues set by their male colleagues or risk being assigned to soft news.

Still, the majority of women journalists say that their presence in newsrooms makes a difference in how news is selected and how it is presented.

Journalists completing a 2000 IWMMF (International Women's Media Foundation) survey felt strongly that women bring a more human dimension to the news. A senior editor from the Philippines commented, "Men tend to concentrate on quotes from government officials and focus on conflicts, while women tend to look at impact on the greatest number of people or sectors."

Source: *Leading in a Different Language: Will Women Change the News Media?* Amy Johnson and Kimberly Campbell, IWMMF, December 2000

Activity – Discussion Points!

1. Why do you think journalists do not interview women as sources for news? Do a few interviews with journalists from the print and broadcast media in your country to find out why they do not seek out women as sources. Make a list of the reasons given, and discuss in your network, solutions or strategies to tackle the reasons given by journalists for not interviewing women.

E.g. One reason journalists give for not interviewing women is that women 'experts' in particular are not visible and they do not know who they are. To address this, networks like the Mauritius Media Watch, have compiled resources like directories of women in various fields which provide a short profile and contact details. The *Mail & Guardian* newspaper in South Africa has just published a guide to the top women in South Africa in all fields.

2. Look for articles and broadcasts in which women are the central focus of the news story. What type of news stories are these – politics, economics, health, etc? Why are women the central focus in these stories? Begin to collect articles and tape broadcasts items where women are the central focus of the news. Organize a discussion with journalists in the print and broadcast media to get their views on why women are the main actors in the news stories and broadcasts collected, and not in other areas (especially if the pattern that emerges is that women appear in 'soft' topics as the GMMP 2005 findings show).

3. Why do you think women comprise a large majority of the presenters on television and are a minority in other areas of the media?

Chapter Five: Who are the Target Audiences for Gender and Media Advocacy?

Successful advocacy depends on knowing the various audiences that are strategic for bringing about change. Some of these audiences will be able to affect change in a direct manner, while others may be those who can have a positive influence, or who can put pressure on those in positions to make change happen.

There are various audiences that should be targeted for gender and media advocacy, and the audiences and their roles may change depending on the issue raised or strategies used.

Key audiences are those who have the power to effect change (also called change agents), but who may need to be persuaded to act. These include media owners, managers, senior editors, advertisers, media governance structures (such as Boards of Directors), and legislators.

Primary audiences (also called beneficiaries) are those who will benefit from the changes being made. In gender and media advocacy these include women and at times men, both within and outside the media.

Secondary audiences (also called partners) are those whose support you can rally. These include media professional bodies such as editors' forums and journalists unions, media advocacy groups; legislators and independent regulators who are instrumental in developing guidelines for the media; the general public.

Significant others include target audiences within the media industry who might oppose the proposed changes. These include the journalists and other media professionals who will have to change their newsgathering and editorial practices to be more conscious of the gender biases and prejudices that influence how they do their work.

Good advocacy depends on taking the time to think through how you will work with and influence each of the audiences.

1. Who is Who in the Media?

As an industry, the media employs people in various capacities. Like many sectors, there are those employed in the administrative, financial, human resources and technical areas of the media operations, as well as those who work in the editorial operations. Advertising and marketing are considered part of the business side of media operations.

A large part of gender and media advocacy is targeted at those who work on the editorial side of media operations. Some of these people are as follows. This is not a detailed breakdown, but a general overview of some of the key positions within the media so that gender and media activists can ensure that they work with the right group on each issue. For example, it should not be assumed that by targeting the journalists for media advocacy, one will bring about a fundamental and sustainable change. Journalists take orders from editors who in turn are answerable to the media's management and governing structures.

Journalists/Reporters – Those who daily beat the path for stories. These are the women and men who often are the first target of gender and media advocacy, because journalists are viewed as those who have the power to decide which stories to cover, how to cover, who to interview as sources, and to decide on what will or will not be news. Journalists are key to bringing about a change in the media because they are the gatherers of news and often do have leeway to choose the type of stories they will report on, especially as they become more senior reporters who have paid their dues in to media trenches of general assignment reporting (usually covering whatever is assigned by an editor and not having the luxury to specialize on one topic or issue).

Editors – These are often referred to as the ‘gatekeepers’, because they are among the decision-makers and policymakers within the media. Editors assign news and issue-based stories to journalists and reporters; they can decide what will be the top stories of the day to appear in the newspaper or in the broadcast line-up; they guide the reporters towards various sources and also help to shape the angle (focus) a story will take; and they are instrumental in the development of editorial guidelines, codes and policies. Editor is a broad term which covers a broad spectrum of people ranging from editors-in-chiefs, news editors, business editors to features and sports editors.

Sub-editors – This group is mentioned on its own, because these are the people who are responsible for the editing of news and other media stories to ensure that facts, spelling and grammar are correct, that the story is written in accordance with the media institution’s style guidelines, and it is the sub-editors who write headlines, captions for pictures and graphics (and they often decide what illustrations will go with what stories) and who are responsible for ensuring that stories fit within the space (newspapers and magazines) or time-slot (broadcast) available. This means that the sub-editors have the task of cutting stories to fit the required space or time available which gives them the power to decide what stays and what will be omitted.

Media managers – Many people fall within this group. And, overall they are the decision-makers within the media who are responsible for policy development, management issues; and, they are the ones who have the power to effect change through the development and implementation of policy, and they give the guidance and direction that can make a difference in how a media operates. General managers or chief executive officers, editors-in-chiefs, controllers of news, directors of human resources, advertising/marketing, finances, technical operations, all fall within this category. Although the media managers are not always directly involved in the day to day production of the editorial content(especially in large and medium-size media operations), they are the ones responsible for setting out the vision and for developing the policies that give direction to how those involved in editorial operations do their work.

Directorate/governance structures – These are the members of the Board of Directors or members of the highest governing structure of a media institution. These structures are not involved in the day-to-day work on the media, but do have a vested interest in seeing media survive, becoming more relevant to their audiences, and in ensuring that the bottom line is in order. These are often influential people within a community or country and may not be from the media sector. Media owners, those who invest funds into the running of a media operation or who start the medium from their own resources, are often part of the governance structure.

Box 10: Other Audiences Who Can Make a Difference

External policy makers – legislators, regulators, State and private sector administrators within the media and communications sector.

The general public – building media literacy among the media’s audiences is pivotal to successful and sustained engagement with the media on gender equality issues both within the media and in the media’s editorial agenda. **Media literacy** is the ability to understand the way the media works, to spot bias in the news and to recognize accurate and impartial news coverage.

The following chart illustrates how gender and media activists can begin to identify the various audiences for gender and media advocacy issues.

Chart 1: MAPPING AUDIENCES FOR GENDER AND MEDIA ADVOCACY

Issue	Key audience	Secondary audience	Primary audience	Significant others
Development of gender editorial policy and guidelines by media institutions	Media managers Directorate/governance structure Editors	Editors forums Women’s groups Media associations	Women within the media General female populace	Editors Journalists
Increasing the number of women who speak in the media as sources	Editors Journalists/reporters	Women journalists Women’s groups	Journalists editors	Journalists Editors
Improve coverage of gender violence in the media	Journalists Editors	Legislators Women’s groups Media councils	General populace Women survivors of gender violence	Journalists Editors

The chart illustrates how an issue for gender and media advocacy can be thought through in terms of audiences. Activists can use this as a model to begin to think of the various audiences and how they fit into gender and media advocacy.

Box Ten: Case study

Industry Ears goes for top guns

Industry Ears, a Washington D.C.-based media watch group, was started by women professionals within the music industry to lobby radio stations not to air hip-hop and rap music that contains misogynist lyrics.

The media watch group says its firing aim is at the media policy makers and not the artists who create the lyrics. "People go after the artists, but rarely do we hold to the fire the feet of executives who control when and how often we hear these songs," says Lisa Fager, co-founder of the group.

Last spring, Fager and other group members hit the National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters annual gala, handing out fliers with the lyrics from the song they found offensive. Their strategy: to confront those at the top of the radio food chain. "We told them we expected more from them," Fager says.

Besides getting executives to face the music, Industry Ears also is empowering communities to take on the media. They recently worked to end an insidious practice at WMIB The Beat in Miami, Florida, and WQHT Hot 97 in New York: smack fests, where mostly young women of color pummel each other until someone gets injured or gives up.

After Industry Ears learned that in New York the contest violated state laws barring unlawful fighting competitions, the organization armed local activists with the information. That led officials to order the station to stop the contest and the state attorney general to launch a probe into it. Florida lawmakers are next on their list.

Source: Davey D, Going Straight to the Source, *Essence*, July 2005

Activity – Discussions Points!

1. What is the gender and media issue for Industry Ears?
2. Who is the key audience and why?
3. What other audience does Industry Ears target? Why?
4. What are Industry Ears strategies?
5. Is there a similar gender and media issue of concern in your country? If your answer is yes, what strategies have been used to bring this to the attention of the radio station(s)?
6. What new gender and media advocacy tips have you learnt from the Industry Ears story?

Section One Appendix: Definitions and Pointers

1. Glossary of Terms

Accuracy – Information that the media communicates to the public should not be false or misleading. The media must correct misrepresentations of facts and correct the mistakes and apologize to the persons/organizations.

Advocacy - The process of influencing people to generate a policy change.

Communications for advocacy – A means of sharing information ‘packaged’ in different ways and conveyed using media and messages customized for different audiences.

Culturally diverse output – The creation of an organization’s output that reflects the multi-cultural society in which it operates and which is reflective of its diverse stakeholders. But **diversity** for the media is about more than just the numbers alone. Diversifying newsrooms and issues of content, coverage and the media’s role in a pluralistic society are key issues.

Freedom of expression – The unrestricted and uncensored inclusion of views and opinions in organizations’ output enabling debate and dialogue.

Gender – Is the way in which society assigns characteristics and social roles to women and men. In all societies worldwide the roles, functions and characteristics attributed to men have been accorded greater value than those of women.

Gender and media advocacy - includes lobbying, campaigning, research, training, media monitoring, communication and alliance-building activities which seek to advance women’s rights and gender equality in and through the media.

Gender stereotypes – Socially constructed beliefs about women and men. They are constructed through sayings, songs, proverbs, the media, religion, custom, culture, education, drama, etc.

Impartial and balanced output – The production of fair, diverse, and unbiased media output which reflects and informs public opinion and dialogue supported by editorial policies, which are independent from ownership.

Informing public opinion – The delivery of high quality information, which provides the full range of views about an issue, and is reflective of the society in which it is disseminated, to inform rather than influence public debate.

Integrity of information – The provision of quality data, images and information, which is objective and accurate.

Listserv – A mailing list, similar in some ways to a conference, but where messages are sent to the list's address. A copy of the message is then sent to each member or subscriber to the list.

Media literacy – Consumers' understanding of the types of information and its availability, to enable an informed decision about the programming/article/music/image they listen to, view or read.

Sex – The biological differences between women and men.

Sources: The Media CSR Forum, KMPG, 2005; Whose News? Whose Views?, Gender Links, 2001; Gender in Media Training, A Southern African Toolkit, Gender Links and the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism, 2002; Making A Difference Strategic Communications to End Violence Against Women, Jenny Drezin and Megan Lloyd-Laney, UNIFEM, 2003; Getting Smart- strategic communications for gender activists in Southern Africa, Colleen Lowe Morna and Lene Overland, Gender Links and Women's Media Watch, 2002.

