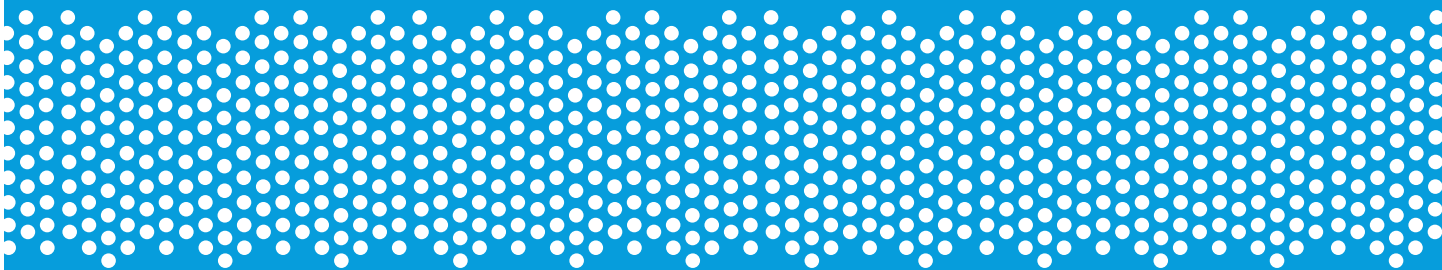




# THE BIG CONVERSATION

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Handbook to Address  
Violence against Women  
in and through the Media



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



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# FOREWORD

Violence against women remains one of the greatest human rights issues of our time. One in every three women will experience some form of physical or sexual violence (not including sexual harassment) in her lifetime. The Beijing Platform for Action, a global blueprint for the achievement of gender equality nearing its 25-year review, reminds us that there is still much work to do to stem the scourge of this epidemic. It also reminds us of the importance of media to this agenda. Television, film, radio, print and social media surround us on a daily basis, providing information, entertainment and ever-increasing channels of communication. These platforms, and the content they deliver, present both unrelenting challenges and incredible opportunities for the achievement of gender equality and the elimination of violence against women and girls.

The discriminatory social norms that drive gender inequality and violence against women and girls have often been perpetuated through the stereotypical portrayals of men and women, not only along gender lines, but also other personal identities, such as race, language group, disability and social and economic status, among others. At the same time, media have powerfully contributed to opening up our imaginations, demonstrating the richness of our diversity and holding promise for a world with more respectful relationships and greater harmony. It is this power that we seek to harness and support.

UN Women and UNESCO are pleased to have collaborated on the production of this handbook, which is one in a series of handbooks being developed to advance implementation of *A Framework to Underpin Action to Prevent Violence against Women* (UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, OHCHR and WHO, 2015). This handbook provides guidance, tools and promising practices from countries across the globe for those working with and within media. It is our intention that this handbook provides entry points for accelerating progress towards gender equality in the systems and structures of organizations. We hope that it leverages what we know works in order to promote the values of diversity, equality and non-violence in the content that media produces.



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# KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

**Gender:** the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female, the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialisation processes. They are context/time-specific and changeable (UN Women, 2015).

**Gender diversity:** in the context of this toolkit, refers to gender roles, expressions or behaviours that differ from traditional gender norms. Gender-diverse people may define themselves as different from, and behave in ways that may not be typically associated with, their biological sex.

**Gender equality:** the concept that all human beings, regardless of sex or gender identity, are equal in dignity and rights and free to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices without discrimination and the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles and prejudices.

**Gender inequality:** the gender norms, roles, cultural practices, policies and laws, economic factors and institutional practices that collectively contribute to and perpetuate unequal power relations between women and men. This inequality disproportionately disadvantages women in nearly all spheres of life across all societies.

**Gender mainstreaming:** the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in

all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetrated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women, 1997).

**Gender stereotypes:** generalized views or preconceptions about attributes or characteristics that are or ought to be possessed by, or the roles that are or should be performed by, women and men (OHCHR).

**Intersectionality:** a concept that seeks to capture both the structural and dynamic consequences of the interaction between two or more forms of discrimination or systems of subordination. It specifically addresses the manner in which racism, patriarchy, economic disadvantages and other discriminatory systems contribute to axes of inequality that structure the relative positions of women and men, races and other groups. Moreover, it addresses the way that specific acts and policies create burdens that flow along these intersecting axes actively contributing to create a dynamic of disempowerment (UN, 2000).

**Media:** refers to a variety of communication institutions (in print, audio, visual and online) used to produce and disseminate information, ideas or messages pertaining to, for example, news, entertainment and/or advertising. References to "the media" in this publication should not be taken as generalisations about each and every media institution.

**Prevention:** refers to halting abuse before it occurs and stopping it from recurring. The focus of this toolkit is on preventing violence by targeting the social norms, practices and structures that underpin or endorse violence against women and girls. Prevention requires a range of interdependent and mutually reinforcing interventions that are also accompanied by support services for survivors and perpetrator accountability.

**Social norm:** a norm is a social construct. It exists as a collectively shared belief about what others do (what is typical) and what is expected of what others do within the group (what is appropriate). Social norms are generally maintained by social approval and/or disapproval (Heise, L. & Heise & Manji, K, 2016).

**Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG):** is defined as ‘any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women (or girls), including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.’ Such violence is perpetrated against women and girls specifically because they are women and girls. It exists in multiple, interrelated and sometimes recurring forms, and is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women (UN A/RES/48/104, 1993).

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is widely recognized as one of the most pervasive human rights violations in the world. It acts as both a cause and consequence of gender inequality, impacting the health, safety, productivity and overall well-being of women and girls, and impeding the realization of their rights. Despite increased efforts to address it, rates of VAWG remain alarmingly high. Global data shows that one in three women has experienced physical and/or sexual violence at some point in her lifetime, with this figure being as high as 7 in 10 in some countries (WHO, 2013). The most significant challenge remains the persistence of attitudes, beliefs, practices and behaviours in society that perpetuate negative stereotypes, discrimination and gender inequality, as root causes of VAWG. Addressing this challenge lies at the core of prevention work.

UN Women, in partnership with the ILO, OHCHR, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, WHO and other relevant stakeholders, including civil society, has developed a first ever framework on prevention (*A United Nations Framework to Underpin Action to Prevent Violence Against Women*, 2015). The Framework reflects the growing evidence that a comprehensive approach to prevention is needed, bringing together interventions that are multi-component and mutually reinforcing at all levels of society (individual, relational, communal and institutional). The Framework highlights the need to squarely address the underlying practices, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours across society that perpetuate and tolerate abuse. It identifies eleven 'entry points' of intervention to prevent VAWG, including: schools, workplaces, sports organizations, male-dominated institutions, health, justice, security and transport

services, within communities, at local and national government levels, and through the media.

This Handbook provides guidance to UN and other entities working with media organizations to advance gender equality and prevent violence against girls and women. There are two main domains for achieving these goals, including: working with media as entities that can promote gender equality from within and working with media as channels to promote values of diversity, equality and non-discrimination externally through the content they produce. The handbook is structured to provide more specific guidance on:

- 1) Strengthening the enabling environment
- 2) Promoting positive institutional approaches
- 3) Engaging with media for changing social norm

## 1.1 Why is it important to work with media?

Media are regarded as a key 'entry point' for preventing VAWG in the long-term because of their unique reach to broad sections of the population, as well as their ability to influence and shape ideas and perceptions about what is considered socially acceptable. On the one hand, through stereotypical and/or harmful portrayals, media may reinforce the social norms that contribute to gender discrimination, inequality and

violence against women and girls. On the other hand, media function to shine light upon important societal issues: raising awareness about the extent, causes and consequences of the various forms of abuses that exist. They should serve to present society in all of its diversity, rather than drawing upon narrow traditional narratives and stereotypes regarding the roles and portrayals of men and women, and men and women



of different backgrounds. They can provide a voice and platform to empower women and place critical issues onto the political agenda.

At the same time, however, media can and often does perpetuate violence-supportive social norms that are discriminatory along gender, racial and other lines, which actively undermine gender equality and women's freedom from violence. The media content on violence against women could affect the audience in different ways. The negative content produced can have significant adverse effects which can lead to serious consequences. This can range from the banalization of the issue to the reproduction of violent acts, also known as the copycat effect (Toledo and Lagos, 2014). It is important for media professionals to have a better understanding of the potential effects of the content they produce and to be engaged in a co-creation of a more sensitive and purposeful content about gender, diversity and non-violence.

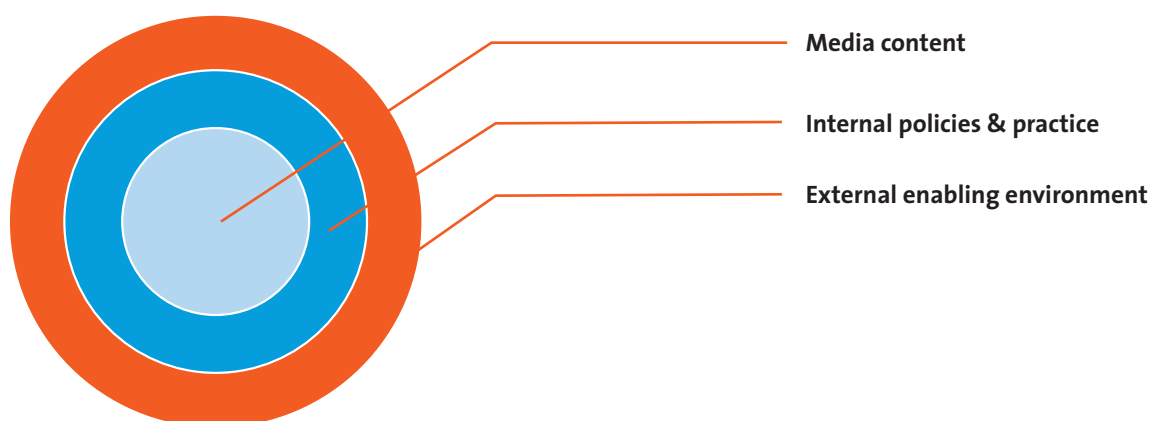
## 1.2 What are the ways to engage media?

Media are diverse in structure (the way they exist and are organized), formats (print, audio, digital, etc.) and in their content types (news and current affairs, entertainment, social interaction, etc.). What they have in common is that gender inequality and the discriminatory social norms that are pervasive in society are usually reflected in their structures, formats and content. What they also have in common is the power that they have to communicate ideas to a vast segment of the population. This context brings many opportunities to drive positive change to the media

organizations themselves, the content they produce and to the audiences.

Work with media, in this respect, requires engagement in three inter-connected spheres, including:

- Strengthening the external enabling environment that facilitates positive change in structural and social norms, such as improving laws and policies (regulatory frameworks) to address potential harm; understanding the successes and challenges of the sector through research and monitoring; enhancing media and information literacy for populations to better navigate content that they are exposed to; and celebrating promising practices through awards and recognition.
- Promoting positive institutional change for gender equality, such as working towards parity of men and women in the workforce and in decision-making; training on gender, discrimination and violence against women and girls; and strengthening policies around gender (sexual harassment and domestic violence, work-life balance, safety of journalists) and those related to editing and publishing.
- Engaging in transforming social norms by addressing content that stereotypes gender, is discriminatory and lacks an understanding of the root causes of violence against women and girls, in addition to exploring opportunities to partner for prosocial communications, targeted campaigns and programming to foster values, beliefs and attitudes that are based on equality, respect for diversity and non-violence.



# 2. INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS

## 2.1 Human rights frameworks

International and regional human rights frameworks systematically note the importance of media to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women, including eliminating violence against them.

The **Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women** through its general recommendations 19 (1992), 23 (16th session, 1997) and 35 (2017), call on states to adopt and implement effective measures to ensure that the media respect and promote respect for women by:

- encouraging the creation or strengthening of self-regulatory mechanisms by media, including online or social media, aimed at the elimination of gender-stereotypes relating to women and men, or to specific groups of women (such as human rights defenders), and to address gender-based violence against women that takes place through their services and platforms;
- creating guidelines for the appropriate coverage by the media of cases of gender-based violence against women;
- establishing and/or strengthening the capacity of national human rights institutions to monitor or consider complaints regarding any media that portray gender discriminatory images or content that objectify or demean women or promote violent masculinities; and
- establishing a system to regularly collect, analyse, and publish statistical data on the number of complaints about all forms of gender-based violence against women, including technology mediated violence.

The **Beijing Platform for Action** (1995) recognized the potential that exists everywhere for the media to

make a far greater contribution to the advancement of women. It outlined two strategic areas that are still very relevant today as progress has been slow:

- to increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication; and
- to promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in media.

The Platform for Action had the foresight to include advances in information communication technologies (ICTs); their role in facilitating a global communications network that transcends national boundaries; and the impact this has on public policy, private attitudes and behaviours.

The **Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence** (Istanbul Convention, Article 17, 2011) adopted in Europe, but open for global signatures, requires States Parties to: encourage the private sector, the ICT sector and media, with due respect for freedom of expression and their independence, to participate in the elaboration and implementation of policies and to set guidelines and self-regulatory standards to prevent violence against women and to enhance dignity; and develop and promote, in co-operation with private sector actors, skills among children, parents and educators on how to deal with the information and communications environment that provides access to degrading content of a sexual or violence nature which might be harmful.

At the regional level, the **Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women** (Belem do Para, Article 8, 1994), adopted in Latin America, requires States

Parties to undertake progressively specific measures, including programmes to encourage the communications media to develop appropriate media guidelines to contribute to the eradication of violence against women in all its forms, and to enhance respect for the dignity of women. The **Protocol to The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa** (Maputo Protocol, Article 12, 2003), adopted in Africa, requires States Parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate all stereotypes in

textbooks, syllables and the media, that perpetuate all forms of discrimination against women. The **ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women** includes “design, implement, and evaluate evidence-based and context-specific and cultural sensitive awareness-raising campaigns for changing social norms towards non-violence and respectful relationships, especially through making effective use of existing [people-oriented] media outlets and communication channels (ASEAN, 2015).”