2. Key Points to Remember!

- News is a choice, an extraction process, saying that one event is more meaningful than another event.
- Understanding the media's various roles, its power and sphere of influence and the role it can play in bringing about change are essential for any type of advocacy that aims to change the media.
- The media do not just provide information, education and entertainment. By selecting the types of news stories, choice of words and language used, choice of people interviewed to give their views and perspectives, selection of images, etc., the media sends messages.
- Gender biases and prejudices in the media emerge through the 'choices' media managers, advertisers, and media professionals make each day. Decisions about who will be promoted; who will not; what will make news; what will not; who will be interviewed; who will not; etc are affected by media professionals' beliefs about where women and men 'should be' in a society.
- Good advocacy depends on taking the time to think through how you will work with and influence each of the audiences.
- Central to any approach taken for gender and media advocacy is the need for gender and media activists to engage the media, as oppose to taking an antagonist stance.

3. Gender, Media, Freedom of Expression and International Obligations

There are several international conventions and declarations that provide a rights-based framework for gender and media advocacy, as well as a basis for the role the media should and can play in promoting women's human rights and gender equality.

These declarations and instruments include:

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is an international treaty, adopted by the United Nations and ratified by the United Nations, and ratified by over a hundred nations, to promote and protect women's right to equality. CEDAW requires that:

"State parties shall take all appropriate measures:... To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the ideas of the inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women."

The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) identifies the media as a critical area of concern. In Section J on the Mass Media, the BPFA recognizes that the media has a vital role to play in addressing the issues of gender inequality, specifically, women's lack of access to media; the fact that women in the industry are generally not in decision-making positions; and the portrayal of gender stereotypes.

Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states:

- Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference
- Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of choice

Both CEDAW and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights do not explicitly address women's rights to freedom of opinion and expression, but Article 19 read in conjunction with Article 7 of CEDAW affirm this right.

Article 7 of CEDAW which calls on State parties to ensure women, on equal terms with men, have the right to:

- Vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for elections to all publicly elected bodies
- To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and to perform all public functions at all levels of government;
- To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

Section Two: Building Gender and Media Campaigns - Advocacy Strategies and Tools

This section provides the 'how to' in building gender and media advocacy campaigns. It outlines the steps to developing campaigns and gives tips and insights on how to engage with and use the media. One of the gender and media advocacy issues examined in this section is lobbying the media to develop gender policies and guidelines.

Objectives:

To take activists through the various steps for building a gender and media campaign

To provide tools that can be used for developing gender and media advocacy campaigns

To provide tips and insights on how to engage and build a relationship with the media

To highlight the various approaches to monitoring and evaluating advocacy work

Chapter One: Where to begin?

1. Plan what you want to do...

If you want to make an impact with any gender and media advocacy strategy or campaign, planning is a crucial first step. There are many issues and areas of concern for gender and media advocacy, therefore activists have to narrow the focus.

Remember, the goal of advocacy is to bring about change. This does not happen overnight and requires not only planning and research, but also time, energy and resources.

When initiating an advocacy activity, it is important to make strategic choices about where to direct your energies and to look for strategic entry points.²⁴

Planning can help activists to:

- Use resources (often limited) efficiently
- Minimize the element of surprise
- Build commitment and a cohesive vision among those involved in advocacy to speak with a strong and united voice
- Help to focus energies.

Key questions for advocacy planning

- What aspects of gender and the media will be tackled and why?
- How do you ensure that the aspects identified are also the priorities of your primary audience?
- Who are you targeting?
- What change do you want to see?
- Are you best placed to work on this, and if so who else is working in this area?
- Are you duplicating efforts or adding value?
- How can you add value?²⁵

Advocacy planning is defined as the development of the following²⁶:

²⁴ An Advocacy Guide for Feminists, Young Women and Leadership, Awid, No. 1, December 2003

²⁵ Colleen Lowe Morna and Lene Overland, Getting Smart, strategic communications for gender activists in Southern Africa, published by Gender Links and Women's Media Watch, 2002

²⁶ Adapted from A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation by Lisa VeneKlasen and Valerie Miller quoted in the Handbook on Advocacy

An overall change strategy – a long-term plan that embodies your vision, and reflects where you are, where you want to go, and how you get there.

A campaign – a medium-term plan with activities aimed at influencing the policy environment and public opinion. The activities are intended to achieve some of your advocacy strategy objectives.

Tactics, actions or activities – short-term activities within a larger change strategy, designated for a specific moment or opportunity. These could include research and media work to shape the campaign and capture the attention of people in power in relation to your issue.

Impact assessment – continuous monitoring through the advocacy campaign in order to adjust, modify or change the plans according to the situation or information that comes along the way.

2. Know what you want to achieve

An advocacy campaign should begin with well-defined and measurable goals and objectives.

- A **goal** is defined as a forward-looking and ambitious statement of what is to be achieved over the long-term, e.g. reducing the objectification of women as sex objects in the media.
- An **objective** is an incremental and realistic step towards achieving the goal, e.g. developing gender portrayal guidelines for the media.

The objective must specify the changes to be brought about and should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound).²⁷

Several questions that can help to create SMART objectives include:

- Do qualitative or quantitative data exist to show that reaching the objective will improve the situation?
- Is the objective achievable, even with opposition?
- Will the objectives gain the support of many people? Do people care about the goal/objective deeply enough to take action?
- Will you be able to raise money or other resources to support your work on the goal/objective?
- Can you clearly identify the main audiences? What are their names or positions?
- Is the goal/objective easy to understand?

Strategy and Technique Development, edited by Flor Caagusan, Institute for Popular Democracy, Manila Philippines

²⁷ Making a Difference Strategic Communications to end Violence Against Women, Jenny Drezin and Megan Lloyd-Laney, editors, UNIFEM 2003

- Do you have the necessary alliances with key individuals or organizations to reach your objective? How will the objective help to build alliances with other NGOs, leaders and audiences/stakeholders?
- Will working on the objective give people opportunities to learn about and become involved with the decision-making process?²⁸

Gender and Media Advocacy in Practice! Planning and Setting Goals

To illustrate how the information on planning and setting goals can be put into practice, let us take the following example.

What's the issue?

You are a group concerned about the issue of gender violence, and believe that the media does not cover this issue often, and when it does cover stories on gender violence, they are usually sensational, portray women as victims or as having provoked the violence perpetrated against them (in stories of sexual violence, some media may allude to the woman's appearance, how she was dressed, or of her doing something which is considered 'not appropriate' in terms of gender stereotypes like drinking alone in a bar, for example). Or, your local airwaves are filled with songs which contain lyrics which perpetuate violence against women and girls blasting daily on the radio.

In deciding how to approach the media on this issue, as a group you decide to build a campaign on gender violence in the media.

What is the angle/focus of the campaign?

Gender violence in the media can be tackled from several angles. A few that could be considered in a gender and media campaign on this issue include among others:

- The playing on radio of popular music (either foreign or locally-produced songs) that contains lyrics and language that denigrates women and condones and perpetuate violence against them
- Gender violence is not considered a newsworthy topic for the media and is seldom reported on as an issue which is central to the protection of women's human rights
- Women only make news when they have been raped, beaten or abused by a partner

In designing your campaign at the planning stage, you choose one angle to focus on in order to be able to develop clear objectives, and to ensure that you engage with the media in a dialogue and process to bring change.

²⁸ Adapted from SARA/ED: An Introduction to Advocacy Training Guide cited in Making a Difference Strategic Communications to end Violence Against Women, Jenny Drezin and Megan Lloyd-Laney, editors, UNIFEM 2003

So, for our example, the **focus** of the campaign is: **to improve the quantity and quality of coverage on gender violence in the media.**

What is the goal of the campaign?

Given our focus, the **goal** is to shift the media's coverage of gender violence from that of a sensational news event to an issue of human rights and justice.

What is the objective of the campaign?

Main objective: To improve the quantity and quality of coverage on gender violence in the media

Specific objectives: There could be three objectives to reach the overall objective:

- To train journalists on how to report on gender violence
- To develop guidelines for the media on how to report on gender violence
- To illustrate to editors and journalists the gaps and gender biases in media reports on gender-based violence

In short good planning entails:

- Identifying the media house(s) or companies that you wish to lobby.
- Deciding on what method will be used (i.e. telephone calls, letters/faxes/e-mails or face-to-face meetings)
- Preparing your position
- Mobilizing a network of supportive organizations, groups and individuals.
Establishing a relationship with media regulatory bodies²⁹

²⁹ Whose perspective? A guide to gender-sensitive analysis of the media, Women's Media Watch Jamaica, 1998

Chapter Two: Do your Homework!

Good research to find clear examples, trends and patterns in the media to illustrate to media professionals the gender biases and prejudices that are represented is important for effective gender and media advocacy.

Approaching the media with assumptions will yield little results from media professionals, whose first response when often challenged about how they do their work and what appears in the media is: 'Show me the evidence!'

The media operates by gathering and reporting facts. Gender and media activists therefore **must also work with facts when engaging with the media**. There are different ways that activists can do research on the media to gather these facts, several of which are discussed in this chapter.

Media monitoring

Monitoring the media is an effective content analysis tool for gender and media advocacy. Media monitoring is one way to keep track of the media's performance on gender. The findings of monitoring can be used to raise awareness among journalists, editors and media managers, as well as advertisers, for the development of gender and media advocacy campaigns and for identifying areas where policy, codes and guidelines need to be developed.

Media monitoring is done occasionally, even though it is a systematic surveillance of media performance for the purpose of its description and critical evaluation. Mostly it generates knowledge about the media by focusing on content. By observing the content, patterns and practices that media professionals use become more accessible. Frequently media monitoring reveals isolation, exclusion and discrimination – human-made inequalities as oppose to 'objective' reflection of the reality of the situation as it is.³⁰

The objectives of monitoring can differ. Analysis may be interpretative or quantitative; it may be a special 'case study'; it may focus on the language or narrative of news stories; the duration of analysis may be short or long; it can include one medium and single country or it may be comparative.³¹ Trends and changes, as well as media employment patterns also can be monitored.

Monitoring how often women are quoted as primary sources is an example of quantitative monitoring. Qualitative monitoring would analyze gender biases, stereotypes, the change of value judgment, perceptions and attitudes.

The findings of media monitoring can be documented in short reports and/or fact sheets which can be publicized in the media itself, and can be used to challenge the media to change practices which violate women's rights or foster gender disparities and discrimination.

³⁰ Milivojevic, Media Monitoring Manual, Media Diversity Institute & Samizdat B92, 2003

³¹ S. Milivojevic, Media Monitoring Manual, Media Diversity Institute & Samizdat B92, 2003

Tips on how to present media monitoring findings

- Present the findings to media management and media policymakers, the change agents within the media
- Write articles to the media supported by the findings
- Distribute the recommendations widely and adopt a strategic lobby campaign for the relevant media houses to implement them.
- Extend the discussion to some on the spot media monitoring(*use the newspaper or broadcast of the day to illustrate, for example, women as sources, absence or portrayal of women, etc.*) if the media interviews you about your gender and media issues of concern.

Source: Getting Smart – Strategic Communications for Gender Activists in Southern Africa, Colleen Lowe Morna and Lene Overland, editors, published by Gender Links and Women’s Media Watch, 2002

Here is one example of a tool that can be used for quantitative media monitoring. The GMMP tool (WACC London), also is available to gender and media activists on <http://www.whomakesthenews.org>

Quantitative Monitoring Tool

Use the day’s newspapers, or a video or tape recording of a recent news cast. Count the number of women and the number of men you see, and note what women and men are doing. Fill in the information in the table below and discuss.

Publication	%Images of women	Roles depicted	% Images of Men	Roles depicted

The same exercise can be done to determine women as sources. This is more detailed requiring for the print media, that you read each story and identify where possible the sex of the source (the person quoted directly or indirectly) in the story. You can also monitor the media to determine the sex of the sources on issues such as gender violence, gender equality, HIV/AIDS, etc.

Box Eleven: What to look for when monitoring media images

Images that appear in the media also can be monitored for gender, as well as other characteristics, that help activists to establish patterns on how women and men are portrayed in the media. When monitoring images, look for:

- Age
- Sex
- Ethnicity
- Socio-economic group
- Location/Setting; rural, urban, inner-city

Physical appearances
Activity
Occupation
Situation/Place/Context
Family Role/Family Status
Personality Traits

Source: Whose Perspective? A Guide to Gender-Sensitive Analysis of the Media, Women's Media Watch, Jamaica, 1998

Qualitative media monitoring

While quantitative monitoring helps activists to come up with the numerical evidence to show women's invisibility as sources, newsmakers and in images within the media, for example, **qualitative monitoring** helps to analyze the gender biases and prejudices that appear in the media also through value judgments, perceptions and attitudes that are communicated through the language, placement of stories, sources chosen, focus of the story, etc.

A combined approach of quantitative and qualitative monitoring sheds light on whether the media give fair and equal space and time to women's and men's voices; if women and men are consulted across the racial and class spectrum; if the reports carry adequate context and balance; and if the reporting is analytical³² (and more issue-based as opposed to reporting only on an event).

Qualitative monitoring also helps to reveal how the media portrays the power relations between women and men, i.e., the position of women and men in the division of resources and responsibilities, benefits and rights, power and privilege. The use of gender relations as an analytical category shifts the focus from viewing women in isolation from men.³³ A detailed set of questions to guide a more qualitative analysis of the media is provided in the Appendix to this section.

Activity! Key questions for spotting gender relations in the media's content

1. Are women seen in positions of power or are they seen in low status activities?
2. Are women and men seen actively asserting themselves in activities associated with power?
3. Who is seen more frequently providing information? Giving speeches?
What is the media's role in perpetuating the low status given to women's activities?
4. Are the roles of women and men active or passive?
5. Are their activities traditional or non-traditional?

³² Getting SMART, strategic communications for gender activists in Southern Africa, Colleen Lowe Morna and Lene Overland, editors, published by Gender Links and Women's Media Watch South Africa, 2002

³³ Whose Perspective? A guide to gender-sensitive analysis of the media, Women's Media Watch Jamaica, 1998

6) What is the sex of the spokesperson or voice of authority?³⁴

Use newspaper articles or watch television news broadcasts and answer the questions above to see how gender power relations are represented in the media.

Content analysis

This is a type of research that is used to understand and accurately describe the actual content of different messages and images in the media. This form of analysis is concerned with how often certain messages occur in the media. For example, how many times women or men feature in political news stories, or how many times women of different ages appear in adverts?

A content analysis can be done on: advertisements, TV/print/radio news, films, videos, magazines, soap operas, music lyrics, music videos, TV series, etc. Content analysis can lend itself to a qualitative through the interpretation of the images portrayed and by the messages transmitted, both hidden and obvious.³⁵

How to do a content analysis?³⁶

- Select the sample to be examined (e.g. Newspaper or TV ads)
- Decide on content and features to be examined
- Decide on units (details of content, i.e. age, sex, etc.) to be examined
- Decide on time frame (i.e. period of time for analysis)
- Develop recording sheets (local media trainers and researchers can assist you with developing sheets and tools that are easy to use)
- Record your observations
- Analyze the data

The following are examined when doing a content analysis on some form of media:

- Roles and actions
- Physical features
- Psychological features (e.g. happy facial expression)³⁷

³⁴ Whose Perspective? A guide to gender-sensitive analysis of the media, Women's Media Watch Jamaica, 1998

³⁵ Whose Perspective? A guide to gender-sensitive analysis of the media, Women's Media Watch Jamaica, 1998

³⁶ Whose Perspective? A guide to gender-sensitive analysis of the media, Women's Media Watch Jamaica, 1998

³⁷ Whose Perspective? A guide to gender-sensitive analysis of the media, Women's Media Watch Jamaica, 1998

What does the audience think?

Audience research adds credibility to any form of media research as it adds the public's interpretation of media messages and provides insight on how women and men engage with the news. This is important because often one of the main reasons media professionals give when presented with examples of sensational articles that portray women as sex objects or which focus on women as victims of crime, for example, is the retort that 'this is what the public wants'.

Therefore, gender and media activists should not just rely on their own views as consumers of media, but should seek out the views and perspectives of others who are not activists to demonstrate to the media that these images and types of stories may not be what the public wants.

In many developing regions, media institutions have little capacity or resources to conduct audience surveys. Therefore, editors and journalists often produce editorial content based on the journalistic notions of what is news, which can be subjectively influenced. Again, using local expertise in media training institutions, universities, a questionnaire can be developed and audiences selected to gather information and views across age, sex, education, location, etc.

Box Twelve: My views on the news! The Southern African Gender and Media Audience Study

In 2004 and 2005, 12 countries in Southern Africa participated in a Gender and Media Audience Study (GMAS), which was the sequel to the Gender and Media Baseline Study (GMBS) in 2002 and published in 2003.

Conducted by Gender Links (GL), a gender and media NGO, in partnership with universities and media advocacy organizations in the region, the audience researched focused on how women and men interact with the news, while the GMBS looked at gender in editorial content.

The specific research questions were:

*What aspects of the news do women and men interact with?
Why do they interact with these aspects of the news (as opposed to other aspects)?
What impact do gendered representations have on these news preferences?
What aspects of news are considered to be omitted or insufficiently included)?*

The findings of the research will be used for gender and media advocacy with the media based on the assumption that the audience's voice is a strong motivator for media change.

For more information about the audience research and how it was done, see www.genderlinks.org.za.

Another way to gather views from ordinary women and men who consume the media is through **focused group** discussions. These are carefully planned discussions to get people's views and perceptions on a defined area of interest. For example, if you want to focus a campaign around the media's coverage of gender violence, a focus group can be put together to explore their perceptions and views on how women and men are represented in news stories on gender violence.

The group can be comprised of 6 -10 people selected from the intended audience and sharing a common characteristic, such as age, sex, educational background, religion or something directly related to the topic (a total of about 200 well-selected people will be effective); moderators and note-takers.³⁸

Focused group discussions are used for:

- Probing into people's feelings, opinions, and perceptions of a topic or issue
- Indicating the range of a community's beliefs, ideas and opinions
- Gaining baseline information
- Verifying and obtaining more in-depth details about information collected for an advocacy program
- Designing question guides for individual interviews and questions for structured interview schedules
- Solving specific problems
- Evaluating programs³⁹
- Testing campaign messages

There are many advantages to focused groups. They are often rich, produce information quickly, gather non-verbal reactions to specific items, allow for the participation of those who cannot read and write and they are flexible. However, results cannot be extended to a larger community and results might be biased due to group pressure or due to what is considered socially acceptable. Therefore the key to good focus groups is a good moderator and carefully selected participants.

Gender Audit of the Media

Using a checklist of key questions that look at work place practices and environment, content, language, visuals, packaging, advertising, the roles of government, regulators, training institutions, and even of gender activists, a wealth of information can be obtained to identify the gender opportunities and gaps. For example, a gender audit of media policies may show that a newsroom has instituted gender-sensitive language guidelines for editors and reporters to follow (opportunity), but there is no overall gender editorial policy in place (gap). The language guidelines therefore can be used as the entry point in a gender and media strategy for a gender editorial policy to be developed and implemented.

³⁸ Making a Difference, Strategic Communications to End Violence Against Women, United Nations Development Fund for Women, Jenny Drezin and Megan Lloyd-Laney, editors, 2003

³⁹ Making a Difference, Strategic Communications to End Violence Against Women, United Nations Development Fund for Women, Jenny Drezin and Megan Lloyd-Laney, editors, 2003

This type of research is dependent upon a group taking the time to establish a trusted relationship with a media institution, whereby the media managers request or work with the gender and media advocacy group to gather information to change how they do their work.

Audits, methodical examinations and reviews using key questions and guidelines, can yield a wealth of information about the internal workings of a media institution and shed light on perhaps why gender biases, prejudices and stereotypes appear in editorial and advertising content. This form of research can best be translated into strategies for more one-on-one engagement with individual media houses that activists may want to target for change. Information obtained from an audit should not be translated into an open campaign to shame a media institution. But audits of several media houses, which would require time and human resources, could provide some general insight into how similar gaps exist within all media institutions despite size, ownership and media landscape which contribute to gender biases and stereotypes in the media.

An example of a gender and media audit checklist is provided in the Appendix to this section.

Chapter Three: Creating the Right Message for the Right Audience

In gender and media advocacy, **one message does not fit all audiences**. The message designed for external actors who develop or administer media policy and legislation will not be the same for policy makers within the media who value their independence looking askance at outside influence.

Determining who the message is for and what you want the audience to do after receiving it are two important considerations for developing advocacy campaign messages.

Message development is a direct, simple way of communicating the core objective of the campaign to the respective audiences. Each message should be targeted as specifically as possible, and understanding the audience is crucial to determine the content and language of the message.⁴⁰

For example, messages calling for the development of gender editorial policies in the media would be lost on reporters who are not the policy makers, whereas messages calling for more women as sources and subjects of the news can be specifically targeted at reporters.

Good messages are:

- Targeted for a specific group
- Focused on a specific problem
- Action-oriented
- Simple, to the point and “attention grabbers”
- Easy to understand – use local languages and common terms
- Attractive and interesting
- Prominently visible
- Repetitive
- Reinforced through the use of a combination of media (multimedia approach)⁴¹

Messages in gender and media advocacy can best be framed using the key media principles of **accuracy, fairness, balance and diversity, and fair representation**.

For example, the issue of the lack of women’s access to expression in and through the media can be addressed in a gender and media campaign, for example, on ‘missing views, missing voices’. The low percentage of women speaking on issues in the media can be related to the media principle of **balance and diversity**. If there are only men’s voices, and those only of men in positions of power and formal authority as the sources

⁴⁰ Making a Difference Strategic Communications to end Violence Against Women, Jenny Drezin and Megan Lloyd-Laney, editors, UNIFEM 2003

⁴¹ Making a Difference Strategic Communications to end Violence Against Women, Jenny Drezin and Megan Lloyd-Laney, editors, UNIFEM 2003

of news, then the news is being reported on and told in a manner that does not reflect a diversity of views and a balance of opinions.