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## Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the world's overarching plan to build a better world for people and our planet by 2030. Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, the SDGs are a call for action by all countries - poor, rich and middle-income - to promote prosperity while protecting the environment. Within these goals, there are a number of targets related to the elimination of harassment, discrimination and violence against women and girls, recognizing them as issues of human rights and impediments to peace and development. The targets pertain to public and private spaces in all contexts. They include, among others:

- End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere. (5.1)
- Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation. (5.2)
- Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation. (5.3)
- Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life. (5.5)
- Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women. (5.B)
- Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels. (5.C)
- By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities. (11.7)
- Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere. (16.1)
- End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. (16.2)
- Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements. (16.10)
- Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development. (16.B)

For more detailed information on each of these, see: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>

The **Council of Europe recommendation on the Protection of Violence against Women (2002/5)** notes that Member States should: compile and make available to the general public appropriate information concerning the different types of violence and their consequences for victims, including integrated statistical data, using all the available media (press, radio and television, etc.); encourage the media to promote a non-stereotyped image of women and men based on respect for the human person and human dignity and to avoid programmes associating violence and sex; as far as possible, these criteria should also be taken into account in the field of the new information technologies. Further, the media should be encouraged to: participate in information campaigns to alert the general public to violence against women; organise training to inform media professionals and alert them to the possible consequences of programmes that associate violence and sex; elaborate codes of conduct for media professionals, which would take into account the issue of violence against women and, in the terms of reference of media watch organizations, existing or to be established, encourage the inclusion of tasks dealing with issues concerning violence against women and sexism.

## Policy Instruments

Various policy instruments and special mechanisms have also been formulated to address media and violence against women. These include the Sustainable Development Goals, General Assembly Resolutions, Human Rights Council Resolutions, reports and recommendations by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its cause and consequences and the outcome documents of the Commission on the Status of Women, The World Summit Information Society and the Broadband Commission.

### General Assembly and Human Rights Council Resolutions

General Assembly and the Human Rights Council Resolutions have been adopted referring to the role media can play in eliminating gender stereotypes and promoting gender equality, the empowerment of women and the full enjoyment of human rights.

These Resolutions have also provided more targeted recommendations related to the issues of journalist safety and violence against women committed through ICTs.<sup>1</sup>

### The Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences

The Special Rapporteur, through her various reports, has highlighted the critical role of media, including: in monitoring and reporting on cases of gender-based violence; in providing a counter-discourse to ‘hegemonic interpretations of culture’ and transforming discriminatory values, institutions and power structures; and through the importance of portraying culturally unbiased and non-stereotypical images of different women (e.g. those living with disabilities) to change negative perceptions, eliminate discrimination and end violence. The Special Rapporteur also produced a dedicated report on ICT-related violence against women (2018), articulating a number of recommendations to effectively address the issue (HRC, 2018).

### Other Global Platforms

The Commission on the Status of Women has recognized the importance of media and ICTs in many of its outcome documents and Agreed Conclusions, including its 55th Session on Access and Participation of Women and Girls in Education, Training and Science and Technology (2011) and its 57th Session on Elimination and Prevention of All Forms of Violence against Women and Girls (2013) among others. The Commission also resolved to discuss the media and ICTs theme at its 62nd session (CSW 2018). During this session, position papers were presented on this topic, later compiled into a UNESCO publication titled “Setting the Gender Agenda for Communication Policy: New proposals from the Global Alliance on Media and Gender”.

<sup>1</sup> See for example: General Assembly Resolutions 70/162, 71/170, 69/147, 67/144, 65/187, 63/155, S-23-3 and Human Rights Council Resolutions 35/10, 32/17, 32/19, 29/14, 26/15, 23/25, 17/11, 14/12, 32/13, 33/2

## Resolution in the European Parliament on Gender Equality in the Media Sector in the EU Adopted 20th February 2018

This Resolution adopted by the European Parliament provides background and recommendations to address gender equality in audio-visual, technology-facilitated and digital communications. It includes a range of relevant issues related to gender parity, participation and decision-making, equal pay and work-life balance; safety of journalists; sexual harassment; gender stereotyping; gendered experiences of women's access to, use of and experiences with technology; the role of legislation, regulatory bodies and women's organizations; and the importance of research and monitoring, among other key areas related to gender equality in the media.

For detailed information, see: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2F%2FEP%2F%2FTEXT%2FBREPORT%2BA8-2018-0031%2Bo%2BDOC%2BXML%2BVo%2F%2FEN&language=EN#\\_part1\\_ref2](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2F%2FEP%2F%2FTEXT%2FBREPORT%2BA8-2018-0031%2Bo%2BDOC%2BXML%2BVo%2F%2FEN&language=EN#_part1_ref2)

On gender, ICTs and new media, the World Summit Information Society+10 Statement on Implementation of WSIS Outcomes and the WSIS+10 Vision for WSIS Beyond 2015 included the mainstreaming of gender issues across all WSIS action lines...to ensure action lines take account of continuing gender issues, redress

discrimination and contribute to ending violence and harassment (ITU, 2014). In 2013, the Broadband Commission endorsed an advocacy target, calling for gender equality in access to broadband by 2020 and produced a discussion paper on *Combatting Online Violence against Women and Girls*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See [http://www.itu.int/net/pressoffice/press\\_releases/2013/o8.aspx#.VCRq\\_PldUrZ](http://www.itu.int/net/pressoffice/press_releases/2013/o8.aspx#.VCRq_PldUrZ) and <https://www.broadbandcommission.org/Documents/publications/bb-wg-gender-report2015-highlights.pdf>

# 3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The principles below provide a common philosophy to guide organizations and media professionals who engage with subject matter related to violence against women and girls. They are especially relevant to those who are in direct contact with individuals who have experienced or witnessed abuse, but also apply more broadly to any engagement. The principles should frame the understanding of violence in all circumstances and should permeate all content, activities and actions.

## 3.1 Adhering to Ethics and Safety

Any media intervention should prioritize and guarantee women's and girls' rights to safety and security, confidentiality and privacy, expression of opinion and autonomy to make decisions. Subjects should be made fully aware of the purpose, intent, format and expected reach or impact of any media intervention. Participation and dissemination of any material, including audio, visual or print should be based on expressed informed consent by written or recorded confirmation.

Survivors of violence (whether those appearing in a media segment or employees of a media organization) may present symptoms of post-traumatic stress in recounting circumstances of their abuse or when they report it. It is essential to research and make available referrals to quality accessible local support services or hotlines. If the subject is a minor (under 18) it is critical to have a trained psychologist, counsellor or social worker available on site to provide support. Laws related to mandatory reporting of abuse for minors must also be researched in advance and must be fully disclosed to participants ahead of acquiring informed consent, so that the individual (and her legal guardian) are fully aware of the possible ramifications of participation.

Advocates (especially human rights defenders and women journalists) and survivors who speak out are often at greater risk of further harm or retribution. It is critical to assess risk, provide immediate security and referrals for longer-term protection and safety planning.

## 3.2 Refraining from Social and Cultural Bias

Individuals are shaped by their environment and their lived experiences, which may result in consciously or unconsciously expressing bias towards others. For example, specific forms of harmful practices and violence, such as female genital mutilation/cutting, acid attacks, dowry violence, "honour" killings, female infanticide and child marriage, among others which affect girls and women from specific communities or from particular regions, tend to be exoticised and "othered" (Larasi 2012). Coverage could also have the unintended consequence of increasing expressions of racism and religious hatred against specific communities. In order to avoid such bias and to better evaluate, understand and portray people and situations in a more balanced manner, it is critical for media personnel or those using media platforms to understand what stereotypes and biases are and to recognize how these manifest in their own views and communications. This also applies to the policies and practices within institutions, where social and cultural biases (conscious and unconscious) may permeate systems and structures related to hiring, retention, promotion, decision-making and the overall organizational working environment.

## 3.3 Maintaining a Human Rights-Based and Gender Equality Lens

The ways in which media portray VAWG is often problematic in a number of ways that perpetuate myths and stereotypes without analyses grounded in the social and political reality of the situation. This can include things like: victim-blaming and placing the attention or burden of the situation on the

woman instead of the perpetrator; sensationalising the circumstances; distorting facts and information; misrepresenting the legal context; and presenting the issue as isolated incidents perpetrated by men who are demonized or unwell. To maintain a human rights-based and gender equality lens, violence against women and girls must be recognized as a violation of the woman's human rights and that there is no circumstance which justifies violation or harm to her person. It means presenting the context of violence against women as a problem of social norms that discriminate against women and girls (and promote harmful ideals of masculinity and manhood) and structures that reinforce inequality between men and women allowing men to feel entitled to exert power over them. This understanding is also foundational to good sexual harassment policies and practice, recognizing the issue as one of power imbalance, abuse of authority and discrimination.

### 3.4 Adopting an Intersectional Approach

Interventions to address gender roles and stereotypes cannot occur without an understanding that although all women are in some way subject to gender discrimination, all women are not discriminated against in the same way, while particular groups of women (with different economic, social, political and cultural status) may face multiple forms of discrimination (Crenshaw 1991 and Wing 1997). Intersectional discrimination has been recognized as a serious obstacle to the achievement of gender equality and is at the core of the 'leave no one behind' principle of the Sustainable Development Goals. Factors including race, ethnicity, caste, class, age, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, geographic location, disability, HIV status or status as a migrant, refugee or internally displaced person, can all influence the forms and nature of violence women and girls may suffer (Fergus 2012). These factors can direct discrimination and violence towards, as well as create inequalities that are unique to particular groups of women, or that disproportionately affect some groups of women. A sound understanding of the multiple forms of discrimination faced by different groups of women in different contexts needs to be embedded in all interventions.

### 3.5 Ensuring Representation

Women and girls are experts on their own experiences, how they feel and what they need. Media organizations and those planning media interventions should value women's knowledge, and recognize women and girls, including survivor's organizations, as respected sources of information based on their ideas and experiences. Not all women and girls have the same needs and experiences. These will be affected by culture, age, ethnic background or race, sexual orientation, ability and other defining characteristics related to social and or political status. This means that decisions within media organizations, within programmes and interventions, in portrayals and messaging should be reflective of the inputs and knowledge of women and girls from diverse backgrounds. Engaging women, especially those whose rights and voices have been marginalized, can avoid further exclusion, uphold their rights and minimize unintended or negative consequences.

### 3.6 Planning for increased help-seeking by survivors of violence

Media engagement, especially on a large scale, can result in greater numbers of victims/survivors and their communities seeking support and information on how to address such violence. As a result, such interventions can place an additional demand on support services, which may be struggling already to meet existing demands, a factor to consider in the design of the broader programme to end VAWG. It is important therefore to identify existing services and consult them on the design of interventions and communicate to audiences which services are available (with contact information) and in what capacity. It is also important to provide this information to survivors or witnesses that you interview, who may experience secondary trauma from recalling and retelling what they have experienced or witnessed. The same applies within institutions, for example, when a new sexual harassment policy and/or procedures are put in place, it is likely that more people will come forward and report their experience(s).

### 3.7 Aiming for Internet Universality (ROAM-X Principles)<sup>3</sup>

As media are operating in a ubiquitous digital environment, the key values and principles that UNESCO advances for tackling the issues related to media and gender in the digital age is Internet Universality (IU). Just as human rights are universal, and the SDGs are universal, so is the value of Internet Universality as a key starting point for engagement and empowerment of all actors including women and girls. Internet Universality

was unanimously endorsed in 2015 by UNESCO's 193 Member States. Underpinning the concept of Internet Universality are UNESCO's ROAM principles (Rights, Openness, Accessibility and Multistakeholder participation). Internet Universality recognizes the Internet as a network of economic and social interactions and relationships (i.e. much more than just digital technology), with huge potential to enable human rights, empower individuals and facilitate sustainable development. To be sustainable, digital technologies must be available to all, especially girls and women.

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<sup>3</sup> See: <https://en.unesco.org/internetuniversality>



# 4. STRENGTHENING THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Media are part of a broader political, social, economic and cultural environment. Media operates as a reflection of this context at the same time that they contribute to shaping this context. As the environment changes, new considerations arise as to how the media operates and how society interacts with media.

For the purposes of this publication, the enabling environment shall refer to external factors which have direct or indirect influence on media structures, practices and content. An enabling environment is key to ensuring a gender sensitive media content which can significantly contribute to the prevention of violence against women and girls and social awareness around it. Strengthening the enabling environment entails multi-layered interventions which can include:

- Recalling states' obligations to international commitments with regards to gender equality and women's empowerment, including as it relates to media, to ensure their translation into concrete laws and strategies.
- Advocating for regulatory frameworks (including self-regulation) to increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through media; to increase more equitable and safer access to new technologies of communication; and to promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women throughout media.
- Ensuring a high level of media literacy among the population at large, with special attention to young people in order to foster critical thinking and analysis of media that is consumed, especially as it relates to content that is discriminatory, violent and harmful.

## 4.1 Regulatory Frameworks

Media are fundamental to the principles of freedom and democracy. Securing the right of individuals to express themselves and voice their

opinions is fundamental to these principles. This right, however, co-exists with other fundamental rights that individuals hold, including the rights to not be discriminated against or violated. Government and media in this context need to balance these rights, including through (self) regulation.

### Understanding how this works

Media regulation refers to the overall process of providing parameters or guidance through codes and procedures, applied by governments and other political and administrative authorities to various media activities (University of Leicester. ND).

Regulatory frameworks could be formal or informal. Formality is defined by three aspects: 1) whether or not it is established in law; 2) whether provisions carry enforceable penalties (financial or otherwise); and 3) whether it is permanent or temporary. Formal regulations could provide obligatory instructions about the structure, conduct or content of media. As an example, regulations could serve to limit monopoly ownership or media cross-ownership; to control the amount of advertising on television or to set requirements to receiving license for television or radio. Legal requirements of general application *de facto* help to regulate media, including prohibitions against libel and defamation, laws protecting privacy, laws concerning intellectual property rights, and prohibitions against incitement to violence or racial hatred, pornography or obscenity. Specific media regulatory frameworks could in some cases provide guidelines for media professionals, such as in the UK (Article 19, No Date) or set clear prohibitions on specific types of content, such as

in New Zealand (Government of New Zealand, 2018) which includes a prohibition on portrayal of cases of domestic violence.

Informal regulations and self-regulation are based on voluntary compliance, which often result from increasing pressures toward compliance from colleagues, clients, audiences, advertisers and other industry stakeholders. Leading media bodies (national, regional, international) may also be important partners in this regard, even if they do not enjoy complete regulatory reach among their constituencies.