Diversity and fair representation also provide the framework for developing messages and campaigns on changing the gender stereotypes and portrayal of women in the media only as sex objects, objects of beauty, in domestic roles, or as only victims, among others. Gender stereotypes do not project women in all of their diverse roles in society.

MISA-Zimbabwe, a media advocacy group that lobbies for media pluralism, a free and independent media, and the rights of journalists, targeted a campaign at the general public to improve the quality of media content using the slogan, 'Is the media we have, the media we want'? This slogan is memorable and led the audience into the larger message of media consumers having a key role to play in demanding better professional standards, including gender guidelines and codes of ethics, of the media.

Messages and slogans must also be related to appropriate media and channels through which they will be disseminated. The medium and the message are intimately connected. The following questions should be considered when choosing the most appropriate mediums and channels:

- What is the purpose of what you are trying to do?
- Who are you trying to reach with your messages and how many people in each target group do you need to reach in order to meet your objectives?
- What is the source of information your target groups use most often and trust the most?
- What are the different messages you need to convey to cover all the important knowledge gaps and obstacles that were revealed during the target group research?⁴²

⁴² Making a Difference Strategic Communications to end Violence Against Women, Jenny Drezin and Megan Lloyd-Laney, editors, UNIFEM 2003

Chapter Four: Transforming the Media through Policy

Advocacy and lobbying strategies focused on persuading the media to develop gender work place and editorial policies, and/or guidelines, have been key in starting consistent and sustained dialogues with the media community, regulatory bodies (where they exist), the government and the public on many of the gender and media issues highlighted in the GMMP 2005 (see Chapter 4 in Section One).

All of the gender and media advocacy efforts over the years have focused on:

- changing the negative portrayal of women
- including in larger numbers the voices and perspectives of women
- increasing the numbers of women in the media in senior, middle management and other positions within the media where their numbers are low
- the fact that changing the use of language that fosters discrimination and perpetuates gender stereotypes will yield inconsistent results if the media do not put in place policies that make change a consistent reality.

The blueprint for ensuring checks and balances within the media are systems of self-regulation and codes, which take shape in the form of workplace and editorial policies. Policy is important for the media for the following reasons:

Media accountability

The media's responsibility should not stop with its own stated role of being a watchdog in the public's interest. Media also must be accountable to their audiences and stakeholders and as an institution, should practice good governance, transparency and promote human rights within the workplace and in and through the news content.

Trust and credibility

If the public begins to identify gender, cultural, racial, religious or other forms of biases in the source of its news and information, then the media will lose audiences confidence and trust, and this can lead to declining audiences and shrinking markets. Credibility among all sectors of society is what many media build their sales and marketing pitches on.

Likewise, if the media do not see potential segments of society as the sites for potential new markets, or have the insight to stay on top of changes in the public's needs, they will not remain viable businesses.

Box Thirteen: Gender can affect the bottom line

In Australia, media analyst Misha Schubert, notes that the business case for a fair portrayal of women in the media is increasingly replacing the justice plea: "as the principal household shoppers in 90 percent of homes, women form the primary target group for the majority of advertisers. Research has been successfully used to challenge sexist advertising and programming."

Source: Report of the Gender in Media Symposium, Commission on Gender Equality, Johannesburg, September 26, 1997, quoted in *Whose News? Whose Views?* edited by Colleen Lowe Morna, Gender Links, 2001

Ensuring Diversity and Equal Opportunity in the workplace and output

The media's workplace and leadership should be reflective of the society in which it operates. The media's output should also reflect this diversity. If not, the media needs mechanisms to help bring about a fundamental change.

In an article on *What the United Nations Should Do, Marginalization of Women in the Media*, Sonia Gill, the Assistant Executive Director of the Broadcasting Commission in Jamaica, argues for more media advocacy and lobbying to ensure gender is inclusive to media and communication policy development. This will require however different skills from those that traditionally have been found in activists groups, Gill says.⁴³ These new skills include:

- The ability to understand and analyze policy-making structures and to assist with the formulation of policies that encompass gender concerns.
- New research that moves beyond the existing pattern of gendered media studies, which are largely limited to descriptive assessments of the portrayal of women, to studies that relate issues identified to national media policy in a way that provides for recommendations for feasible policy amendment.
- The ability to open a dialogue with professional media associations and national regulatory bodies on setting and monitoring compliance with standards which speak to gender awareness of media entities.⁴⁴

⁴³ Sonia Gill, *What the United Nations Should Do, Marginalization of Women in the Media*, UN Chronicle Online Edition, Issue 4, 2003

⁴⁴ Sonia Gill, *What the United Nations Should Do, Marginalization of Women in the Media*, UN Chronicle Online Edition, Issue 4, 2003

Activity- What policies are in place?

Gender and media activists should do an audit of the internal and external media and communications policies, codes and guidelines that exist in their countries. Knowing what exists and what is missing can help to identify strategic areas for lobbying and advocacy initiatives. Some key questions include:

1. What does the Constitution guarantee in terms of freedom of expression and free speech?
2. Are there industry codes, guidelines and policies that guide professional standards on portrayal, language, coverage of violence, sexism in advertising, etc?
3. Do media houses have workplace and editorial policies and codes? Are these inclusive of gender? Are they published?
4. Are there regulatory bodies in place to ensure enforcement of policies, guidelines and codes?
5. Do licensing policies include gender and diversity criteria?

Troubleshooting

Like all institutions confronted with the need to change, either from the inside or externally, there will be resistance and counter-arguments from the media. Calling for a change in media policies to change the portrayals of women and men, women's limited access to expression, women's limited access to leadership and management positions within the media, among other issues, requires that gender and media activists know the issues, have their facts and figures correct, and have plenty of examples from the media to illustrate their arguments and points. This is why research, understanding the media, and engaging with the media to have allies within with whom strategies can be discussed and refined are important to any successful gender and media advocacy.

Women's Media Watch Jamaica, which has years of experience in lobbying the media on gender issues, provides several challenges in its 1998 training manual, *Whose Perspective? A guide to gender-sensitive analysis of the media*, activists are most likely to meet when lobbying the media for policy, guidelines and changes in the way they do their work. These challenges are common responses from media managers, editors, journalists and other media professionals, and the pointers offered can help to prepare activists to think of how to troubleshoot when they engage the media on gender issues.

Challenge 1 – *The media does not influence behavior, people know it is not reality.*

- Advertisers spend billions of dollars a year to persuade consumers to buy products and services in the belief that ads influence consumers. Often advertisers link their products to a certain lifestyle and image.

Challenge 2 – *Producers of media messages do not intend the meaning that you're reading into it.*

- Think about the not so obvious effects: many messages aren't immediately evident, but after frequent viewing, we absorb their underlying meaning
- Think of an example of a media image and its possible interpretations
- Why are the same images used over and over? What is the cumulative effect of repeated messages? Do they create stereotypes?

Challenge 3 – *The media just reflects what's going on in society.*

- The media reinforces as well as reflects stereotypes
- The media are NOT representative – older women, fat women and people with disabilities are virtually absent from the mainstream media (yet all exist in the very society the media says it reflects).
- The news is very selective. Think about what is covered, how it is covered, the time allotted to news items, the order in which they are presented
- Who are the decision makers in the media?

Challenge 4 – *Aren't men objectified in the media as well?*

- Yes, it is dehumanizing for any human being to be turned into an object. BUT men aren't objectified as often as women, or in the same way as women
- The objectification of men is not as threatening, because men are a powerful group in our society

Challenge 5 – *Using women to sell products does work, why should advertisers stop?*

- The media is sometimes sensitive to issues of race. Is the same level of sensitivity shown towards sexism?
- If the media continues to demean women, half the population, what will stop it from treating other groups within society in the same way?
- Exploitation, by the media, of women's insecurities about their physical appearance, is what sells beauty products
- The media will only change if its financial interests are threatened; if viewers stop watching a program, refuse to buy a product or service
- Growing consumer awareness has on occasions led to ads being pulled out or changed. One company moved from showing women draped over tires, to highlighting the quality of the tire. Media Watch in Mauritius also has had sexist advertising removed by mobilizing public opinion and taking complaints to the advertising regulatory body in the country.

Challenge 6 – *This sounds like censorship – media houses and advertisers have the right to produce what they want, and I have the right to read, watch, and listen to anything.*

- Censorship is not being advocated by gender and media activists. An alternative approach is to balance responsibility and sensitivity with marketability.
- Many racial stereotypes in the media have become unacceptable.

- Media managers often have considerable power over a publication's editorial content, and therefore, decide what is published.

Challenge 7 – Aren't the women the ones who allow themselves to be exploited by the media?

- Women are socialized by the same media into thinking that this is the correct and acceptable thing to do
- The media often glamorizes these images, making them seem more attractive.

Box 15: Country and Regional Experiences in Engendering Communication and Media Policy

CANADA has one of the most comprehensive systems of gender and media policy, which has evolved out of a partnership between government, the media and non-governmental organizations. The balance between government legislation and industry self-regulation makes this system work. (*See case study on Canadian approach*)

AUSTRALIA's government, through the Office on the Status of Women, initiated in 1986 a consultation with 26,000 women and found that women wanted the media to portray more realistic and positive images of women. In 1988, the government established the National Working Party on the Portrayal of Women in the Media and two working parties operated until 1993. These parties produced guidelines on sexist language, how to report on violence against women and on sexual exploitation in advertising. Changes in government however, have led to concerns among activists that many of the gains made are being reversed.

SOUTHERN AFRICA, where gender and media activism has taken off in the years following the publication of the 2003 Gender and Media Baseline Study (GMBS), saw in 2005 the launch of the Media Action Plan (MAP) on HIV/AIDS and Gender. MAP brings together a partnership between the media industry, civil society and the international community (UNAIDS, the PANOS Institute, for example) to improve the quality of media reporting on HIV/AIDS and gender. One of MAP's key objectives is to ensure that 80% of media institutions in the region have workplace-based and editorial policies and programs on HIV/AIDS and gender by the end of 2008. The engagement with media houses to develop these policies will begin in 2006.

Source: adapted from WACC internal reports from regional conferences on Gender and Communication Policy experiences and MAP documents for Southern Africa.

Case study

Canada - 'Enforced self-regulation' and public advocacy to transform the media

Canada's approach to gender communications and media policy development is seen as a model. The Canadian system is based on government legislation and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which provides that "freedom of opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication" is subject to "such reasonable limits...as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society". Freedom of expression, therefore, is not defined as an absolute, opening the way for regulations and standards on program content.

The country also has several regulatory bodies created by government and private media players. These include: the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications (CRTC), the agency responsible for broadcast legislation; the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council (CBSC), created by private broadcasters to promote self-regulation in programming. There also is an Advertising Standards body, the advertising Standards Council.

Therefore, Canada's policy environment is enabling for gender and media advocacy because it has:

- A communications policy that acknowledges the negative impact of a sexist media environment
- A broadcast industry which voluntarily drafted sex-role portrayal guidelines and set up its own industry watchdog to ensure that broadcasters followed the guidelines
- A regulatory body with the potential power to revoke a broadcast licence if sex-role codes and guidelines are not followed.

Media Watch, Canada, the first organization set up with the aim of eliminating sexism in media content promotes change through activities grouped into three broad programs – **Advocacy, Education and Research.**

Advocacy – the public advocacy program encourages the general public to actively take part in shaping their media environment, because the media does care about what their audiences think;

Education – this program makes people aware of how the media operates by building media literacy among the consumers of media and the training of public speakers on media literacy issues; Media Watch trains volunteers as public speakers on media literacy issues. Empowering consumers to critically analyze the media environment and advocate for change is an effective means to bring about change.

Research - regular studies of both media content and audience opinion are commissioned, and the findings are used to lobby the media industry. Media Watch views research as an important tool in successful lobbying. The results of research studies helped ensure that gender equity language was included in legislation and guidelines. The gender and media advocacy group uses research to strengthen its arguments with the media industry. Besides media monitoring and other research

techniques such as content analysis, Media Watch also conducts audience research. A survey of Canadian women was used to show advertisers that more than half of the women surveyed, “quietly vote with their wallets by boycotting products whose advertising has offended them”.

Engaging the media – Media Watch has worked to foster positive relationships with journalists who may be sympathetic to their message. They then develop a mutually satisfying relationship whereby the organization is able to present relevant up-to-date information to the media.

Media Watch also engages with industry and regulatory bodies, pressuring them to meet their obligations under existing guidelines and regulations on gender portrayal.

The results of this strategy include voluntary industry codes of ethics and guidelines on sex-role portrayal, violence and advertising.

Formal lobbying is often done by Media Watch and individual members of the general public through the public consultations process established by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), the broadcast regulator. Media Watch has frequently intervened with the CRTC on issues such as television programming, regulation of the Internet, among others. Media Watch often submits briefs on the various issues and advocates strongly for the CRTC to play a strong role as regulator and to resist industry pressure to deregulate.

Through its own monitoring of the media and on behalf of the public, Media Watch files complaints to the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council (CBSC) when broadcasters are deemed in contravention of the Sex Role Guidelines. The gender and media advocacy group also facilitates consumer complaints to the Advertising Standards Council (ASC) and has been successful in the removal of offensive advertising from the public realm.

Sources: adapted from Margaret Gallagher, *Gender Setting, New Agendas for Media Monitoring and Advocacy*, ZED & WACC, 2001, Media Watch Canada, ‘Our Lobbying Experience’, presentation during WACC Regional Conferences on Communications and Gender Policy

Activity – Discussion Points!

1. Why is the external policy environment in Canada conducive to effective gender and media advocacy? What’s in place?
2. What are the three pillars of gender and media advocacy for Media Watch Canada?
3. What have been some of the successes of gender and media advocacy by Media Watch Canada?
4. What lessons can you learn from this approach for your lobbying and advocacy?

Chapter Five: Getting the Issue on the Media's Agenda

The media can be the target, ally and tool in gender and media advocacy. Gender and media activism worldwide has attracted media professionals who are strategic allies.

The news media provide gender and media activists with access to a wide audience. Media Watch Canada, for example, sees its relationship with the media as a key component of its gender and media advocacy initiatives. The organization has developed relationships with journalists who are sympathetic to their message. This has led to a mutually beneficial relationship whereby Media Watch is able to present relevant up-to-date information to the media which is always on the lookout for good stories.

Various approaches to woo the media have been adopted by gender and media activists. These include:

- **Special incentives** for journalists such as exclusive interviews, invitations to training, field visits or international conferences on gender issues.
- **Developing press kits** and other packets of information to facilitate the journalists' coverage of gender issues.
- **Training programs** for journalists on the relevant issues. Newsroom senior managers – editors-in-chiefs, sub-editors, frontline editors (news, features, sports, etc) however, seldom attend training programs and a different approach is needed. Gender Links, a Southern African NGO that advocates for gender equality in and through the media, has developed relationships with some media in South Africa that have now open their doors for in-house training (which reaches editors and a larger number of staff within a media house). This form of training also is likely to be more hands on and relevant to the day-to-day realities.
- **Creation of gender-sensitive media awards** – both Asia and Southern Africa has experience with such awards. And although the award was not specifically for gender reporting, the winning of the Pulitzer Prize in the 1990s by a paper in Dallas Texas for its series on violence against women worldwide was a clear illustration that the missing gender stories, reported accurately, fairly and sensitively, are the essence of good journalism.

Greater media interaction breaks down many of the myths of the media as an 'untouchable' institution and provides gender and media activists with the knowledge they need to engage in gender and media literacy with consumers of media.

Case Study

Cambodia: Gender Equity Media Awards

The Women's Media Centre (WMC) in Cambodia was born from a movement to increase women's participation in the democratic process during the UN-sponsored elections in 1993. The WMC delivers innovative, national awareness and informative programs on a diverse range of issues affecting contemporary Cambodia, with a special focus on the roles and rights of Cambodian women.

Since its inception in 1995, the WMC has produced high quality, innovative radio, television and video productions designed to educate and inform Cambodians on a wide range of issues impacting on women's rights and human rights including HIV/AIDS, trafficking, elections, domestic violence, decentralization and poverty.

WMC is also dedicated to promoting gender-sensitive reporting in the Cambodian media sector and to encourage journalists to mainstream gender in their reporting and coverage of women. In 2003, Ms. Sarayeth TIVE, Co-Director of WMC and Networking Manager, coordinated Cambodia's first Gender Equity Media Award, and in 2004, the Gender Equity Writer's Award.

Media monitoring was developed and a discussion forum was created to encourage journalists to portray women more positively. The forums provided the group with the opportunity to present their findings to the media and to discuss various obstacles media professionals faced.

The media monitoring findings were announced once a year at a press conference, and letters of appreciation were sent to the Editors-in-Chiefs of media which refrained from publishing stories that portrayed women as sex objects.

WMC's advocacy approach is to work with the media to try and find practical solutions to change the representation and portrayal of women in the media.

The Gender Equity Media Awards and Gender Equity Writer's Award were created to encourage all Cambodian journalists to write gender sensitive articles and to congratulate print media, television and radio organizations for supporting this positive form of reporting.

WMC received funding to coordinate the awards from donors, and worked with the Ministry of Information, the NGO, Women for Change, and a number of media outlets to effectively coordinate and produce the awards ceremonies.

Since 1996 the portrayal of women in the media has progressed a lot, especially the representation of women on radio and television.

WMC continues to encourage media monitoring activities, media internships, student visits to WMC, solidarity events with journalists and editors-in-chief, article solicitation, gender equity media awards, workshops and forums for journalists.

Activity – Discussion Points!

1. Make a list of the strategies the Women’s Media Centre in Cambodia has used to engage the media.
2. What is the main philosophy of the approach used by the Centre?
3. What do the gender and media awards seek to do?

Getting News Coverage – What you can do!

Stage an event like a press conference, the launch of a petition or a protest march to a targeted media. Always prepare written material and/or press kits for the planned event. Ensure that you always have an up-to-date roster (list) of the key media in your country, including the names of journalists, editors, telephone, fax and e-mail details. Contact the media two to three days prior to the event and reconfirm attendance early on the day of the event.

Pegs: Use events like World Press Freedom Day, May 3, the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence (November 25-December 10), International Women’s Day (March 8) or appropriate national holidays to peg gender and media advocacy issues on.

Get to know the media’s deadlines: Check with your local media houses to find out their deadlines for news, features, opinion pieces or for arranging talk shows and current affairs discussions. Work to these deadlines when scheduling media events or planning to use the media to get out information on gender and media issues.

Write Opinion and Commentary Pieces: Use media monitoring findings to develop timely opinion and commentary pieces that can be marketed to the media. The Gender and Media (GEM) Commentary Service is an excellent example of how gender and media activists have claimed a space in the mainstream media. Go to www.genderlinks.org.za to find out more about the service, which can be replicated in other regions. Also write **Letters to the Editor** to highlight gender issues of concern in the media.

Be willing to be a source: Become a reliable and authoritative expert on gender and media issues and do not shy away from media interviews. Prepare for the interview and talk facts, figures and impact. Do not waffle of the top of your head.

Case Study

How to say NO to the Boss campaign

Between 1997 and 1999, women trade union coalitions in Slovenia and Croatia, ran a campaign on sexual harassment in the work place. Although organized by women trade unionists, the 'How to say No to the Boss' campaign was led by a project coalition in each country which include civil society, university students and a representative from the Chamber of Commerce(private sector) in Slovenia.

This campaign also included representatives from the media. In Slovenia, the male editor of the largest private television station was a member of the coalition and in Croatia, the female editor of a women's magazine, also joined.

Staging media events, preparing materials, making available to the media women leaders in the project for interviews and producing and disseminating popular campaign materials like posters and leaflets increased the public's awareness of sexual harassment as a serious violation of women's rights.

The coalitions successfully engaged the media to raise awareness of the issue of sexual harassment – six press conferences were held. The coalitions also mounted campaigns to get their issues covered in the media and in Slovenia, 95 articles were printed in the media, and the coalition was featured on seven television broadcasts and in several radio broadcasts. The campaign in Croatia resulted in more than 50 articles published in the print media, several broadcasts on national and local radio stations and four television broadcasts.

Key female figures within the coalitions were readily available to be interviewed by the media in events such as public forums and hearings which included women with first-hand experience of sexual harassment, legal experts, governments. The groups prepared and disseminated to the media, laws, expert articles and speeches on sexual harassment, research findings on sexual harassment in the workplace, among other materials.

All of these tactics kept the issue on the media's agenda over the two-year period, and the public in both countries began to understand the serious dimensions of sexual harassment at work. "Underestimation, ridiculing and tolerance of the perpetrators at the beginning of the project were little by little transformed into the conviction that the problem is big, serious and difficult" for the women who are sexually harassed.

Source: Sonja Lokar, Coordinator of the 'How to say NO to the Boss' Project Coalition, Slovenia

Activity-Discussion Points!

1. What strategies did the coalitions use to get their issue onto the media's agenda? What were the results of their efforts?
2. Why do you think the media became 'allies' to the coalitions in this campaign?
3. What was one positive change that occurred because of the coalitions' work with the media?

Media Tips for Gender and Media Advocacy

- Remember, the media is always looking for **news** and a good story. "News is what is new, but this includes more than just what is happening now. What is new also can be a new interpretation of an event or issue".
- Create a contact list of women who are willing to speak and who are accessible. This list can be sent to the media to help journalists and editors to build a network of women as sources whom they can contact on gender issues.
- Go and look for the journalists/editors to give them story ideas and information. Establish a relationship. **BADGER** them. Don't just go once, but twice, three times, as often as necessary to form a relationship with journalists and editors.
- Convene an "experts" panel of women to speak at a press conference on a key issue that has developed within your community, at the provincial level or even nationally. Such panels also can write statements to be given to the media.
- Create information packets for journalists on gender issues, including gender and media areas of concern. But always ensure that the information you give out is factually correct and up to date. Wrong information can hurt an NGO's credibility.
- Have members of your staff, who may be responsible for media relations, take short courses on how to write a press release, or a basic journalism skills course. There are short courses on the Internet, or NGOs can also contact media training institutes within their countries for short courses. Several NGOs also can team up and organize a venue and resource person to provide a short journalism skills course for several groups. Courses on news reporting and writing opinions and columns would be valuable.
- NGOs should be careful not to repeat the "same" messages on gender issues over and over again. Remember, what is new. How much progress has been made on an issue? If things are static and there is a backlash or no change, why is this happening?
- Do not give out figures without placing the numbers in a context – that is, what do the numbers mean? What story do the numbers tell? Always ensure that the

figures are accurate. Always provide the source of the data given to the media. NGOs can be a source of sex-disaggregated data.