### Regulation on addressing violence against women

The majority of countries maintain dedicated domestic legislation to address intimate partner or domestic violence, sexual violence and sexual harassment (Tavares and Wodon, 2018). These laws, however, only address media in a few cases. Within legislation addressed specifically to the media, some forms of discrimination (e.g. racial, religious) and violations of

human rights may be covered, however, the majority of regulatory frameworks do not include or have weak provisions related to discrimination based on gender. In some instances, provisions from different parts of the legislative framework may contradict one another or come into conflict. For example, research with media professionals from Australia found that laws related to court reporting, contempt and other aspects within the Family Violence Protection Act, made it difficult for news reporters covering cases of domestic violence to situate these cases within a broader context of gender-based violence and precluded them from sharing certain information as it related to perpetrators (Sutherland et al., 2017). Regulatory processes often take time and may not be keeping pace with contextual changes. For example, innovation and expansion of ICTs, which have opened tremendous opportunities for public communication (e.g. through private and instantaneous chat applications, video production and dissemination and social networking platforms), have also posed new challenges to protecting women from abuse and holding perpetrators accountable.

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## Examples of National Mechanisms to address Gender Discrimination and Violence in Media and Communications

**Belgium's** National Action Plan to Combat all forms of Gender Based Violence (2015-2019) referred to the importance of self-regulation and the need for training for media professionals to address sexism in the media (Government of Belgium, 2015).

In **Morocco**, the government established an arbitration commission to deal with cases of women journalists and their employers; requires reporting on gender equality activities of institutions under the Ministry of Communication (e.g. statistics on women journalists); has adopted charters and editorial policies to promote respect for women's rights and a guide on gender stereotyping in media for public television stations (United Nations, 2017). In 2018, a law was passed including provisions on fines that will be levied for gender-based defamation against women and should any person who intentionally shares (including through technology) someone's private or confidential information, statements or pictures without their approval (Government of Morocco, 2018).

The **Slovak Republic's** National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women (2014–2019) included the need to track violence against women in the media and advertising based on annual monitoring to increase the effectiveness of media law and self-regulation. The plan also includes training activities on tackling violence against women and gender equality for professionals in the media (Government of the Slovak Republic, 2014).

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**Tanzania's** National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women and Children (2001–2015) mandated a range of measures in order to achieve gender-sensitive reporting of cases of violence against women and children without perpetuating gender stereotypes, including training of media personnel on women's human rights and violence against women.

**Timor-Leste's** National Action Plan on Gender based violence (2017-2021) includes the role of the media in promoting gender equality and zero tolerance towards GBV. The plan proposes to achieve this through 1) the development of a code of conduct on gender sensitive reporting, including ethical guidelines on reporting gender-based violence but also disciplinary action in case of breach of the code, 2) the institutionalization of mandatory annual trainings on human rights, gender equality and gender sensitive reporting on gender-based violence and 3) the development and implementation of a media tool to monitor the reporting on gender-based violence and portrayal of women (Government of Timor-Leste, 2017).

**Spain's** National Plan to Heighten Awareness and Prevent Gender-Based Violence: Conceptual Framework and Main Lines of Intervention (2007– 2008) included: actions to promote and distribute best practice guidelines on media reporting and awards for best practices in advertising; strategies to establish strong partnership structures between government and media/ advertising industries; the creation of an Advisory Committee on the image of women to analyze how women are treated in advertising; extension of self-regulation agreements in advertising; development of agreements with publicly-owned media to promote non-sexist content and the active participation of women in all areas of life; a self-regulation pact that will guarantee that news items are treated objectively and that they transmit the values of equality and reject this type of violence; extension of the Self-regulation Agreement for television operators on the subject of protection of minors to include gender-based violence and discrimination for reasons of sex; and conventions with Audiovisual Regulatory Authorities to establish collaboration procedures to eradicate from programming and advertising all direct or indirect encouragement of gender-based violence.

Addressing violence against women in the media through domestic legislation and regulation must be approached very carefully, with thoughtful consideration of other rights and freedoms (e.g. freedom of speech and expression; access to information; and the right to privacy) that are at the foundation of fostering democratic, inclusive and more equal societies. Exceptions to these rights and freedoms are necessary when words or images pose a danger to individuals (when asserting one's rights compromises and harms the rights of another), peace and the rule of law (OSCE, 2008). The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states that the exercise of the rights of freedom of expression carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary: (a) For respect

of the rights or reputations of others; (b) For the protection of national security or of public order or of public health or morals (ICCPR Article 19). This applies across mediums (e.g. print, audio, video, digital, etc.) and content types (e.g. news, entertainment, advertising, social media, etc.).

Legislation and regulation around online or digital content has proven especially challenging to address given the various private and public stakeholders involved (individuals, internet intermediaries, government) and the unique context (e.g. transnational communication and jurisdictional issues; public domains versus 'private' communications through apps/texting) within which this form of communication exists. Online violence and harassment were previously omitted from discussions of violence against women,

Regulation		Self-Regulation		Guidance	No Rules
No gender discrimination in ads	Portrayal of gender in advertising	ICC code in full or as basis/or similar	Specific rules re. gender stereotypes	Gender stereotypes	
Belgium France Finland Greece Hungary Ireland UK	Norway Spain	Australia Bulgaria Finland France Greece Ireland Lithuania Luxembourg Portugal Romania Slovakia Slovenia Spain UK	Finland Ireland Germany India Italy Austria South Africa New Zealand	Belgium France Bulgaria Canada Sweden USA	Cyprus The Czech Republic The Netherlands Turkey

Sourced by WFA from ASA's *Depictions and Harm: A report on gender stereotypes in advertising*. July 2017

but have come into sharper focus since 2016. While this form of violence seems to be on the rise, response to ICT-mediated violence remains insufficient as legal frameworks addressing this specific form of violence are either non-existent or not enforced. There is a need for clear self-regulatory frameworks to govern internet and ensure it is a safe space which respects women's rights (World Wide Web Foundation, 2015).

Self-regulatory organizations and standards bodies for advertising are also taking action to promote and respect healthy and progressive portrayals of gender. The European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA) consisting of 14 industry bodies and 27 self-regulating organizations has committed to ensuring that women and men are portrayed responsibly (WFA, 2018).

### Examples of media regulation related to gender discrimination and violence against women

In **Botswana**, a code of the media council under the Media Practitioners Act 2008, states that media institutions should not identify victims of gender-based violence unless they have supplied consent and bans presenting content which could incite hatred based on gender.

**Canadian** Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has enacted regulations stating that broadcasters must not broadcast any "comment or abusive pictorial representation" that could "expose an individual or a group or class of individuals to hatred or contempt on the basis of... sex or sexual orientation"; and that they must ban unjustifiable and uncalled-for stereotypes, present women and men of different ages, or different appearances, of different opinions and interests, in a variety of tasks and roles, including non-traditional ones; in journalistic programs, seek women's opinions, as well as men's,

on the full range of public issues; and strive to reach a balance in the use of women’s and men’s voices in voice-overs. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/media-and-the-law>; <http://www.cbc.radio-canada.ca/en/reporting-to-canadians/acts-and-policies/programming/program-policies/1-1-3>

In **India**, the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 has both a “Programme Code” and an “Advertising Code” which both ban content which “denigrates women”.

The Press Council of **Pakistan**, a statutory body, includes 19 members from different sectors of the print media, as well as civil society, including representatives of women’s groups. Their code of ethics addresses content which incites hatred against women, as well as a clause preventing the identification of victims of sexual offences against women and children.

In the **United Kingdom**, the Committee for Advertising Practice (CAP) and the Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice (BCAP) produced a regulation for the industry stating that “[Advertisements] must not include gender stereotypes that are likely to cause harm, or serious or widespread offence,” following a report on the harm that gender stereotypes in advertising contribute to. This rule goes into effect in June 2019.

## Resources:

- ➔ The Media Self-Regulation Guidebook (OSCE): <http://www.osce.org/fom/31497?download=true>
- ➔ Online Harassment: A comparative Policy Analysis for Hollaback: <https://www.ihollaback.org/app/uploads/2016/12/Online-Harassment-Comparative-Policy-Analysis-DLA-Piper-for-Hollaback.pdf>
- ➔ Submission to the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression on ‘Content Regulation in the Digital Age’: <https://www.article19.org/resources/submission-un-special-rapporteur-content-regulation-digital-age/>
- ➔ Countering Online Hate Speech (UNESCO): <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000233231>

## 4.2 Research and Monitoring

Research and monitoring are key components to any programme or initiative engaging with the media. It is this data and information that provides insight into how the industry is performing- the progress that has been made and the gaps that still exist. Research and monitoring can be used for a number of purposes:

- To highlight practices that are good and to call attention to those institutional practices and content that are problematic and need attention.
- To inform normative processes, fill gaps and hold governments accountable to commitments they have made in this area.
- To connect directly with journalists, editors and media owners.
- To engage in public campaigns and education initiatives (e.g. media literacy and community dialogues) that challenge prevailing social norms and gender stereotypes that condone inequality, discrimination and violence.
- To provide substance for training and programme development.

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## The Global Media Monitoring Project World Association for Christian Communication (WACC)

The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), overseen by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), is the largest and longest longitudinal study on gender in the media worldwide, with network partners in over 100 countries. Since 1995, it has been conducting highly participatory and highly visible assessments of the media every five years, tracking progress on gender equality. This initiative has spurred a movement across regions, equipping its participating organizations with the skills and tools to engage in this work on a regular basis.

The project has undertaken the following activities:

- Mapping the representation and portrayal of women in the world's news media
- Developed a grassroots research instrument
- Built solidarity among gender and communication groups worldwide
- Created media awareness through advocacy, campaigns and dialogue
- Developed media monitoring skills on an international level

The project provides a useful repository of women's representation in the media, and its findings can be used to argue about the role of the media in portraying society in all of its diversity, rather than perpetuating harmful gender stereotypes. The findings of the project research can prove a useful foundation for a discussion with news/ entertainment or social media. The methodology and research instruments of the GMMP are freely available in three languages. They are user-friendly and easily adaptable to the local context to facilitate independent monitoring of media reporting.

For more information, see: <http://whomakesthenews.org/>

To access the tools, see: <http://whomakesthenews.org/media-monitoring/methodology-guides-and-coding-tools>

### Advisory Media Forum (Albania)

UN Women in Albania, with funding from the European Union, launched an Advisory Media Forum for reporting on trafficking of girls and women. The forum currently has 30 members/journalists from major media outlets and has provided a platform to increase accurate and ethical reporting. A manual and a practical toolkit have been produced on reporting trafficking cases, as well as two media monitoring reports for 2014 and 2015, on print and electronic media. A competition was held in 2014, in collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, for the best articles on human trafficking in the national media. The awarded journalists were invited to become part of a global training in Kiev, Ukraine in November 2015.

A review of the programme stated that UN Women's work with the media in Albania has resulted in increased gender-sensitive media reporting on trafficked women and girls, as well as in increased community sensitivity to women and girls facing and surviving trafficking, as a result of campaigns and workshops reaching 20,000 citizens nationwide.

For more information, see: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2016/3/breaking-the-cycle-of-human-trafficking-in-albania>

### Just the Women (United Kingdom)

In the UK, a group of four women's organizations worked together in 2012 to monitor all national newspapers' portrayal of women and VAWG over a two-week period. Workers and volunteers read every page of every national newspaper for two weeks and noted the quantity and quality of any coverage related to VAWG, including the reporting of crime stories, political stories, feature stories and interviews, and even elements of advertising used alongside these articles. A summary report was produced which found: (1) minimising and sensationalising coverage of VAWG, and (2) racist-sexist portrayals of women in multiple media outlets, at a time when media regulation was under scrutiny. The results formed a key part of the response of women's organizations to the debate about press reform in the UK. The report was used to engage with journalists, editors, politicians and the wider public, and to create broader, ongoing conversations about how media portrayals contribute to 'permission-giving' for VAWG. It was regularly cited by media commentators and politicians and influenced the work of other women's groups challenging media portrayals of VAWG.

For more information, see: <http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Just-the-Women-Nov-2012.pdf>

Indicators are specific, observable and measurable characteristics that can be used to show changes or progress in an initiative. For media organizations, global indicators have been advanced for assessing performance on gender equality and for the safety of journalists. These indicators can be used and

contextualized for various national settings to conduct research and determine the baseline or country context against various areas of concern. Tracking data against these indicators over time, shows if interventions are having a positive impact on equality and safety.

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## UNESCO Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media (GSIM)

In 2012, UNESCO, in cooperation with the International Federation of Journalists and other partners launched a global framework of gender-sensitive indicators to guide the media in assessing its performance on gender equality. The indicators comprise critical areas of concern, including:

- Fostering Gender Equality within Media Organizations
  - o Gender balance at decision-making level
  - o Gender equality in work and work conditions
  - o Gender equality in unions, associations, clubs and organizations of journalists, other media professionals and media self-regulatory bodies
  - o Media organizations promote ethical codes and policies in favour of gender equality in media content
  - o Gender balance in education and training
- Gender Portrayal in Media Content
  - o Gender portrayal in news and current affairs
  - o Gender portrayal in advertising

Specific indicators on violence against women include:

- Use of non-judgmental language or victim/survivor-blaming for acts of VAW, as well as distinguishing between consensual sexual activity and criminal acts
- Use of the term ‘survivor’ rather than ‘victim’ unless the violence-affected woman or girl uses the latter term or has not survived.
- Identification of women and girls affected by gender-based violence as sources of information, with their evident consent.
- Percentage of stories that: 1) invade privacy and/or 2) denigrate dignity, of the victim/survivor of violence.
- Use of background information and statistics to present gender-based violence as a societal problem rather than as an individual, personal tragedy.
- Inclusion of local contact information for support organizations and services available for victims/survivors of violence.
- Proportion of time or space and prominence given to stories on gender-based violence in relation to other stories.

To see the full list of indicators, visit: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/gender-sensitive-indicators-for-media-framework-of-indicators-to-gauge-gender-sensitivity-in-media-operations-and-content/>



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## UNESCO Journalists' Safety Indicators

### International level Indicator Categories

- UN organizations promote journalists' safety issues at the international level
- International and regional intergovernmental organizations promote journalists' safety issues at the international level
- International Non-governmental Organizations (INGOs) promote journalists' safety issues at the international level

### National level Indicator Categories

- General indicators
- State institutions and political actors
- Civil society organizations and academia
- Media actors and intermediaries
- UN and other international organizations

To see the full list of indicators and the accompanying implementation guidebook, visit: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/safety-of-journalists/journalists-safety-indicators>

Monitoring implementation of resolutions is another entry point for holding government and media houses accountable. For example, the Global Network Defending and Promoting Freedom of Expression (IFEX) provides practical suggestions for civil society and partners on how to engage with human rights bodies to strengthen implementation of commitments.