- Provide the media with case studies that help to bring the human angle to an issue and to illustrate the impact of the issue or event on women, men, girls, boys, etc.
- **PREPARE! PREPARE! PREPARE! ALWAYS BE PREPARED WHEN YOU TALK TO THE MEDIA**

Tips for Writing Opinions and Commentaries

What editors look for?

- The argument of point of view should be right up front in the piece
- The argument must be strong
- A strong news peg (i.e. a piece which is based on an event, issue or trend that is topical in the society, as well as forward looking; also can be a new perspective or new/fresh insight into an event or issue)

How to pitch your piece:

- Call an opinion page editor, rather than sending unsolicited articles. Better tactic is to go and see the editor and be persistent
- Have a 2-3 page brief with you when you pitch which outlines the article
- Know the newspaper you want to publish your article in (know its values, editorial policy, its readers, etc); research the newspaper before you approach it.
- Be brave when pitching your opinion
- Know the area you are writing about; show that you know the issues well.
- For dailies: allow three weeks lead time to pitch your piece. For weeklies: allow six weeks lead time

Structure (writing the piece):

- Start with a case study, anecdote or explain a scenario to lead the reader into the issue
- Put your point of view high in the piece
- Use statistics when appropriate
- Give the context (why the issue is important)
- Give the history/background to the issue (not in abundance, but enough to help explain the issue)
- Avoid jargon and when jargon is used, explain it
- Avoid acronyms
- Remember you are writing for general readers
- Write to length (i.e. find out from the editor how many word your piece should be and stick to the length given)

- Acknowledge and understand the editing process (do a self-edit on your piece for style, clarity). You may ask to see a pre-publication piece to see how the piece has been edited by the newspaper

What to avoid:

- Do not think that just because you write a piece, you are entitled to space. You must convince an editor why it is important to publish your piece. The piece must be compelling and informative
- Do not write a piece that is too specialized which can be understood only by a small audience
- Avoid inaccuracies in facts and data
- Avoid one-side and unfair arguments. Be balanced
- Avoid a didactic/preachy/prescriptive tone in your piece

KEY POINTERS: BREVITY, CLARITY, KEEP THE ARGUMENT CENTRAL

<p>Editor’s Checklist for Newsworthiness⁴⁵</p> <p>Does the story offer new information? Does it say something original? Does it add to ongoing coverage? Should it be told now? What impact will the story have on the audience reading it? Will the story make a difference? Will it change the way the issue is seen? Does it indicate a movement of change?</p> <p>Tips for writing a Press Release</p> <p>Be brief and to the point Ensure all facts, figures and information is correct Answer in the first paragraph the following: Who, What, When and Where Provide answers to Why and How in subsequent paragraphs Put the important points first and high up in the release Support data with quotes from spokespersons (ensure a balance of women and men, both experts and ordinary citizens)</p>

<p>Box 16: Using the Internet in Gender and Media Campaigns</p> <p>The Internet is the biggest computer network in the world and can be used to put one’s campaign on-line to inform wider audiences of your work at the national level. The Internet can be used to:</p>
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⁴⁵ Adapted from Making the Most of the Media, Tools for Human Rights Groups Worldwide, cited in Making a Difference Strategic Communications to end Violence Against Women, Jenny Drezin and Megan Lloyd-Laney, editors, UNIFEM 2003

- Publish information cheaply and quickly, that will be accessible all over the world
- Find information fast from all over the world to help you research your campaign
- Share information and promote your organization and its work
- Find the people or projects that may be able to support or assist your organization
- Find options for funding and support from all over the world
- Co-ordinate international campaigns cheaply and inefficiently
- Exchange news, views and experiences with others in a world wide public forum

Source: Getting Smart strategic communications for gender activists in Southern Africa, Colleen Lowe Morna and Lene Overland, editors, published by Gender Links and Women's Media Watch, 2002

Chapter Six: Keeping Track of Advocacy Work

Monitoring and evaluating advocacy work is fairly new terrain. Reasons for tracking the impact of gender and media advocacy may vary and the reason for evaluating the work will determine the techniques to be used. Some of the incentives for monitoring and evaluation include:

- To prepare credible funding reports
- To demonstrate to colleagues and partners that advocacy work is a cost-effective way of improving gender equality in and through the media
- To learn from experience⁴⁶

There are different types of evaluations and what you will use should be chosen based on your original goals and objectives, and the resources available. The types of evaluations include⁴⁷:

Process Evaluation –examines whether activities are reaching the intended audience, are occurring as planned and are adequately funded. This is the least expensive and most simple type of evaluation, and should be done continuously throughout the advocacy and lobbying to ensure that objectives are still on target, and it addresses questions such as:

- How many opinion leaders received information?
- How many pieces of educational or informational material were distributed to the public?
- How many presentations or meetings have been held with media opinion leaders?
- How many favorable articles have appeared in the media?
- How many members does the organization or its network have?

Outcome Evaluation – measures the immediate impact and results from this type of evaluation will indicate progress toward meeting the objective. Questions posed in this type of evaluation include:

- Has awareness of gender and media issues among opinion leaders in the media and/or in the general public increased?
- Did the target organization's policies change as a result of the activities?
- Was there a measured increase in the public's support of these policies?

Impact Evaluation – examines the progress made towards long-range goals. This is the most expensive type of evaluation and is used to examine only the most ambitious advocacy efforts. This type of evaluation may take place three to five years after advocacy activities. Impact evaluation addresses questions such as:

⁴⁶ Handbook on Advocacy Strategy and Technique Development, edited by Flor Caagusan, Institute for Popular democracy, Manila Philippines

⁴⁷ Handbook on Advocacy Strategy and Technique Development, edited by Flor Caagusan, Institute for Popular democracy, Manila Philippines

- Was there a change in the percentage of women as sources and news subjects in the media?
- Was there an increase in the development and use of gender editorial policies, guidelines and codes by the media?

Developing Indicators

Impact and outcomes, and management indicators are recommended for evaluating advocacy. Impacts and outcomes are about advocacy's contributions to building democratic goals which include participation and equity, building civil society and building sustainability. Impacts may either be direct consequences of advocacy on the policy itself or are results that fulfill other underlying advocacy objectives. Management focuses on processes and capacity.⁴⁸

Indicators are explicit measures used to determine performance. The best indicators are simple, easy to collect and analyze, and show levels of progress towards achieving results. They should be designed to reflect change at different levels. A good way of viewing indicators is to see them as 'milestones' along the path you are traveling.⁴⁹

Indicators also can be developed within the Awareness, Knowledge, Attitude and Behavior (AKAB) framework, and areas to be assessed would include⁵⁰:

Expanded public and private dialogue and debate (awareness)

What increase has there been in:

- Coverage and discussion in the news media?
- Problem solving dialogue?
- Focus and discussion in entertainment media?
- Debate and dialogue in the political process?

Increased accuracy of the information that people share in the dialogue/debate (Tracking progress towards increasing knowledge)

- Are people becoming more informed about the issue?
- Are stereotypes being dispelled?
- Are people discussing different perspectives on the issue?

Shifting attitudes

- Are there signs of increased sensitivity on the issue?
- Are people more accepting of different perspectives on the issue?
- Is there reflection on existing social norms and cultural values (that currently might stand in the way of behavioral change)?

Change in behavior

⁴⁸ Handbook on Advocacy Strategy and Technique Development, edited by Flor Caagusan, Institute for Popular democracy, Manila Philippines

⁴⁹ Making a Difference Strategic Communications to end Violence Against Women, Jenny Drezin and Megan Lloyd-Laney, editors, UNIFEM 2003

⁵⁰ Making a Difference Strategic Communications to end Violence Against Women, Jenny Drezin and Megan Lloyd-Laney, editors, UNIFEM 2003

- Are people taking action as a result of being informed and influenced?
- What are their actions, and what outcomes are emerging?
- Are people getting involved in campaigns, becoming advocates themselves?
- How sustained has this behavioral change been to date, and what signs are there of the change being sustained in the future?

Section Two: Appendix – Definitions, Pointers, Checklists and Tools

1. Glossary of Terms

Accountability – Media are accountable to their viewers, readers and listeners, and to the media industry, not to produce misleading stories.

Corporate governance – Systems and processes for ensuring proper accountability, probity and openness in the conduct of an organization's business.

Evaluation – A time-bound exercise that aims to assess systematically and objectively the relevance, performance and success of ongoing and completed programs and projects. Evaluations can also address outcomes or other developments.

Gender-aware policies – Recognize that women, as well as men, have an important role to play in society; that the nature of women's involvement is determined by gender relations that make their involvement different and often unequal; and that consequently women have different needs, interests and priorities, which may sometimes conflict with those of men.

Gender-blind policies – Do not recognize gender inequalities. They mistakenly assume that men and male norms represent the norm for all human beings. As a result, they incorporate biases in favor of existing gender relations and therefore exclude women.

Indicator - A direct or indirect measure of change. Indicators must be realistic and easy to measure and often the indicators used by large organizations are different from those used by medium and small organizations.

Inputs – Resources required for achieving the stated results.

Internet – A network of computers and servers connected by telephone lines, undersea cables, microwave towers and satellite links. It is the infrastructure that allows data – in sound, picture, video or text form – to travel from one computer to another (or from one computer to many)

Listserv – A mailing list, similar in some ways to a conference, but where messages are sent to the list's address. A copy of the message is then sent to each member or subscriber to the list.

Mainstreaming – Bringing issues such as gender equality, for example, into the mainstream of society. Policy processes are reorganized in order to move the attention of gender equality to everyday policies.

Monitoring – An ongoing process to verify systematically that planned activities or processes take place as expected or that progress is being made in achieving planned outputs.

Non-Sexist Language – language that does not exclude one sex or give inequitable treatment on the basis of gender.

Policy – A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organization or individual.

Press release – Information about a newsworthy event or activity your organization wants to share with the mass media. Gets the press interested in your issues and allows your organization some degree of control in the way the material is presented.

Press kit – Packaged written material (including speeches, press clippings, press releases, etc) with facts about your issue and information about your organization.

Press conference – Arranged meeting with press members to give a speech and answer questions. Use most often for a major announcement or breaking news.

Process documentation – The capturing of information about the progress and process of achieving objectives in print, on film or through other means so that it can become a historical record and a resource for others to use.

Results – Changes that can be described and measured.

Transparent ownership and practice – Disclosure of an organization's ownership structure and the development of processes/systems which demonstrate editorial independence and integrity.

Transparent and responsible editorial policy – The conformity to clear editorial policies, standards or codes covering issues of accuracy, impartiality and politics.

Sources: The Media CSR Forum, KMPG, 2005; Whose News? Whose Views?, Gender Links, 2001; Gender in Media Training, A Southern African Toolkit, Gender Links and the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism, 2002; Making A Difference Strategic Communications to End Violence Against Women, Jenny Drezin and Megan Lloyd-Laney, UNIFEM, 2003; Getting Smart- strategic communications for gender activists in Southern Africa, Colleen Lowe Morna and Lene Overland, Gender Links and Women's Media Watch, 2002.

2. Key points to remember!

- Become conversant with the language and priorities of the media.
- Target media policy makers, media professionals and external policymakers for the development of gender policies, codes and guidelines and regulatory frameworks.
- Cultivate allies, both women and men, within the media.
- Approach the media with more than opinions. Do your homework and research to present the media with facts and figures to illustrate the issues of concern.
- Develop strong media literacy programs to build the capacity of consumers of media – the general public – to put pressure on the media. When audiences speak, the media listen, fearing loss of potential markets and revenue.
- Media monitoring is an effective tool for regularly analyzing media content in order to present the media with data and specific examples of areas of concern. Content analysis, audience research and gender and media audits also are important research techniques.
- Learn how to use the media itself to put gender and media issues onto the news agenda. The writing of opinion and commentary pieces is one media genre that is open to writers outside of the media to get their views across to a wider audience. Gender and media activists should look for and create opportunities to claim this space within the media.

3. Advocacy Planning Tool

The following guide can be used to plan a gender and media advocacy campaign. Remember, planning is the first and an important step in campaign building.

Key Issues for Planning	
What is the problem and what are its causes and solution(s)?	Use the gender and media monitoring, content analysis, situation analysis and/or research tools to identify the problem and get concrete data and specific media examples
What are your goals and objectives?	A goal is a long-term ambition which will be realized through a combination of advocacy and practical activities. An objective is a more immediate ambition and should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART)
What are the changes you are trying to bring about through your advocacy campaign (e.g. Awareness, knowledge, attitude or behavioral changes which can influence how journalists do their work, for example, believing that women are experts on issues and should be accessed as sources , the introduction of missing gender editorial policies, etc)	Another way of thinking about this is: "What will be different as a result of the advocacy?"
What indicators will you use to track progress towards results?	Think about the different sorts of progress you want to keep track of throughout the life of the strategy, e.g. of the process, of the impact and outcomes of your strategy, and of the change in context (which might influence whether you achieve your objective). Identify what systems you will use to collect and analyze your indicators.
Who are your key stakeholders?	What do they know? How are they influenced? How do they make decisions? What information do they need?
Who are your primary stakeholders? How have they been involved in designing the goals, objectives, results and indicators of your strategy? Who are your secondary stakeholders and significant others?	Key stakeholders include those who have the power to effect change, but who may need to be persuaded to act; secondary stakeholders include groups whose support can be rallied, primary stakeholders are those who will benefit from the changes being made, and significant others include target groups within the media industry who might oppose the strategy. Taking the time to think through how you will work with and influence each stakeholder increases the

	chances for success.
What research do you need to carry out to test assumptions about knowledge, attitudes, etc.	How will you reach a representative sample of your target audience, and what techniques will you use to find out their views about the issues? How do they access information on the topic now?
What are the key messages that you need to communicate to each group of stakeholders to bring about the desired change (e.g. Increase their knowledge, change media practices, etc)?	Use focus groups with media practitioners and other kinds of media research to find out what is happening and why and target your messages accordingly.
What communications products (e.g. Popular versions of research findings, fact sheets), channels (face-to-face communications, seminars, the media) and activities (media literacy with targeted consumers) are most appropriate for your key stakeholders?	You will probably need to influence many people to do different things at the same time. Be explicit about whom you're targeting to do what; find out about each group and target them with appropriate messages, and products conveyed through appropriate channels. Think also about who is communicating, involve those who have credibility/influence with key stakeholders.
What will be the timing/work plan for your advocacy strategy/campaign? What are the key dates/occasions for release of messages and materials?	It's useful to do a timeline when planning your strategy so that deadlines are met and tasks distributed in a fair and effective manner. National, regional or international commemorations may serve as useful occasions to release and distribute materials.
What process documentation systems will you use or create to capture the process and results? How will you package and disseminate this information and knowledge to anticipated audiences?	Think about what systems already exist for capturing and sharing this information, e.g. stakeholders meetings, media alert systems, etc. Can they be used to convey information about process and results? Who needs to know the information you have and what information do you have that is useful? This should be linked to the indicators.
How much will you need to budget for your advocacy strategy and what skills and expertise are necessary?	It is important to be realistic and to choose method consistent with the resource that you have.
How will you assess and disseminate the impact of your strategy and the lessons learned from your experiences?	Think about how other organizations can benefit from your experiences.
How will you ensure sustainability of your advocacy strategy?	If you have successfully brought about changes you need to think about how to ensure that these continue once the original enthusiasm/conviction has died down. Who needs to sustain the intervention, and what communications approaches will be most effective? Media

	Watch Canada continues to lobby to ensure sex-role portrayal and other gender guidelines are enforced by the appropriate regulatory authority.
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Source: adapted from Making a Difference Strategic Communications to end Violence Against Women, Jenny Drezin and Megan Lloyd-Laney, editors, UNIFEM 2003

4. Gender and Media Policy Checklist

The following checklists provide a set of key questions that can be used to conduct a gender audit of a media institution. Depending on the focus of the campaign – editorial content, changes in the work place to increase the employment and retention of women media professionals, the removal of sexist advertising, etc. – a set of questions are provided to help guide you through a situation analysis, which provides facts and figures for lobbying the media.

GENDER POLICY FRAMEWORK

International commitments

Are you aware of existing national, regional, international commitments to gender e.g. Constitution, Equality Act, CEDAW, and how they relate to their work?

National legislation

What national legislation and or regulatory authority govern you? To what extent is gender mainstreamed in this legislation?

Gender policy

- Do you have a gender policy?
- Does the policy cover ethical considerations, internal human resource issues and the editorial product?
- Is it a stand- alone policy; is it integrated in all existing policy documents; or both?
- Is the policy informed by consultation?
- Does the policy allow public access and involvement?
- How is the policy implemented? What are the outputs?
- Are resources allocated for the implementation of the policy?
- Is there a high level commitment to the policy?
- How and where is this commitment articulated?

EDITORIAL CONTENT

Gender beat checklist

- Is gender awareness and sensitivity built into all reporting requirements?
- In addition to this, is gender recognized as a specialized beat?
- Is the gender beat accorded the same status as other beats, such as the courts, political, financial etc?
- Is the gender beat understood to include both women's and men's concerns?
- Are there both women and men specializing in the gender beat?
- Are they afforded the same opportunities as other beats for expanding their horizons and deepening their skills on this beat?

Representation

- Does coverage give fair and equal space/time to women and men's voices?
- Are reporters and editors trained to probe the gender issues that may underlie stories?
- Are women consulted across the racial and class spectrum?

- To the extent some women are difficult to reach, is sufficient effort and enough resources set aside for accessing these “marginal” groups?

Context

- Are a variety of sources, representing a broad spectrum of views, consulted?
- Is there a specialist civil society organization on the issue? Has this source been consulted?
- Is there adequate context and balance?
- Is the story analytical? Does it go beyond the event and raise the underlying issues?

Portrayal

- Does your coverage reflect a holistic and realistic view of women and do they appear in the full spectrum of activities in which they engage?
- To the extent that women are missing from certain categories because of their status in society, does the coverage raise critical questions as to why this is so?
- Are male and female subjects treated equally?
- Does your story apportion blame on the subject?
- Does your story exonerate the perpetrator?
- Are all subjects treated with dignity?
- Does the story challenge or reinforce stereotypes?
- Does it examine the underlying issues?
- Are these approached from a human rights perspective?
- Are the experiences and concerns of women trivialized in any way?
- Is your story fair, accurate and balanced?

Language

- Is sexist language defined and forbidden?
- Is language used inclusive of men and women?
- To the extent that gender-neutral terms are used, is relevant gender disaggregated information provided?
- Are adjectives used objective and relevant, and do they convey any biases or stereotypes?
- Is physical description relevant to the story? Does it apply equally to men and women.

Visuals

- Are women and men equally represented?
- Over time, does the range of images portray women in all their diversity with regard to age, sexual orientation, class, disability, race, occupation, and urban/rural?
- Is there a gender bias in how the event is portrayed? Can changing the report reverse or change that bias?
- Do the media have a responsibility to ask why an area shows gender bias or begin to correct it through affirmative reporting and images? For example, if men’s soccer is regularly featured, is there a responsibility to report on why this is predominantly a male game; and of the fact that women’s soccer is an up and coming new sport? Would this help to balance gender images on the sports pages?

- Do pictures reflect women happy with exploitation - for example happy to be scrubbing the floors?
- Do images emphasize/ exaggerate physical aspects (especially sexual)?
- Would using a different image convey a better sense of the gender dynamics? For example, would a photo of women farmers in a remote rural area be more appropriate than a photo of the male minister of agriculture in a story on farming?
- For professional women, does the image show a professional role, as opposed to emphasizing the physicality of women?
- Is the image one of which the person would approve?
- Are women portrayed as survivors or victims?
- Are women portrayed as active or passive?
- Does the image degrade the dignity of women?
- If you substitute man for women does it make sense?
- To the extent that women are announcers on television, to what extent are they represented in all their diversity- gender, race, and physical attributes?

Programming

- Do you have special spaces/ slots for women?
- Should these be for gender rather than for women?
- Is the difference understood?
- Who are you addressing in these spaces?
- Where are they placed?
- For audio- visual media, do they take account of the dual roles and time constraints of women?
- Are they available during prime time when the largest number of men and women are likely to be watching and or listening?

SALES AND MARKETING

Advertising

- Is there a discussion in your organization about the need for consistency in standards applied to advertising and editorial?
- What happens when there is a conflict between the two with regard to gender?
- Has there been any research to determine what really attracts consumers?

Readership/Listener and viewer surveys

- Does gender feature in readership/ listener/ viewer ship surveys?
- Do you conduct focus group surveys to solicit the views of audiences to products? Are men and women equally represented? Are the results disaggregated by gender? Are they acted upon?

INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION

Affirmative Action Policy

- Do you have an affirmative action policy?
- Does law prescribe the affirmative action policy or is it your own?
- Does it spell out precise quotas or targets for male and female representation?
- Are these broken down by rank?
- Are there timeframes for achieving this?

- Is there a plan and resources allocated for achieving this (for example, additional empowerment strategies for women, if required)?
- Do you keep regular staff records, disaggregated by gender?
- Does management regularly monitor and evaluate these?

Recruitment

- Do you advertise using a variety of communication channels, including direct interaction, that ensure men and women are equally reached?
- Do you actively encourage women to apply?
- Is there anything in the way your advertisements are phrased that could discourage women from applying?
- Do you have initiatives to encourage young women to take up careers in the media?

Selection

- Are your selection panels gender balanced?
- Do you ensure a minimum quota for women in the short-listing process?
- Do the same standards apply to women and men in the interview process? For example, would you ask a man whether he was married and had children or intended to have any in the future?
- How are family considerations raised and addressed in the interview process?

Work environment

- Do you have any initiatives in place that promote a gender friendly work environment?
- If someone told a sexist joke at your workplace how would others respond? Would there be any sanction?
- Do you have a sexual harassment policy?
- Do you offer flexi-hours?
- Have you taken advantage of IT to allow work from home under certain conditions?
- Do you ensure the safety of all your employees, for example with regard to their transportation to and from work, especially from certain locations and at certain hours?