➔ [https://ifex.org/campaign\\_toolkit/build\\_it/](https://ifex.org/campaign_toolkit/build_it/)

## 4.3 Media and Information Literacy (MIL)

Empowerment of women and girls (and men and boys) through media and information literacy is critical in fostering equitable access to information and knowledge and providing the skills needed to navigate and engage with the content being disseminated through various channels (print, audio, video, digital, etc.). This is especially important given the volume of information and images, including, but not limited to, explicitly harmful content (e.g. pornography, misogynistic, degrading and violent material) that is easily accessible through the internet and on mobile devices.

This is particularly worrying for young people, given the detrimental impacts repeated exposure has on the brain during this critical developmental stage.

## Pornography, the Internet and Young People (Australia)

Researchers in Australia surveyed 692 youth ages 13-16 to better understand their use of the internet and exposure to harmful material. Alarming, it was found that over 90% of the surveyed boys and 60% of girls in this age group had seen pornography online. Complementary research on the industry itself, found that the nature of pornography that youth were exposed to had changed from years past, with scenes that included verbal (48%) and physical (88%) aggression, the latter characterized by slapping, gagging and choking. In 94% of cases, these acts of aggression were directed at female performers. The researchers stated that 30% of all internet traffic is porn-related with no differentiation between those who had restricted access compared to those with unrestricted access, indicating that exposure to this harmful material is mainstream.

Exposure to pornography has a number of detrimental effects on youth who are at a critical developmental stage and whose neurological connections in the brain are still being formed. Pornography conveys a number of problematic messages that impact on the knowledge, expectations and behaviours of young people. These include:

- Distorted views of the relationship between intimacy and sex.
- Eroticization of violence against women.
- Notions that consent is not necessary or can be obtained with perseverance.
- Distorted views of what the average body/body parts look like.
- Fabricated and exaggerated expressions of pleasure during violent, humiliating and degrading acts.
- Discriminatory portrayals of gender and race.

In 2016, the Department of Social Services engaged the Australian Institute of Family Studies to consolidate the research and evidence-base on the effects of pornography on children and young people to articulate the impacts and recommend strategies for addressing the problem. The report acknowledged that to address the issue comprehensively, it is important to situate it within a broader framework of primary prevention and the sexual safety and well-being of children and young people that is based on child development, sexual crime prevention, prevention education, and legal and regulatory measures. The specific strategies entail:

- legal and regulatory avenues to existing legislation regarding online pornography
- education for children and young people; and
- education and resources for teachers and parents.

For detailed information related to the context, impacts and approaches, see: <http://www.itstimewetalked.com.au/> and <https://aifs.gov.au/publications/effects-pornography-children-and-young-people/export>

Sources: A Bridges, R Wosnitzer, E Scharrer, C Sun & R Liberman. 2010. Aggression and Sexual Behaviour in Best-selling Pornography Videos: A Content Analysis Update. *Violence against Women*, vol. 16, no. 10; MJ Fleming, S Greentree, D Cocotti-Muller, K A Elias & S Morrison. 2006. Safety in cyberspace: Adolescents safety and exposure online. *Youth and Society*, vol. 38, no. 2.; S Anthony. 2012. Just How Big Are Porn Sites? <http://www.extremetech.com>; It's time to Talk. 2014. <http://www.itstimewetalked.com.au/>

“The constant exposure of populations to media presents an educational challenge, which has increased in the electronic and digital age. Evaluating information sources requires skills and critical thinking and is an educational responsibility the importance of which is often underestimated. Separating fact from opinion, evaluating text and image for bias, and constructing

and deconstructing a text based on principles of logic are teachable skills. Media literacy instruction is not widely recognized for its importance as an aspect of civic and peace education and therefore few instructional programs have been developed as part of basic modern education” (UNAOC, No Date).

### Social learning with MIL CLICKS a social media innovation on media and information literacy

A girl decided to shut down her Instagram page because random strangers keep leaving insulting comments under her photos. Another girl feels ridiculed and bullied while scrolling down her Facebook timeline and seeing her friend shares a meme mocking girls who appear gender-nonconforming. The advent of social media made these stories commonplace. According to a survey conducted by Opinium for the children’s charity Plan International UK, involving 1,002 young people aged between 11 and 18, half of UK girls are bullied on social media (The Guardian, 2017).

Social media has become a central station where images full of gender stereotypes, sexist comments, misogynist posts, and other types of inappropriate gender-related speech accumulate and are extremely easy to access and share. Women and girls are therefore frequently exposed to online harassment and cyber bullying on social media. These occurrences sometimes even lead to offline violence and discrimination, such as aggressions in schools and unequal treatment at workplaces. This situation is particularly challenging for young girls who are still shaping their worldviews and learning about gender roles. Hence, it is critical to equip them with media and information literacy competencies, in order that they know how to respond to online hate, what content is appropriate to share and what is not, how to optimize their social media settings in order to avoid undesired content and harassment etc.

In early 2017, MIL CLICKS was brought to the world in this context as a powerful response, aiming to empower social media users, especially youth, with MIL competencies. It is a way for people to acquire MIL knowledge competencies in their normal day-to-day use of the Internet and social media and to engage in peer education in an atmosphere of browsing, playing, connecting, sharing, and socializing. It was launched by UNESCO, with the support of Saudi Arabia, European Commission, and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA).

MIL CLICKS develops and shares various forms of educational resources, including research findings, best practices, useful tools and practical tips. Through periodical thematic campaigns, MIL CLICKS tackles many MIL-related issues that increasingly concern our citizens, including “identify and countering gender stereotypes with MIL”. The MIL CLICKers, those who embrace the values and principles of MIL CLICKS and are learning MIL with MIL CLICKS, are strong and assertive on social media while confronted with hate, intolerance, and violence when their gender role or that of others is concerned. They know how to act and voice their opinion in a place often hostile and aggressive for women and girls.

MIL CLICKS is currently available on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Learn more about MIL CLICKS and the MIL CLICKers Pact: <https://en.unesco.org/milclicks>.

Imparting media and information literacy competencies to women/girls and men/boys enables them to be critical about and challenge material they are

consuming as it relates to gender, power, stereotypes, violence, sexuality, discrimination and other ideas that permeate social structures and are often transmitted through media on and off line. The below table outlines the core competencies for media and information literacy along with the expected benefits.



**DO YOU USE YOUR MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY (MIL) SKILLS FOR DIALOGUE ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY? PLAY THIS "BOARD" GAME AND CHECK YOUR SCORES!**



MIL COMPETENCIES	I DO THE FOLLOWING FOR GENDER EQUALITY:			ADD UP YOUR SCORES
Recognize and articulate a need for information and media	I recognize that there should be information about women/girls and men/boys in the media, books and in history	6 pts	Extract and organize information and media content	6 pts
	I call for data about men and women in reports about development such as unemployment, access to information etc.		Synthesize or operate on the ideas abstracted from content	
Understand the role and functions of media and other information providers in democratic societies	I understand and recognize the power media and other information providers (OIP), to offer counterbalances or to reinforce gender inequalities.	9 pts	Ethically use information based on rights and duties	15 pts
	I call on the media and other information providers to make gender inequalities and understandable to the public.			
Understand the conditions under which those functions can be fulfilled	I advocate for media freedom, the right of women and men of all ages to express themselves freely.	12 pts	Be able to apply ICT skills in order to process information and produce user-generated content	12 pts
	I search for and retrieve gender-related information.			
Locate and access relevant information	I use access to information laws to obtain government held information about equal treatment of women.	9 pts	Engage with media and OIP, for self-expression, dialogue, civic engagement, gender equality and against all forms of inequalities etc.	16 pts
	Critically evaluate information and the content of media and OIP, in terms of authority, credibility and current purpose and potential risks			
Critically evaluate information and the content of media and OIP, in terms of authority, credibility and current purpose and potential risks	I analyze media messages and information to reveal links between sexism, gender stereotypes.	15 pts	I access and participate in mainstream media, community media, and the Internet to advocate for gender equality in and through media and women's participation in democracy and culture.	16 pts
	I am critical of information online and monitor my behavior to avoid potential risks.			

**Total score: 100 points**  
Your rating based on scores you achieved:

SCORE	Rating	Description
30 points and under	☆☆☆☆	You are getting started! Now keep going, play again in three months!
31-50 points	☆☆☆☆	You are progressing well! Now shoot for higher scores, play again in three months.
51-70 points	☆☆☆☆	High performance! You are really engaged in dialogue on gender equality through MIL. So, why not become an expert or full practitioner? Play again.
71 points and over	☆☆☆☆	Excellent performance. You are an expert or full practitioner, now be a peer educator and help others.

Adapted from "Enlisting media and informational literacy for gender equality and women's empowerment" - Alton Grizzle  
Media and Gender: A Scholarly Agenda for the Global Alliance on Media and Gender - UNESCO

Enlisting media and informational literacy for gender equality and women’s empowerment (UNESCO, 2014)

<b>MIL Competencies</b>	<b>Enlisting MIL as an empowerment tool for gender equality</b> will enable all citizens women/girls and men/boys to:
Recognise and articulate a need for information and media	<p>Recognise that there should be information about women/girls and men/boys in the media, books and in history</p> <p>Identify the absence of certain types of information about women. For instance, information about powerful women in history or present day women leaders.</p> <p>Call for sex-disaggregated data in reports about development such as unemployment, access to Internet and mobile phones etc.</p>
Understand the role and functions of media and other information providers in democratic societies	<p>Understand and recognise the power and role of media and other information providers, including those on the Internet, to offer counterbalances or to reinforce gender inequalities.</p> <p>Call on the media and other information providers to make gender inequalities transparent and understandable to the public.</p> <p>Push for diversity in the media and other information providers.</p>
Understand the conditions under which those functions can be fulfilled	<p>Advocate for freedom of expression, freedom of the press and their right to freely express themselves without fear of discrimination on the basis of gender.</p>
Locate and access relevant information	<p>Search for and retrieve gender-related information and knowledge.</p> <p>Use access to information laws to obtain government held information about equal treatment of women and their empowerment.</p> <p>Actively participate in the information life cycle - relating to all forms of development - collecting, processing and disseminating, and for women to participate in the process in separate groups as may be necessary.</p>
Critically, evaluate information and the content of media and other information providers, including those on the Internet in terms of authority, credibility and current purpose and potential risks	<p>Deconstruct media messages and analyse information to reveal links between sexism, gender stereotypes, and the promulgation of masculinistic male-centric status quo<sup>17</sup>.</p> <p>Be more critical of information online and for women and girls to monitor their behaviour online and that of others thereby becoming less vulnerable to potential risks.</p>

Extract and organise information and media content	Based on their own experiences, local realities and research, gather relevant information that points to factors that hinder their empowerment and equality, and to use this information to open dialogue with relevant stakeholders and seek redress.
Synthesise or operate on the ideas abstracted from content	
Ethically and responsibly use information and communicate one's understanding or newly created knowledge to an audience or readership in an appropriate form and medium	While recognising and demanding their right to freely express themselves, accept that with rights comes certain responsibilities; for instance the responsibility not to knowingly disseminate false information or information that instigates hatred and discrimination of another individual or group based on gender etc.
Be able to apply ICT skills in order to process information and produce user-generated content	Acquire agency in producing their own information and media content (on or offline) based on MIL competencies they acquire - content about women, that more closely resembles the realities of women and girls, and that challenges gender stereotypes which have become the norm.  Develop and disseminate social marketing and advocacy content relating to gender equality and based on their own research and community realities.
Engage with media and other information providers, including those on the Internet, for self-expression, freedom of expression, intercultural dialogue, democratic participation, gender equality and advocating against all forms of inequalities	Access and participate in mainstream media (public or private), community media, and the Internet as viable information sources and effective advocates of gender equality in and through media and women's participation in democratic processes and cultural expressions etc.

Resources on media and information literacy with gender equality integrated:

- ➔ UNAOC Media and Information Literacy Clearinghouse - <https://milunesco.unaoc.org/welcome/>
- ➔ UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Site Pages– <https://en.unesco.org/themes/media-and-information-literacy>
- ➔ UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers- <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/>

[publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/media-and-information-literacy-curriculum-for-teachers/](https://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/media-and-information-literacy-curriculum-for-teachers/)

- ➔ UNESCO Media and Policy and Strategy Guidelines, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/media-and-information-literacy-policy-and-strategy-guidelines/>

- ➔ Media Education Foundation Resources - <https://shop.mediaed.org/all-gender--culture-c68.aspx>

## 4.4 Networks

Media portrayals of women have been a concern for women's rights advocates as far back as the 1970s. Today, women's groups remain at the forefront of national advocacy, continuing to raise visibility on gender stereotypes and degrading portrayals of women and girls, unequal terms of employment, the safety of women journalists and human rights defenders and abuse faced by women and girls online. National efforts to promote gender equality in and through the media sector include: monitoring gender equality in media content and company performance, advocacy, training, policy development, media production and awards ceremonies. The expansion of communications tools and interconnectedness has enabled networks to transcend borders, with movements that span entire regions and the formation of vibrant global alliances. In Latin America alone, for example, there are now countless monitoring networks, linked together since 2007 in the Red Latinoamericana de Observatorios de Medios (Red Latinoamericana de Observatorios de Medios Comunicacion 2007).

Social activism and advocacy have been central to promoting gender equality in and through media. Women's rights groups have been raising awareness of the industry's discriminatory portrayal

and treatment of women for decades, pushing for changes within international, regional and national normative/legislative frameworks and advocating for changes within media organizations themselves. These groups have used research and monitoring at global, regional and national levels to regularly assess the performance of media organizations (public and private) against agreed commitments and obligations to promote accountability in this area. The evolving knowledge-base is also used to showcase good practices and to advocate for further development of normative frameworks and their implementation.

Networks of professional media workers invested in gender equality are a valuable mechanism for prevention of violence against women. There are often networks of media workers, for example, within journalists' trade unions with women's or other relevant subcommittees, which can offer a space for media outlets and groups working to prevent VAWG to share expertise and form partnerships.

Mapping stakeholders, relevant groups and their networks can identify other actors who would like to engage with the media VAWG prevention work. This provides opportunities for partnerships in approaching media partners and can generate additional interest for media outlets to engage with a wider network.

### The World Association of Community Radios (AMARC)

The World Association of Radio Community Broadcasters (AMARC) is an international non-governmental organization serving the community radio movement, with almost 4,000 members and associates in 150 countries. AMARC aims to support and contribute to the development of community and participatory radio along with the principles of solidarity and international cooperation. AMARC also hosts the Women's International Network (AMARC-WIN), a large assembly of women's communicators working to ensure women's right to communicate through and within the community radio movement.

In 2015, AMARC partnered with UN Women 20 years after the Beijing Declaration to reflect on the progress or setbacks achieved towards gender equality. AMARC and UN Women produced an international radio campaign related to Beijing+20. The audio series offers a comparative perspective between 1995 and 2015: from where we were, to where we are now, featuring stories from participating producers around the world. The campaign aimed to enhance the understanding of the issues from the Beijing Platform



for Action and to highlight what changed for women since the Conference held in Beijing 20 years ago. Additionally, enhance the understanding of the issues from the Beijing Platform for Action and to highlight what changed for women since the Conference held in Beijing 20 years ago.

AMARC offers comprehensive information on how to use audio, video and print media; how to conduct evaluations; links to media networks in all regions; and a collaboration space for members.

To access the resources, see: <http://www.amarc.org/>

To learn more about the collaboration with UN Women, see: <http://www.amarc.org/unwomen-home>

Apart from organizations and civil society groups working directly on VAWG, other groups to consider for partnerships include:

- Civil society groups and NGOs, including those who represent specific groups (e.g. indigenous women and girls, women living with disabilities, women living with HIV, adolescents, migrants, ethnic/racial minorities, etc.) and organisers of campaigns on human rights and equality.
- Human Rights Commissions and human rights NGOs who may already be organized and are campaigning on human rights and equality.
- Frontline services, such as health, police, justice or shelter providers.
- Local independent activists or campaigners.
- Women's community groups.

- Women journalist networks.
- Independent media producers.
- Media trade unions and/or broadcast/print media associations.
- Media self-regulatory bodies.
- Universities and training institutions focused on gender or media issues.
- Other media professionals.

Groups may be drawn together through an invitation to join a network with long-term ongoing work or may bring specific partners together to undertake a targeted project (e.g. a campaign). The strength of such networks resides in its partnership approach from the outset, which makes collaboration more likely. The media is engaged as a member in this partnership, rather than as a target, alongside groups working to end VAWG.

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## Networking for Better Coverage (Australia)

In 2002 in Australia, with funding from philanthropists and local government began work to address the non-gender sensitive media reporting of family violence. A toolkit for media on how to report family violence was developed with the belief that training media on the issue would address the reporting challenges. It was quickly recognized that a more comprehensive, strategic and collaborative approach was required to address these challenges, including tight deadlines for journalists to report or beliefs that VAWG is either about isolated incidents of abuse or is simply the result of a minority group's culture.

A strategic framework was published in 2007 with a revised and expanded version in 2015, with the support of a cross-sector committee of family violence, sexual assault and community services workers, journalists, academics, police, and government. The framework outlined a range of complementary initiatives, across various sectors, to instigate change in media awareness and in people's ability to provide information on VAWG to media. Initiatives included supporting and training women to speak out to the media on their experiences of violence, training VAWG-sector staff to work more effectively with journalists and editors on the issue, creating newsworthy events on VAWG, and supporting media to examine gender issues within their industry and how these may affect reporting. The framework and its initiatives have been critical tools for creating a more unified 'story' about VAWG for the news media, and Australia has made notable changes in reporting on family violence and violence against women and girls since this work started.

For more information, see: <http://dvvic.org.au/publications/working-with-news-and-social-media-to-prevent-violence-against-women-and-their-children-a-strategic-framework-for-victoria/>

Global alliances on gender and media have emerged in a big way since 2013 to provide platforms for groups to engage in a structured manner on a regular basis towards specific outcomes. These alliances connect hundreds of members from diverse countries. They serve various functions, including: as knowledge hubs from which to draw data and information on media practice and content; house tools and approaches

that can be useful for monitoring, training and advocacy; allow for relationship building and engagement in international processes (e.g. reporting against human rights mechanisms or participation in large-scale events, such as the Commission on the Status of Women) and to undertake joint advocacy; and provide broader visibility for promising practices.

## Illustrative Global Alliances/Compacts/Networks

**Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG):** Launched in 2013 by UNESCO, the independent Alliance works to promote gender equality in and through media. Its objectives include: to pursue gender equality in media systems, structures and content by strengthening international, regional and national cooperation in which all stakeholders work together to drive change globally; to follow-up, build on and systematically monitor implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: 'Women and the Media Diagnosis', and its strategic objectives; and to develop and sustain gender and media priorities within a broad donor, government and development agency funding framework. Over 700 media organizations and individuals working on gender and media have joined. To learn more and join, visit: <https://gamag.net/>

**Global Alliance for Partnerships on Media and Information Literacy (GAPMIL):** Launched in 2013 and hosted by UNESCO, GAPMIL promotes international cooperation to ensure that all citizens have access to media and information competencies. The core objectives are: to articulate key strategic partnerships to drive media and information literacy in development focused on nine major themes (governance, citizenship and freedom of expression; access to information and knowledge for all citizens; development of media, libraries, Internet and other information providers; education, teaching, and learning; linguistic and cultural diversity as well as intercultural and interfaith dialogue; women, children and youth, persons with disabilities and other marginalized social groups; health and wellness; business, industry, employment and sustainable economic development; and agriculture, farming, wildlife protection, forestry and natural resources conservation) and to enable the media and literacy community to speak and address, with a unified voice, certain critical matters, including the need for policies; and further deepening the strategy for media and information literacy to be treated as a composite concept by providing a common platform for stakeholders and associations globally. To learn more and join, visit: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/media-development/media-literacy/global-alliance-for-partnerships-on-media-and-information-literacy/>

**International Association of Women in Radio & Television (IAWRT):** is a global organization formed by women working in electronic and allied media aiming to strengthen initiatives towards ensuring women's views and values are integral part of programming and to advance the impact of women in media by: providing opportunities, sharing strategies and contributing to the development of women in broadcasting by sharing professional and technical knowledge; facilitating unique opportunities to exchange views and share experiences with the world's media professionals; and offering professional skills in training with a focus on gender perspective in programmes, development issues and management. The Association organizes international and regional conferences, workshops and trainings for the professional development of its members; distributes awards of excellence to honour the creativity of women producers of outstanding radio and TV programmes; maintains a scholarship fund to support media studies; and supports productions, training and projects for women in developing countries. To learn more, see: <https://www.iawrt.org/about>

**Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue Network (UNITWIN Cooperation):** Launched in 2011 and hosted by UNESCO, the Media and Information Literacy and Intercultural Dialogue University Network (MILID Network) unites universities involved in media and information literacy (MIL) from around the world. It aims to give impetus to research that can inform policies on MIL and intercultural dialogue. As of February 2019, it has 40 member and associate-member universities from all the regions.

The MILID Network stands firm in advancing gender equality through the lens of MIL. In cooperation with the MILID Network, UNESCO and partners advance collaborative knowledge development and publish the MILID Yearbook annually since 2013. Each year the gender dimensions of MIL and intercultural dialogue is addressed. MIL's as a tool to promote gender equality and human rights was one of the central themes, notably in its 2016 edition "Media and Information Literacy: Reinforcing Human Rights, Countering Radicalization and Extremism", and its 2015 edition "Media and Information Literacy for the Sustainable Development Goals". For more information and to join, visit: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/media-and-information-literacy/gapmil/milidnetwork>.

**Step It Up for Gender Equality Media Compact:** Launched in 2016 by UN Women, the Compact is an alliance of media organizations that have committed to championing women's rights and gender equality issues. The commitments include: highlight women's rights and gender equality issues through editorial articles, features and news coverage; ensure production of high-quality stories with a focus on gender equality and women's rights, with a minimum of two per month; ensure inclusion of women as sources in stories produced, aiming for gender parity, including across diverse subjects such as business, technology, science and engineering; adopt a gender-sensitive code of conduct on reporting; in orientation and training of staff members, ensure guidelines for gender-sensitive reporting; through gender-responsive decision-making, enable equality in the newsrooms by ensuring women journalists are given similar opportunities as their male colleagues and can cover diverse subjects from politics to business, science, sports and technology, while encouraging male journalists to also cover diverse issues, including women's rights and gender equality stories; and ensure women journalists are provided mentors and guidance for career advancement. For more information and to join, visit: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/get-involved/step-it-up/media-compact>

**Unstereotype Alliance:** The Unstereotype Alliance is convened by UN Women and brings together a powerful global coalition of more than 30 industry leaders behind the common goal of eliminating gender bias and harmful gender stereotypes from their advertising. Through developing new standards and tools, the Alliance seeks to transform and unstereotype advertising; to measure these changes; to contribute research, tools and knowledge on how to do this; and to inspire the public to reject harmful stereotypes through communications and outreach. The Alliance is focused on empowering women in all their diversity (race, class, age, ability, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, language, education, etc.) and addressing harmful masculinities to help create a gender equal world. Challenging harmful stereotypes and promoting positive representations of women and girls, as well as men and boys is fundamental to changing attitudes and behaviours. Social norms not only shape perceptions, they shape actions. <http://www.unstereotypealliance.org/en>

**University Twinning and Networking Programme (UniTWIN) on Gender, Media and ICTs:** This Network aims to advance research training and programme development in UNESCO's fields of competence by building university networks and encouraging co-operation between gender, media and ICT scholars. The Network supports education and research on media, information and communication technologies, and specifically aims to promote gender equality and women's participation in and through media on a global scale through: research, education and advocacy; support for training and research on media, information and communication technologies (ICTs); work to stimulate and showcase some of the most significant scholarly contributions to knowledge relating to expanding women's participation in all media platforms. The Network consists of institutions from across regions. To learn more, visit: <http://www.unitwin.net/>

## 4.5 Awards and Recognition

Media awards provide a public platform for recognizing good practices and to celebrate those who are committed to gender equality within their organizations and throughout their media content and initiatives. They can also be an incentive to encourage others to follow suit; raise awareness of what gender and media entail to a broader audience; increase audiences accessing or pursuing better media; and can facilitate

partnership-building/networking. Such media awards exist for gender equality more broadly and for violence against women specifically. They can be found at the national, regional and global level. Though some may be one-time events, those that are conducted regularly (e.g. annually or bi-annually) are better placed to influence media practice. Media awards can range from large-scale events to very local events.

### Examples of Media Awards

**Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity:** Known as “The Oscars” of advertising, Cannes Lions has introduced objectification criteria for all of its juries to consider when judging work submitted to the festival. From 2019, the jury will be encouraged to reflect upon identifying harmful stereotypes within advertising, building on the objectification guidelines introduced in 2017. These guidelines will have a significant influence on content of all kinds and send a strong signal about the importance of reflecting gender equality as criteria for quality across the board. In addition, Cannes Lions introduced its Glass Lion: The Lion for Change; an award which specifically recognizes work that challenges gender biases and shatters stereotypical images of men and women which remain rooted in marketing messages. It is the Festival’s long-held belief that marketing actively shapes culture, and the launch of the award is part of an on-going commitment to positively impact the course of communications.

**#SeeHer Award** for portrayal of strong, complex female characters at the Critics’ Choice Awards recognizes a woman who embodies the values set forth by the #SeeHer movement, launched by the Association of National Advertisers with the goal of accurately portraying all women and girls in media by 2020. <https://seeher.com/>

**Eliminating Violence Against Women Media Awards (Australia):** honour journalists for excellence in their reporting of violence against women and celebrated news media contributions towards the prevention of violence against women. <http://www.evas.org.au/index.php/what-are-the-evas/about-the-evas-media-awards>

**The Laadli Media Awards for Gender Sensitivity (India):** launched in 2007 with later support from UNFPA, these awards honour, recognize and celebrate the efforts of those in media and advertising who highlight pressing gender concerns in India. [http://populationfirst.org/Laadli%20Media%20and%20Advertising%20Awards/M\\_\\_18](http://populationfirst.org/Laadli%20Media%20and%20Advertising%20Awards/M__18)

**Annual Media Award for Excellence in Reporting on HIV and Gender-Based Violence (Papua New Guinea):** UN Women and UNAIDS are supporting media awards in Papua New Guinea which recognize excellent journalism on HIV/AIDS and VAWG and the critical connections between the two. The awards started in 2015 and include support for high quality investigations and photojournalism. Winners in 2016 produced stories, which highlighted transgender women living with HIV and the case of a woman who was murdered after being accused of sorcery. News of the awards has been shared widely, allowing all the nominated and winning entries to find new readers and viewers. <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2016/12/writing-for-change>

**Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Media Awards (United Kingdom):** aim to recognize exemplary reporting on violence against women and girls in print, broadcast and online news, features, comment and documentaries – reporting which explains how and why abuse happens, is respectful of victims and survivors, and which has an impact on public debate. <http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/campaign/ending-violence-against-women-and-girls-media-awards/>

**GEM-TECH Awards (Global):** launched in 2014 by UN Women and ITU, these awards recognize outstanding contributions from women and men in leveraging the potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to promote gender equality. <https://www.itu.int/en/action/women/gem/Pages/default.aspx>

Apart from organised media awards, there are other ways to celebrate and show support for gender-sensitive media representation and handling of content related to violence against women. These include:

- Naming, 'tagging' and publicly sharing good media pieces
- Providing positive feedback to media, when reporting in a gender-sensitive manner, either for individual pieces and/or at the end of the month or year as a regular conversation-provoking activity
- Providing positive commentary or indicating "like" on social media
- Sending written correspondence or email to the producers
- Posting on community notice boards or in community centres

# 5. PROMOTING POSITIVE INSTITUTIONAL APPROACHES

Media organizations, like any entity or institution can make a substantial contribution to gender equality, non-discrimination and non-violence by addressing internal structures, operations and practices that adhere to, reflect and promote these values. This entails building capacity within the organization through a range of strategies. Where greater gender parity exists within media organizations, it has been found that media content reflects a more balanced and diverse view of women (European Parliament 2018). In this regard, a more gender-equitable organization is both an important accomplishment on its own right, in addition to being an important pathway of influence in the content that shapes social norms, prejudices and stereotypes.