Family friendly practices

- Do you have a maternity policy in place? What are its provisions?
- Are there stereotypes in your newsroom concerning the ability of women to perform their journalistic tasks, for example presenting programs on television while they are pregnant? What have you done to correct these?
- Do you ensure that the careers of women journalists are not adversely affected by maternity breaks?
- Do you offer paternity leave?
- Do you have a policy on breast-feeding?
- Do you have childcare facilities?

On the job experience

- Is there a gender balance on all your beats?
- Are women encouraged to go into non-traditional areas of reporting?

- Are women encouraged and supported to take up technical sides of the job, for example as camerawomen in television or photojournalists in the print media?
- To the extent that there are physical constraints, for example, the weight of a camera, how have you used advances in technology to overcome this constraint to women's entry into this sphere of work?
- To the extent that women may be more exposed to danger than men because of their sex (for example to the danger of rape or sexual harassment) while on the job, what measures have you taken to ensure their security? Have you consciously avoided the easy way out- to simply exclude them from that beat?

Capacity building

- Do all your employees have access to staff development programs, and are these offered at suitable hours?
- Do you target women for training?
- Do you have mentorship programs in place?
- Are these specifically targeted at women?
- Does the organization offer assertiveness training and are men and women equally encouraged to undergo this training?

Promotion

- Do you have a clearly defined and transparent promotion policy?
- Do you have a minimum quota for women at all levels of the organization?
- Do you have any measures in place to assist women to achieve these positions on merit?
- Do you have a roster of potential women candidates for top posts?
- When you head hunt, do you specify gender as one of the criteria to be considered in sourcing suitable candidates?

GENDER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Champions

- Is there a champion for the gender policy in your organization?
- Is this person at management level?

Governance level

- To what extent does the board/management regard gender mainstreaming as a priority?

Administrative level

- To what extent does the management of the organization take gender mainstreaming seriously?
- To what extent does all staff take gender mainstreaming as their responsibility?
- Are gender considerations built into the overall performance management system?
- To what extent is performance in this area measured and rewarded?
- To what extent do turnover and lack of continuity and "institutional memory" hinder gender mainstreaming in the organization?
- Are gender resource materials available and accessible?

Structures

Formal

- What specific structures have been created for gender mainstreaming?
- Do these include human resources, the editorial and advertising departments?
- Is there a committee that includes all three?
- Is there a gender structure/unit/focal point (GFP)?
- At what level is the gender focal point employed?
- What access to/ influence on decision makers, does the gender focal point have?
- What other responsibilities does the gender focal point have?
- Has the GFP received gender training?
- Does the GFP have clear terms of reference?
- Is gender part of the GFP job description or is it an add-on?

Informal

- What informal structures have been created to encourage understanding and buy in? (For example a gender forum, brown bag lunches)?
- Do they include men and women?
- Are women encouraged to form support networks and structures?
- Are these structures accorded respect and status and given time to meet?
- Do these structures network with civil society?

Analytical Capacity

- Has the whole organization undergone gender training?
- What form did this take?
- Has there been further gender training linked to various areas of responsibility within the organization?
- Did the training have the support of management?
- How has gender training been perceived in the organization?
- What has been the tangible impact of gender training?

Monitoring, evaluation and resource allocation

- Do you have an internal system to undertake content analysis?
- Is gender one of the criteria?
- What gender indicators have been developed?
- Are statistics disaggregated by gender?
- Does content analysis examine: a) events and issues through the voices of both men and women b) stories highlighting the impact of events on men and women? c) Thematic analysis to ensure that issues covered reflect gender challenges?
- Do you engage with research findings by civil society, private sector and other bodies on the way in which gender is covered by the media, and on sexist attitudes in society?
- Are there internal mechanisms for monitoring the overall gender policy including conditions of service and how they impact on men and women?
- How is the budget divided up within each program?
- What is the effect of this with regard to advancing gender equality?
- How do women benefit from the budget compared to men?
- Would the budget need to shift to address gender objectives more effectively?
- Is there an annual review of the implementation of the gender policy?

Source: Whose news? Whose views? Southern Africa: Gender and Media Handbook, Colleen Lowe Morna, editor, published by Gender Links, 2001

5. Qualitative Monitoring – Key Questions

The following set of questions around the gender and media issues of representation, portrayal, roles, images, news and treatment of violence, are guides to critiquing the media qualitatively. Remember, quantitative and qualitative monitoring combined can provide a rich resource of material to support gender and media advocacy work and to build effective campaigns.

Beauty Ideals

- How important is the woman's physical appearance? Is it relevant to the situation, to the activity? To the total media message?
- Who do we not see or hear about in the media? (the disabled, the aged, rural, and persons whom society does not consider to be beautiful?)
- Are women portrayed in the media like the women in your community, workplace and environment? Are they like women you know?
- Do you see any link between how the media shows women and how you see yourself, and how society treats you?

The Commodity/The Decoration

- Is the woman in the media product used to get the attention of the audience?
- Even though the woman is fully clothed, is she still a decoration?
- How often do we see a man resting on cars, mattresses, furniture or draped over tires?

Sexuality/The Sex Symbol

- Do the media show women as sex objects for pleasure, consumption?
- How are men portrayed in relation to women?
- Is it implied that to be sexy and to attract attention, a woman or man has to be scantily clad?
- Does the woman in the media product have a sensual look? Is this relevant to the situation?

Gender Roles, Power and Relationships

- What activities are women and men shown doing in the media?
- What activities are suggested as the ones men or women should do? Is the activity traditional or non-traditional?
- Does it build the women's self-esteem?
- Is the situation domestic? Public life? Community life?
- What is the relationship between the people in the image or story? Who controls whom? Who helps whom?
- Are women/men portrayed as active? Passive? Weak? Strong? Dominant? In control?
- Who is the main character or informant in the ad, news, feature, soaps, and sitcom?
- Whose views hold sway?

Treatment of Violence

- Who are the perpetrators of violence? Women? Men? Heroes? Good guys? Bad guys?
- Are the perpetrators of violence punished or rewarded?
- Can you identify a link between how violence is reported and the gender of the reporter?
- How do the media show people resolving conflicts?
- How are rapes and assaults reported in the media? Are these reports sensationalized or trivialized? Sensitive or unbiased? Are the victims ridiculed or blamed?
- How are violent crimes against women treated in entertainment (films videos)? Is the violence excessive?

Source: adapted from *Whose Perspective? A guide to gender-sensitive analysis of the media*, published by Women's Media Watch Jamaica, 1998

6. Make news: Put the Spotlight on Gender and Media Issues Days for Gender and Media Activism

For the most part around the world, news revolves around events. Create an event on a specific day when the media is marking some milestone or hallmark, and you may find your issue on the news pages or broadcasts of the day.

One way to create a news event is to take advantage of the days several significant dates already on the world's calendars. These dates can be used to launch a gender and media campaign, engage with the media on a specific gender and media issue, or even be the culmination of either media monitoring, a letter writing or petition campaign, where the results are made public for the media to see.

By using some of the dates and ideas suggested in the following chart, your campaign or event can gain visibility and if planned well, can also make news. The ideas given are only suggestions. Be creative! Be bold! Use the techniques outlined in **Section Two** in the chapter on *How to Use the Media*.

International dates for gender and media advocacy

International Day(s) or Event	What you can do
First two weeks of March each year- the UN Commission on the Status of Women meets in NY to review progress towards gender equality(Beijing+5 and +10 were held during these sessions)	Prior to when the CSW starts you can review how well your local media progressed using Section J of the Beijing Platform for Action. Plan a media dialogue, write opinion pieces, develop and launch a special report on how well the media has done and invite it to cover the launch, or even plan a two-weeks action campaign with activities focused on the media, etc.
March 8, International Women's Day	Create your own special publication for the day illustrating to the media how to do it differently; launch a campaign on some specific gender and media issue; hold a forum with editors on how to move women from the women's pages only, etc.
May 3, World Press Freedom Day	Launch a gender and media campaign on women's access to expression in and through the media; launch a report based on monitoring (a month) prior to the day on women's voices in the media ; congratulate the media on positive gender and media reporting and initiatives by holding awards ceremonies to highlight the best gender and media reporting, etc.
Sixteen Days of Activism Against Gender Violence (November 25-Dec 10)	Monitor the media throughout the 16 days to assess the quantity and quality of coverage on gender violence (or even one specific aspect of gender violence) and

	present the findings in a report. Organize events on the last day of the campaign or a few days shortly thereafter for the most media impact; organize workshops and talks on how the media perpetuates violence against women, etc.
December 1, World AIDS Day	Develop workshop sessions for the media on mainstreaming gender into HIV/AIDS reporting; join with HIV/AIDS activists groups to develop seminars or launch a campaign on the media's portrayal of women living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, etc.
December 10, Human Rights Day	Campaigns or dialogues, forums and preparation of media fact sheets and kits on issues such as women's rights to free expression in and through the media, the media's coverage of women's rights as human rights and gender justice issues (do these topics make news, or does the media ignore issues of women's rights?); the launch of a campaign or organize radio talk shows or TV slots to discuss how the portrayal of women as sex objects in the media violates their right to integrity and dignity, etc.
National events	Use major events in your country to also develop gender and media advocacy initiatives. For example, if your country is holding general elections, do special reports and alerts (monitor the media daily for voices, portrayal, representation, coverage of women, etc and send out short reports to the media and other organizations via e-mail on what was found) on the media's coverage of women in politics; seminars can be held with journalists and editors prior to the elections to highlight and illustrate to the media how to improve the quality and quantity of coverage on women in politics and governance.

7. List of Resources

An Advocacy Guide for Feminists, Young Women and Leadership, No.1, December 2003, Awid

Gender and HIV and AIDS, A Training Manual for Southern Africa Media and Communicators, Gender Links and the AIDS Law Project

Gender Setting: New Agendas for Media Monitoring and Advocacy, Margaret Gallagher, published by Women's Media Program, World Association for Christian Communications, WACC

Getting SMART, strategic communications for gender activists in Southern Africa, edited by Colleen Lowe Morna and Lene Overland, Gender Links and Women's Media Watch

Handbook on Advocacy Strategy and Technique Development, edited by Flor Caagusan, published by Institute for Popular Democracy for the SEACA Advocacy Strategy and Techniques Development Internship Program, Manila, Philippines

Making a Difference, Strategic Communications to End Violence against Women, The United Nations Development Fund for Women

Media Monitoring Manual, Snjezana Milivojevic, Media Diversity Institute & Samizdat, 2003

Missing the Message? 20 Years of learning from HIV and AIDS, PANOS Institute, London

My Views on the News! The Southern African Gender and Media Audience Study, edited by Kubi Rama and Colleen Lowe Morna, Gender Links, 2005

The Thoughtful Activist: A Toolkit for Enhancing NGO Campaigning and Advocacy, J. Chapman and T. Fisher, New Economics Foundation

The Drum Beat – Issue 291 – Advocacy, from the Communication Initiative, March 21, 2005

Will Women Change the News Media? International Women's Media Foundation, December 2000

Whose News? Whose Views? Southern Africa: Gender in Media Handbook, edited by Colleen Lowe Morna, Gender Links, 2001

Whose Perspective? A guide to gender-sensitive analysis of the media, Women's Media Watch, Jamaica, 1998