Capacity-building requires a 'whole-of-organization' approach that considers gender equality and non-discrimination throughout the systems, structures, staffing and content of media organizations. It entails undertaking a gender assessment or audit of the organization; the development and/or revision of policies and standards; ensuring gender parity in staffing and decision-making mechanisms; ongoing training for media personnel; and ensuring the safety and security of women journalists and human rights defenders who are at increased risk of attack for challenging social norms related to gender, identity and power dynamics. This requires having a long-term vision with ongoing engagement.

## 5.1 Mapping and Assessment

A preliminary step to working with the media is conducting a mapping of the various media (institutions and outlets) that exist. The mapping would help to identify the channels (e.g. print, television, radio, online and etc.) that are available; their uptake and reach by various segments of the population; their philosophy or approach to information and communication; the characteristics of the content that is developed and disseminated; their organizational functions and structures (e.g. national newspaper v.

internet intermediary); the legal frameworks within which they operate (e.g. regulatory frameworks for public versus private); and the existing level of leadership and commitment to gender equality within the organization.

The mapping will help identify which media partners to approach and for which purpose(s): supporting institutional change, bringing together a network, campaigning for a specific outcome (e.g. legal or policy change; as part of community mobilization for social norms change, etc.). Media organizations that will be targeted for whole of organization transformation, must undergo a thorough internal gender assessment or audit. The audit will determine the strengths, gaps, challenges and opportunities that exist throughout the organization across policies, systems and practices. This information collected then serves as an established baseline highlighting functional structures and positive practices, as well as gaps and areas in need of improvement, against which progress can be tracked over time (European Institute for Gender Equality Gender Audit).

## Gender in Education Media Audit (Southern Africa)

Gender Links for Equality and Justice is an NGO based in South Africa that is a founding member of the UNESCO Global Alliance for Media and Gender. The organization has conducted vast research for catalytic programming across 14 countries in Southern Africa, assessing progress on gender in and through the media. It has produced several reports related to gender content in media, employment of women in the sector, and media literacy for gender. The organization also engages in advocacy, capacity building, media literacy and networking. In 2010, the organization conducted an audit of media in education programmes to understand how gender is mainstreamed in journalism and media education and training. As a result the organization has established centres of excellence for gender and media in 13 countries, which include work with 100 local councils to integrate gender through policy, capacity building and monitoring and evaluation to change their structures and the content and practices of their work. Media institutions are supported to mainstream gender in curriculum and to undertake gender and media research.

For more information on Gender and Media, see: <http://genderlinks.org.za/what-we-do/media/research/>

For more information on Gender and Media Audits, see: <http://genderlinks.org.za/what-we-do/media/research/gender-in-media-education-audit/>

Tools for undertaking a gender audit, assessment or analysis:

➔ Women's Empowerment Principles GAPS Analysis Tool - <https://weps-gapanalysis.org/>

➔ A manual for gender audit facilitators: The ILO participatory gender audit methodology (2nd Edition) - [http://www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/WCMS\\_187411/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/WCMS_187411/lang--en/index.htm)

➔ The Gender Audit Handbook A Tool for Organizational Self-Assessment and Transformation - <https://www.interaction.org/sites/default/files/Gender%20Audit%20Handbook%202010%20Copy.pdf>

➔ UNESCO's Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media (GSIM) - <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/gender-sensitive-indicators-for-media-framework-of-indicators-to-gauge-gender-sensitivity-in-media-operations-and-content/>



## 5.2 Gender Parity

The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (1979) requires Member States to “take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights” (CEDAW Article 11). The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) recognized that women in power and decision-making is a key condition for women’s empowerment and that it is critical “to increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication” (Beijing Platform for Action). Though achieving gender parity (equal numbers of men and women) in the staffing structures and decision-making bodies of media organizations is ideal, a thirty per cent threshold represents a critical mass for influence.

Where women’s representation within media has been tracked, progress has proven to be very slow with little movement over time. For example, global tracking of women’s representation as reporters and presenters in news media shows little to no progress in over a decade. Women reporting stories in newspapers, television and radio newscasts have held steady at 37 per cent (Global Media Monitoring Project 2015). In a study surveying over 500 media companies across the globe, it was found that women held only 27 per cent of the top management positions (International Women’s Media Foundation 2011). The numbers in ICT firms is even lower, with women only comprising 11 per cent of information security professionals and 20% and less of the tech workforce across some of the top technology and social media firms (ISC and WEF 2016). The European Women’s Audiovisual Network found that while women represent almost half of directors graduating from film schools, the overall proportion of female directors working in the industry is less than one-quarter (European Parliament 2018). The Geena Davis Institute has undertaken a vast body of research on women in entertainment media. Some of its findings from studies undertaken since 2010 include (Geena Davis Institute):

- Of the top grossing films, only 17% had a female lead.
- Male characters received two times the amount of screen time as female characters.
- Male characters spoke two times as often as female characters in the top box office movies.
- Male characters have dominated nearly three-quarters of speaking parts in children’s entertainment, and 83% of film and TV narrators are male.
- In film, only 7% of directors, 13% of writers, and 20% of producers are female. (This is for film and TV)
- In Advertising and specifically the creative industry, research conducted by Free the Bid, the 3% Movement and the Young Creative Council showed:
  - o In 2008, just 3.6% of the world’s creative directors were female. In 2016, that number tripled to 11% .
  - o Only 11.6% of women in the creative industry are copywriters and 9.6% are art directors.
  - o Less than 7% of all film directors are women and only 9% of commercials are directed by women.
  - o 70% of young female creatives say they have never worked with a female creative director or executive creative director.
  - o 70% of young female creatives are working in a 75% male-dominated department.
  - o 60% of young females say they believe advertising is a career that doesn’t support young women.

Increasing women’s participation in the communications sector requires dedicated attention in recruitment processes, using strategies such as: affirmative action, quotas, desirable salaries (that reflect equal pay for equal work) and benefits, and research and training that can address unconscious bias and incorrect perceptions around hiring practices of men and women

with equal skills. Retention of women staff involves opportunities for career development and advancement; mentoring, coaching and sponsoring women for promotion; respect for women's decision-making, inputs, contributions and leadership styles; flexible working arrangements and parental leave policies that both acknowledge the persisting social and cultural factors that place a disproportionate responsibility on

women for caretaking, but facilitate greater involvement of men in this regard; and recognition of the sexual and gender-based nature of violence (including harassment) that women face in the workplace with appropriate measures to prevent it and provide appropriate recourse mechanisms and remedies for those who have suffered it with accountability for those who have perpetrated it (McKinsey, 2015).

## Women's Economic Empowerment Principles

The Women's Empowerment Principles established by UN Women and the UN Global Compact provide a concrete set of recommendations to help the private sector focus on key elements integral to promoting gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community. Enhancing openness and inclusion throughout corporate policies and operations requires techniques, tools and practices that bring results. The Women's Empowerment Principles, forged through an international multi-stakeholder consultative process, provide a "gender lens" through which business can analyze current initiatives, benchmarks and reporting practices. Informed by real-life business practices, the Principles help companies tailor existing policies and practices – or establish needed new ones – to realize women's empowerment.

The Principles:

- Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality.
- Treat all women and men fairly at work - respect and support human rights and non-discrimination.
- Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers.
- Promote education, training and professional development for women.
- Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women.
- Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy.
- Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality.

➔ See the Women's Empowerment Principles Portal and Resources at: <http://www.empowerwomen.org/WEPS>.

Elements to consider in achieving gender balance among decision makers within media organizations, include (UNESCO, 2012):

- Proportion of women in ownership, business management and board positions.
- Proportion of women holding leadership positions within media (editors-in-chief, editors, heads of department, heads of desks).
- Cyclical review and reporting on actions to ensure gender balance at decision-making levels.
- Effective equal opportunity policies with comprehensive implementing measures, targets, timeline and monitoring mechanisms.
- Equal opportunity policies developed within media houses in a cooperative manner and with endorsement of staff.

- Measures/policies adopted for the removal of all obstacles to equal opportunities and for the enhancement of women’s work. (e.g. company nurseries, part-time employment; shared and transparent selection criteria to reach management level, etc.).
- Specific budget to support comprehensive equal opportunity policies.
- Existence of specific quota system for representation of women in decision-making.
- Existence of affirmative actions and affirmative action committees to increase female presence in media at all levels of the organizational structure.
- Proportion of job announcements made in a transparent method, accessible to everyone in the workplace.
- Publicity of policies on gender balance in decision-making.
- Efforts to assess awareness of equal opportunities policies.
- Reporting of performance results in relation to implementation of equal opportunities policies.

*Resources:*

- ➔ UNESCO Gender Sensitive Indicators for Media Guide: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000217831>
- ➔ Gender Equality in Media: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/media-diversity-and-gender-equality>
- ➔ Advancing Gender Equality in Media Industries: <https://www.agemi-eu.org/>

### 5.3 Policies, Protocols and Codes of Conduct

Policies, professional guidelines and protocols are critical in guiding the practices within a media organization. They set the operational expectations and codes of conduct for staff and their professional engagements. “Gender-focussed media codes of ethics can potentially institutionalise a different kind of practice that is cognisant about and responsive to gender concerns. The instruments are a first step towards professionalising practice from a gender-ethics perspective” (WACC and IFJ 2012). While certain policies may be more commonplace, such as publishing and editorial policies that cover gender and gender-based violence, others are only beginning to emerge. In a global survey undertaken by the International Federation of Journalists, it was found that only 26% of workplaces had a policy covering gender-based violence and sexual harassment (IFJ).

Global research found that policies on gender for media exist across an array of countries at the ‘macro industry’ or ‘association level’, but that this did not translate to implementable codes and guidelines at the practitioner level. The same research found that where regulations do exist, mechanisms for compliance are lacking due to non-enforcement and no recourse (e.g. redress or corrective action) (WACC and IFJ 2012). These findings indicate that in addition to having strong policies in place, it is important to employ complementary strategies (such as training and accountability mechanisms) to ensure they are effectively implemented.

### Sexual Harassment and Domestic Violence Policies

Policies on harassment and violence must be gender-responsive and embedded in the reality of the world of work. This requires thinking beyond the immediate workplace to ‘spaces’ related to the workplace, such as, offsite work and social engagements, travel to and from the workplace, and exchanges that take place via technology (e.g. computers and mobile phones). It also requires understanding and including other forms of violence (e.g. domestic violence/intimate

partner violence/family violence) that may be affecting employees which impact the workplace. Policies must acknowledge the gender-based nature of the violence committed against women, allowing prevention and responses to tackle the power dynamics and imbalances that allow it to occur. Policies must also reflect the society and staff composition, recognizing that women, especially those who face multiple forms of discrimination based on their identities (e.g. LGBTI women, immigrant women, women from ethnic and racial minorities, etc.) will experience and be affected by violence and harassment differently. Special considerations and practices need to be put in place also for the growing numbers of personnel hired as contractors or freelancers and who may not be considered staff or employees, as these individuals would be at increased risk of experiencing sexual harassment.

**Sexual harassment policies should broadly include:**

- a policy statement expressing zero tolerance for harassment and abuse;
- clear and comprehensive definitions based on unwelcomed behaviours that cover, verbal, non-verbal and physical interaction;
- examples of prohibited behaviour;
- prevention measures, including accountability of leaders and engagement/training on gender, discrimination, harassment and violence;
- a detailed articulation of the reporting (e.g. confidentiality, protection against retaliation) and complaints procedures available (e.g. formal and informal);
- external legal and judicial mechanisms that are available in the country;
- the sanctions and disciplinary measures that can be levied against perpetrators;
- the support that will be provided to survivors by the organization and through referrals;
- an explanation of how the policy will be implemented, monitored and revised; and

- links to other related policies (e.g. retaliation, family leave, etc.) and supporting materials.

**Domestic violence policies (often within collective agreements) should broadly include:**

- clear and comprehensive definitions;
- an explanation of the national prevalence and consequences (especially as they impact the workplace and co-workers);
- the detailed plan or steps that will be taken to raise-awareness within the organization on various aspects of the issue and the policy; specific training of managers, security and health focal points related to safety planning and referrals;
- identification of key resource staff and their roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis the policy;
- the types of provision, support and safety that the organization will provide affected staff members; an explanation of how the policy will be implemented, monitored and revised;
- and links to other related policies (e.g. family leave) and supporting materials.

For illustrative guides and policies on violence and harassment, see:

- ➔ Model Policy on Sexual Harassment (United Nations): <https://www.unsceb.org/content/addressing-sexual-harassment-within-organizations-un-system>
- ➔ Towards an end to sexual harassment: The urgency and nature of change in the era of #MeToo: <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2018/towards-an-end-to-sexual-harassment-en.pdf?la=en&vs=4236>
- ➔ Domestic Violence Policies for UNI Affiliated Unions: [http://en.breakingthecircle.org/descargas/en/man/violencepolicies\\_en.pdf](http://en.breakingthecircle.org/descargas/en/man/violencepolicies_en.pdf)

## The New Zealand Public Service Association (PSA) on Family Violence at Work

PSA is New Zealand's largest union for workers in central government, state-owned enterprises, local councils, health boards and community groups. It runs an active campaign on family violence at work recognizing the grave consequences that domestic violence has in the workplace. It provides advice for victims, perpetrators, colleagues/co-workers, delegates and organizers and employers. PSA has also developed a sample Family Violence Clause for employers (excerpts below):

Family violence may impact on an employee's attendance or performance at work.... The employer will support staff experiencing family violence. This support includes: up to 10 days of paid leave in any calendar year to be used for medical appointments, legal proceedings and other activities related to family violence. This leave is in addition to existing leave entitlements and may be taken as consecutive or single days or as a fraction of a day and can be taken without prior approval; support safety planning and avoidance of harassing contact, the employer will approve any reasonable request from an employee for changes to their span or pattern of working hours, location of work or duties, a change to their work telephone number or email address, and any other appropriate measure including those available under existing provision for flexible work arrangements. An Employee who supports a person experiencing family violence may take domestic leave to accompany them to court, to hospital, or to mind the children. All personal information concerning family violence will be kept confidential and will not be kept on the employee's personnel file without their agreement. Proof of family violence may be requested and can be in the agreed form of a document from the police, a health professional or a family violence support service.

For more information, see: [https://www.psa.org.nz/search/results?Search=family+violence&action\\_results=Go](https://www.psa.org.nz/search/results?Search=family+violence&action_results=Go)

## Gender Equality and Diversity Policies

Gender equality and diversity policies demonstrate a workplace's commitment to improving measurable gender equality outcomes with respect to employee representation, value, safety and recognition. Within these overarching categories, policies can address: recruitment and advancement processes to ensure equality between women and men; equal pay for equal work; recognition and rewards that are unbiased and based on contribution and performance; non-discriminatory approaches to care and family responsibilities; and genuine access to various positions and levels of leadership by removing gender-based barriers.

- For an example of a workplace gender equality policy, see: <https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/Characteristics-of-a-Gender-Equality-policy.pdf>

The unequal distribution of caring responsibilities (i.e. for children, sick family members, elderly and others) between men and women is a major driver of inequality in employment. Weak or lacking policies and broader measures to support women (who continue to bear the bulk of caring responsibilities) result in departures from the workplace, reductions in hours and interrupted opportunities for career development and advancement (UN HLP, 2017). Following extensive research and consultation, The European Commission has outlined *An Initiative to Support Work-Life Balance for Working Parents and Carers* to address this issue with recommendations that include (European Commission 2017):

- Improving the design and gender-balanced take-up of family-related leaves and flexible working arrangements.
- Improving the quality, affordability and access to childcare and long-term care.

- Addressing economic disincentives for parents and caregivers to work.

Elements to advance gender equality in work and working conditions, include (UNESCO, 2012):

- Existence of gender desk or gender mainstreaming officer(s) for monitoring and evaluation of gender equality in the workplace.
- Awareness among staff members that the gender desk or gender mainstreaming officer(s) exists to address concerns of both women and men.
- Existence of systems for monitoring and evaluation of gender equality in the workplace. Proportions of women and men working in media organization sections (eg. according to newsroom and production) and at all levels (junior, middle and top management).
- Cyclical review and reporting on actions to increase the percentage of women working in the newsroom.
- Existence of media policies securing equal treatment with respect to general working conditions/environment and rights including wages and promotion opportunities.
- Cyclical reviews and reporting on equal wages and promotion rates of women and men.
- Proportions of women and men promoted annually and offered wage increases as per established policies.
- Equal conditions of employment and benefits, including pension schemes.
- Equal and transparent recruitment practices (e.g. all interview panels should be gender balanced, gender officer involved in the recruitment process/programme of the organization at some point).
- Existence of collective agreement securing equal treatment between women and men.

- Alignment of all gender equality related policies to relevant articles of CEDAW such as Article 2, 4, 10, 11, etc.

- Monitoring for gender-responsive budgeting with participation of women.
- Existence of human resources policies on gender including on equal treatment.
- Publicity of human resources policies on gender.
- Media organizations facilitate the dissemination/availability of labour legislation concerning equal treatment of women and men to their staff members.
- Proportions of men and women staff members with part-time contracts.
- Proportions of men and women with fixed-term contracts.
- Proportions of men and women producing or reporting various news subjects (e.g. sports, politics and armed conflicts).
- Specific actions to increase percentage of women who produce or report various news subjects where this is low (e.g. quotas).
- Cyclical review and reporting on actions to increase women's involvement (e.g. producing or reporting) in all news subjects.

Resource:

- ➔ UNESCO Gender Sensitive Indicators for Media Guide: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000217831>

## Editorial and Publishing Policies

Policies related to content gathering, development and dissemination can provide journalists, broadcasters and other media personnel with specific principles, professional guidelines and rules or codes of conduct

that are expected and must be complied with in their everyday work. These may include blocking and reporting mechanisms to content controls. For social media, such frameworks are beginning to emerge as Internet

intermediaries and other ICT-related firms have been engaging with gender and human rights organizations to advance their policies and responses to online violence.

### BBC Editorial Guidelines

The BBC has produced extensive guidelines for its media practitioners. The guidelines clearly state the media organization's principles and how the guidelines should be used. They cover a number of broad areas, including:

- Accuracy
- Impartiality
- Harm and Offence (includes specific sections on violence, sex, intimidation and humiliation and portrayals)
- Fairness, Contributors and Consent
- Privacy
- Reporting Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Children and Young People as Contributors
- Politics, Public Policy and Polls
- War, Terror and Emergencies
- Religion
- Re-Use and Revisioning
- Editorial Integrity and Independence from External Interests
- Conflicts of Interest
- External Relationships and Funding
- Interacting with our Audiences
- The Law (includes specific sections on victims, offenders, privacy, safety)
- Accountability

The guidelines further provide extensive detail related to engaging with victims and offenders and reporting on violence against women and children throughout the sections presented above.

See the full guidelines: [http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/pdfs/Editorial\\_Guidelines\\_in\\_full.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/pdfs/Editorial_Guidelines_in_full.pdf)

Practitioners may consider working with media houses to support enhancement of these principles and rules to ensure a more gender sensitive and rights-based approach to their communications. Where rights already exist (for example, to be treated fairly and to not be discriminated against), they can be used to advocate for compliance or better adherence when they have been contravened. This could involve lodging formal complaints through available media accountability mechanisms and/or publicising them more broadly to raise awareness among the public.

Elements for Media organizations to promote ethical codes/editorial policies in favour of gender equality in media content, include (UNESCO, 2012):

- Media organizations promote ethical codes/editorial policies in favour of gender equality in media content.
- Existence of (written) gender policy with specific reference to media practices (such as sourcing).
- Existence of (written) code (of ethics) that includes reference to gender representation.
- Existence of resources for gender-sensitive reporting such as stylebook/manual, directory of women experts in different subject areas, roster of individuals or agencies that can provide a gender angle or perspective on different subjects, etc., to help journalists and other creative/technical staff avoid sexism and adopt gender-sensitivity as essential ingredients of professional practice.
- Professional staff, including editors, made aware of and accept gender/diversity policy, gender and diversity sensitive code of ethics and stylebook/manual.
- Managerial personnel, including board members and senior managers, made aware of and accept gender/diversity policy, gender and diversity sensitive code of ethics.
- Organization/facilitation of training programmes/workshops to familiarise professional staff with relevant resources such as gender policy, gender-sensitive code of ethics and stylebook/manual and help them integrate awareness of gender into media practice.
- Existence of periodic/ongoing internal monitoring of media content to gauge effectiveness and assess outcomes of measures such as gender policy, gender-sensitive code of ethics, stylebook/manual, and training programmes/workshops.
- Internal mechanisms to provide the public with a forum for complaints and criticism about gender equality issues in content such as in the form of an ombudsman, readers' editor and/or press council, and to ensure that public is made aware of this mechanism.
- Publicity of gender policy and regular reporting to public regarding institutional responsiveness to complaints or perceptions of performance on gender issues.
- Adherence to gender/policy relating to media content taken into account for performance appraisal and promotion rules.
- Recognition of independent organization (or equivalent) as an external mechanism to provide the public with a forum for complaints and criticism about media content, and to make the public aware of such a mechanism.
- Sex disaggregated participation lists for workshops.
- Promotion of use of sex disaggregated data in journalistic content.
- Review of monitoring data and action on significant problems.



Common Sense Media has produced *Gender Equity Guidelines for Content Creators: Recommendations for developing positive gender representations in movies and on TV* for ages 2-17.

	EARLY CHILDHOOD Age 2-6	MIDDLE CHILDHOOD Age 7-10	EARLY ADOLESCENCE Age 11-13	LATER ADOLESCENCE Age 14-17
What Kids Are Learning About Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn that they are boys or girls (gender identity).</li> <li>• Learn stereotypes about activities, traits, toys, and skills associated with each gender.</li> <li>• Develop and strengthen gender-typed play and activity preferences.</li> <li>• Adhere to rigid stereotypes for themselves and others; intolerant of gender-role transgressions.</li> <li>• Show preferences for playing with children of own gender (gender segregation).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw psychological distinctions between women (e.g., more emotional, affectionate) and men (e.g., more ambitious, aggressive).</li> <li>• Learn associations of occupations and academic subjects with each gender.</li> <li>• Own gender stereotyping becomes more flexible</li> <li>• Gender segregation strengthens.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical changes of puberty create appearance concerns and self-consciousness.</li> <li>• Intensified need to conform to cultural gender norms (gender intensification), coinciding with puberty.</li> <li>• With gender intensification comes renewed intolerance of cross-gender mannerisms and behaviors.</li> <li>• Concerns about dating potential.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender segregation diminishes.</li> <li>• Gender stereotyping again becomes more flexible.</li> <li>• Ideas about careers, occupational roles, and work become salient; can be based in gender stereotypes.</li> <li>• While romantic and dating experiences accumulate, develop an increased need to learn gender-based expectations for how to behave in romantic and sexual situations.</li> <li>• Appearance concerns continue.</li> </ul>
Goals for Media Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show children with diverse attributes to show that there is more than one way to do gender.</li> <li>• Show portrayals that equally value boys and girls, masculine and feminine behaviors and characteristics.</li> <li>• Show children engaged in a range of activities, including counterstereotypical activities.</li> <li>• Show girls and boys interacting in healthy and egalitarian cross-gender friendships.</li> <li>• Show girls and boys of diverse races, body/facial/hair types, clothes.</li> <li>• Use more gender-neutral color palette.</li> <li>• Diversify camera filters, editing techniques, sound effects, and music to avoid segregating the worlds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show role models who participate in both feminine and masculine behaviors and roles without ridicule from other characters (particularly important for male characters).</li> <li>• Show role models who are instrumental (focused on doing things) based on content and context rather than gender (especially important for female characters).</li> <li>• Show role models who are expressive (display emotions and sensitivity) based on content and context rather than gender (especially important for male characters).</li> <li>• Show adult women and men in both traditional and nontraditional occupations, including women as professionals and men as caretakers.</li> <li>• Show nonsexualized female characters (e.g., realistic body types, diverse clothing styles, avoidance of signifiers such as red lips, long lashes, cleavage, unrealistically long legs and flowing hair, etc.) and nonaggressive male characters who resolve conflict without resorting to violence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show messages that emphasize that worth and happiness do not come from appearance (especially important for female characters) or from physical strength (especially important for male characters).</li> <li>• Show role models who participate in dating and relationships in addition to, not in lieu of, hobbies and other instrumental activities.</li> <li>• Show examples of positive, supportive, and fulfilling cross-gender friendships and relationships.</li> <li>• Show role models who display both feminine and masculine mannerisms, behavior, and career/academic interests without ridicule from other characters (particularly important for male characters).</li> <li>• Show examples of fully realized transgender characters who experience both ups and downs and are accepted and supported.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show portrayals that feature boys and men expressing their emotions in constructive ways, having diverse interests (not only sex), and being accepting of nonheterosexual characters.</li> <li>• Show portrayals that steer away from gender-based racial stereotypes.</li> <li>• Show teen characters who have non-genderstereotypical professional aspirations (girls who want to be scientists and boys who want to be nurses) and adult characters who are successful and fulfilled in both traditional and nontraditional professions.</li> <li>• Show diverse dating scripts that are not steeped in gender stereotypes (boys always making the first move, girls being passive and acquiescent).</li> <li>• Show sexual scenarios in which gender is not the driving force behind how sexual partners behave and in which both partners have agency.</li> <li>• Show female characters who set sexual boundaries and who are comfortable voicing their needs.</li> <li>• Show cross-gender relationships that are based on nonromantic or nonsexual friendship and trust.</li> </ul>

Source: [https://www.common sense media.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdfs/2017\\_commonsense\\_watching\\_gender\\_executivesummary\\_o62o\\_1.pdf](https://www.common sense media.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdfs/2017_commonsense_watching_gender_executivesummary_o62o_1.pdf)

Media and ICTs are not gender-neutral – they are shaped by the contexts in which they are developed. Gender divides are a significant and pressing challenge facing the media and Internet ecosystem, ranging from women’s ability to access and benefit from the Internet and other digital technologies to their ability to participate meaningfully in multi-stakeholder processes. Women in many countries face a number of barriers in gaining access to or using the Internet, including ‘concrete’ barriers such as affordability and network rollout, quality and availability; ‘analogue’ barriers such as the availability of relevant content; structural barriers concerned with educational access and attainment, lack of relevant skills and income, occupational status, the effect of online abuse and gender-based violence and threats; and several intersectional challenges, including the

impact of stereotypes and cultural norms on their ability to access and to use the Internet.

Without involving more women in Internet policy-making, which will foster a better understanding of capacity and needs, digital gender inequalities are likely to persist. To bridge the digital gap, it is necessary to build and update media and information literacy skills into education systems, to strengthen users’ ability to define, access, manage, integrate, communicate, evaluate and create information safely and appropriately through digital technologies and networked devices for participation in economic and social life. Platforms, regulators, civil society and the media have major roles to play in combatting gender-abuse online.

### The UNESCO ROAM Principles and Indicators

The ROAM principles which are based on international standards serve as the benchmark for actors to come together for improved alignment to Rights, Openness, Access for all and Multistakeholder practice. The ROAM principles together with its supplementary indicators are filling a standard-setting void at the global and national levels. This instrument entails an evidence-based policy making approach for the Internet. It also reflects the value of multi-stakeholder participation in overseeing any research that uses the indicators in order to assess national Internet spaces and to propose recommendations for improvement to the range of actors (governments, companies, academia, civil society, technical community, etc).

For more information, see: <https://en.unesco.org/internetuniversality/indicators>

#### Resources:

- UNESCO Gender Sensitive Indicators for Media Guide: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000217831>
- Gender-Ethical Journalism and Media House Policy - [http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/learning\\_resource\\_kit/learning-resource-kit-book-2-eng.pdf](http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/learning_resource_kit/learning-resource-kit-book-2-eng.pdf)
- International Press Institute OnTheLine Project- <https://ipi.media/programmes/ontheline/>
- Preventing Online Harassment and Promoting Freedom of Expression Draft IFJ Online Harassment Social Media Policy (for media houses)- [https://samsn.ifj.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/IFJ\\_Online\\_Harassment\\_Social\\_Media\\_Policy.pdf](https://samsn.ifj.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/IFJ_Online_Harassment_Social_Media_Policy.pdf)
- Gender in Media: A Southern Africa Toolkit- [http://portal.unesco.org/en/files/47269/12650028681Gender\\_in\\_Media\\_Training\\_A\\_southern\\_African\\_Toolkit.pdf/Gender%2Bin%2BMedia%2BTraining%2BA%2Bsouthern%2BAfrican%2BToolkit.pdf](http://portal.unesco.org/en/files/47269/12650028681Gender_in_Media_Training_A_southern_African_Toolkit.pdf/Gender%2Bin%2BMedia%2BTraining%2BA%2Bsouthern%2BAfrican%2BToolkit.pdf)

## 5.4 Training

Training is an essential component of any change process and continued professional development. It is key to familiarizing staff with the organizational structures, policies, guidelines and codes that have been put in place – what they contain, how they should be used, where to access them and the mechanisms to pursue recourse if there is transgression of those policies. Transformational processes, the longer-term vision of changing ‘hearts and minds’ is very much anchored on the people working within the institution and changing the institutional culture. This requires going beyond simple sexual harassment or diversity type trainings to explore employees’ own understanding of gender issues discrimination and power dynamics, their experiences, their biases (conscious or unconscious) and how these manifest in their everyday lives and workplaces. Training that gives employees an opportunity to engage more deeply and frequently with material related to sexism, racism, homophobia, ableism and other prejudices or discrimination that exist in any given society, provides individuals with an opportunity to self-reflect and see things through an evolved lens which should improve their understanding, relationships and practice (Bezrukova, K et al

2016). Training that supports individuals to be positive bystanders (i.e. knowing how to interrupt or step-in when inappropriate interactions are taking place and how to approach and support victims) can also be useful when done well and are tailored to the specific work context.

Global research found that journalism training resources to support content development with a gender lens exist and may be good, but that concepts are not well understood when they are translated or applied to media practice (WACC and IFJ 2012). These findings reinforce the need for ongoing professional development that go beyond manuals, online and one-off trainings, to include face-to-face opportunities, mentoring, peer-to-peer support and other strategies to improve and develop practice. Training is only one component of an institutional change process. These trainings must be situated within a broader system of gender-ethical policies, protocols, guides, codes and procedures; improved gender parity at all levels of staffing and in decision-making; and processes to monitor and provide feedback loops that allow for practice to be continually enhanced based on application and experience.

### Training for Journalists on Gender Equality (Georgia)

UN Women and UNFPA have been supporting training courses for journalists on ‘Gender-Sensitive Reporting and Covering Violence against Women in the Media’. The trainings focus on media reporting on VAWG in a non-discriminatory way, building skills to interview victims/survivors and protect their identities, as well as using appropriate language, terminology and sources. The training was followed-up with interactive components involving community mobilisation. Journalists and photographers were paired and asked to develop special reports illustrated with photographs and other graphic material covering issues related to violence against women and girls. These then became the basis for a special installation and interactive exhibition during International Women’s Day in 2014. Within three years, gender equality issues became high on the media agenda in Georgia, including through new media programmes discussing women’s rights and promoting gender equality.

For more information, see: <http://georgia.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/05/stories-of-survivors-portrayed-by-journalists-in-georgia> and <http://georgia.unfpa.org/en/news/sensitive-reporting-training-georgian-journalists>

## Women's Media Watch (Jamaica)

Women's Media Watch (WMW) Jamaica works to bring a gender lens to media across Jamaica. Established in 1987, WMW uses media in inclusive ways to introduce different messages about women's empowerment and leadership. WMW recognizes how media shape social values, perceptions and expectations, driving a holistic approach to addressing gender inequality. For example, one project supported by UN Women, trained young women through the PowHERhouse project, with the skills to use the media to transform gender norms, strategically promote gender equality, and advocate for themselves as leaders. The project challenged negative stereotypes about women in society and harnessed the power of the media to portray women as leaders and change agents.

For information on WMW Jamaica's strategies and achievements visit: <http://wmwja.org/>

### Resources:

- ➔ Tackling Unconscious Bias to Promote Inclusive Business Environments: [https://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues\\_doc/development/Tackle%20Unconscious%20Bias%20to%20Create%20Inclusive%20Business%20Environments.pdf](https://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/development/Tackle%20Unconscious%20Bias%20to%20Create%20Inclusive%20Business%20Environments.pdf)
- ➔ Bystander Intervention Training for Sexual Harassment: <https://www.ihollaback.org/trainings-and-presentations/>
- ➔ Masculinities Training: <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/course/description.php?id=16>
- ➔ Diversity Training Resources: [http://www.primdiversity.com/resources/diversity\\_training.html?Nav=EventsBtn](http://www.primdiversity.com/resources/diversity_training.html?Nav=EventsBtn)

## 5.5 Safety of Women Journalists

Women of all backgrounds and in all countries are at risk of and experience various forms of abuse. Worldwide, one in three women has experienced some form of physical and or sexual violence in her lifetime [and this does not include sexual harassment] (WHO, LSHTM and MRC, 2013). Women who face multiple forms of discrimination based on their race, ethnicity, disability, civil status (e.g. migrant), sexual orientation

and other characteristics may be at higher risk or experience abuse differently. This is also the case for women in professions that challenge social norms, the status quo and power dynamics within society, such as women politicians, human rights defenders and women journalists. Of particular concern, is the alarming levels of online violence that women journalists face on a regular basis, including: trolling, doxing, non-consensual sharing of images, cyber-stalking and threats against them and their families. The violence that they face is a gross violation of their human rights, curtails freedom of speech and expression (principles of democracy and pluralism) and gravely affects their professional engagements and ability to work.

Women journalists are affected by gender-specific safety risks such as sexual harassment, sexual violence and threats of violence (IFJ, 2017; IWWMF, 2018). Recent studies have shown that women journalists are particularly affected by online harassment (Reporters Without Borders, 2018; OSCE, 2016). An analysis of the 70 million comments recorded by the *Guardian* between 1999 and 2016 showed that among the 10 staff journalists who received the highest level of abuse, eight were women, while the two others were black men (The Guardian, 2016).

## International Press Institute (IPI) OnTheLine Project

IPI is a global network of editors, journalists and media executives dedicated to quality, independent journalism by promoting the conditions that enable journalists to fulfil their public functions operating freely and without fear of retaliation.

OnTheLine is IPI's digital media initiative seeking to expose and counter a range of threats against press freedom and free expression in the digital sphere, for example through Twitter, Facebook, email and other platforms. The initiative tracks:

- Threats of violence, including threats of death or other harm.
- Abusive behaviour, including sexual or other harassment, cyber-stalking, smear campaigns, the posting of defamatory or false materials, or other similar conduct.
- Technical interference, including the use of malware or other means to attack content posted or the ability to access it, or hacking of accounts or personal information.
- Improper legal threats, including threats of criminal or civil actions, or improper takedown requests.

The initiative maintains a database of online threats and has produced a number of publications on the topic covering global, as well as, country-level contexts.

For more information and to access the resources, see: <https://ipi.media/programmes/ontheline/>

Harassment against women journalists often takes the form of personal attacks, which tend to not focus on the content of the journalist's reporting, but rather on her character or body parts, and in more extreme cases include threats of sexual violence (OSCE, 2016). In a report published in 2018 by Trollbusters and the International Women's Media Foundation, a survey conducted among 597 women journalists and media workers revealed that nearly two out of three respondents stated that they had been threatened or harassed online at least once. Among them, around 40 percent said they avoided reporting certain stories because of online harassment. Fifty-eight percent of the women journalists surveyed stated that they had already been threatened or harassed in person, while 26% indicated that they had been physically attacked (IWMF, 2018).

In a report from 2017 spanning journalists across 50 countries, it was found that (IFJ, 2017):

- Forty-eight per cent had suffered gender-based violence in their work.

- Forty-four per cent had suffered online abuse.
- Two-thirds did not make a formal complaint.
- Of those who did complain 84.8% did not believe adequate measures had been taken in all cases against the perpetrators. Only 12.3% were satisfied with the outcome.
- Only 26% of workplaces had a policy covering gender-based violence and sexual harassment.

To address the safety and security of journalist, the United Nations Chief Executives Board endorsed a first-ever *UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity* in 2012.<sup>4</sup> The Plan of Action, spearheaded by UNESCO, aims to create a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers, both in conflict and non-conflict situations, and both online and offline, with a view to strengthen

<sup>4</sup> See: <https://en.unesco.org/un-plan-action-safety-journalists>

peace, democracy and development worldwide. Its measures include, among other undertakings, the establishment of a coordinated inter-agency mechanism to handle issues related to the safety of journalists as well as assisting countries to develop legislation and mechanisms favourable to freedom of expression and information, and supporting their efforts to implement existing international rules and principles. A consultation in 2017 to strengthen implementation included additional recommendations for various stakeholders. The Plan highlights the need for a gender-sensitive approach and the implementation strategy includes a number of initiatives to address the safety of women journalists. Among others, it calls on Member States to "take action against discrimination and violence against women journalists, including sexual violence, online and offline, and ensure training and awareness-raising" on these issues. The Outcome document of the 2017 consultation additionally encourages (UNESCO, 2017):

- Member States to put in place gender-sensitive measures that do not prevent them from carrying out their journalistic tasks but which enhance their safety and enable them to fully carry out their profession;
- Media actors to enhance a policy of gender equality inside media institutions, and counter social, cultural and other obstacles to equality between male and female journalists;
- Academia to carry out further research on the gender dimensions of safety.

Moreover, the UN Secretary-General's 2017 report on the Safety of Journalists to the UN General Assembly was focused on the safety of women journalists, illustrating the increasing attention being given to the gender dimensions of safety (UN, 2017).

### Safety of Women Journalists in the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE)

The Representative on Freedom of the Media is an OSCE Institution based in Vienna, Austria. The Representative maintains an early warning function and provides rapid response to serious non-compliance with regard to free media and freedom of expression. The OSCE participating States regard freedom of expression a fundamental and internationally recognized human right and a basic component of a democratic society (an open society with accountable governments). The Representative is mandated to observe media developments in the participating States and to advocate and promote full compliance with the Organization's principles and commitments in respect of freedom of expression and free media.

Under this mandate, the OSCE manages an initiative to address 'Safety of Women Journalists Online.' Following a questionnaire to its members, an expert group meeting and conferences, the following recommendations were set forth (OSCE, 2015):

**Participating States** should: recognize that threats and other forms of online abuse of female journalists and media actors is a direct attack on freedom of expression and freedom of the media; strengthen the capacity of law enforcement agencies to understand international standards on human rights so they can identify real threats to safety and protect individuals in danger, including providing tools and training on technical and legal issues; refrain from introducing new criminal laws that could stifle freedom of expression, opting instead to apply existing laws that are in line with international human rights standards; commission and support the collection and analysis of data related to online abuse and its effects, including creating a database of specific occurrences and follow-up from law enforcement; and establish

a network of working groups with participating States, international organizations, media, civil society and Internet intermediaries to develop educational materials, awareness-raising campaigns and create effective structures for dialogue.

**Media organizations** should: adopt industry-wide guidelines on identifying and monitoring online abuse; ensure that journalists experiencing online abuse, both staff and freelancers, have access to a comprehensive system of support including psychosocial and legal assistance; create a company culture of gender equality and non-tolerance to threats and harassment against staff; put in place clear and transparent procedures related to content moderation, with the view of protecting the right to freedom of expression, and train relevant staff accordingly, while ensuring that male and female staff be equally involved; and work with other media organizations and associations to create support systems, including training and mentorship programmes, for female journalists and media actors.

**Intermediaries and social media platforms** should: inform properly about terms of services, guidelines and best practices in ensuring a safe space for all users; ensure that terms of service, community guidelines and information about their enforcement are proportionate and adequate, clear, understandable and easily available to all users; provide information to users about best practices for online safety and about technical solutions on how to best report abusive content; engage in capacity building with civil society organizations on issues like counterspeech as a response to abusive content; and collect data and statistics on online abuse to help facilitate more comprehensive research on online abuse of female journalists and media actors.

For additional information, see: <http://www.osce.org/representative-on-freedom-of-media/safety-female-journalists-online>

*Resources:*

- ➔ The UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity: [https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/options\\_geneva\\_consultation.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/options_geneva_consultation.pdf)
- ➔ Strengthening the Implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity Consultation: [https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/options\\_geneva\\_consultation.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/options_geneva_consultation.pdf)
- ➔ Portal on the UN Plan of Action and related resources: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/safety-of-journalists/un-plan-of-action/>

- ➔ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe: Safety of Female Journalists Online - <https://www.osce.org/representative-on-freedom-of-media/safety-female-journalists-online>
- ➔ Acting on UN Human Rights Council Resolution 33/2 on the Safety of Journalists (Article 19): [https://www.article19.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/safety\\_of\\_journalists\\_WEB\\_23.10.pdf](https://www.article19.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/safety_of_journalists_WEB_23.10.pdf)
- ➔ What If Safety Handbook for Women Journalists- <http://www.iawrt.org/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2017/11/IAWRT%20Safety%20Manual.Download.10112017.pdf>
- ➔ PEN America: Online Harassment Field Manual - <https://onlineharassmentfieldmanual.pen.org>

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## Safety of Women Journalists (UNESCO)

As the organization leading the implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of journalists and the Issue of Impunity, as well as an organization that has adopted gender equality as a global priority, UNESCO implements a number of projects targeted at improving safety of women journalists.

### **Capacity building and safety guidelines for women journalists**

UNESCO supported the publication by the International Association of Women in Radio and Television (IAWRT) of “What if...? Safety Handbook for Women Journalists” (2017), written by Egyptian journalist Abeer Saady. It provides practical tips for women journalists on how to minimize risks, while covering sensitive and dangerous assignments. The handbook’s main strength is its compilation of experiences, of numerous women journalists, who have worked in conflict and post conflict areas. The handbook underscores the importance of physical, psychosocial and digital safety and security.

Training material on the safety of women journalists has been enriched through the updating in 2017 of the *Safety Guide for Journalists: A handbook for reporters in high-risk environments*, developed by Reporters without Borders in concert with UNESCO, which includes a specific focus on gender-specific threats, both offline and online.

UNESCO will also implement a number of training activities aimed at enhancing capacities of women journalists to protect themselves against and to deal with harassment. To galvanize change at the institutional level, UNESCO will also conduct capacity-building trainings for media managers, which will sensitize participants to the issue and encourage them to adopt safety protocols for cases of gender-based harassment of women journalists.

### **#Journaliststoo – Women journalists speak out**

In order to raise awareness for gender-based harassment of women journalists online and offline, and to show how journalists around the world resist and fight back against threats and abuse, UNESCO is publishing a book which consists of personal narratives by women journalists who have experienced gender-based harassment or violence. This book shines a light on the manifold forms of online and offline threats, and underlines their resilience and resourcefulness in developing counter initiatives.

### **UNESCO study on mechanisms to tackle online harassment of women journalists**

UNESCO is launching a research project on effective initiatives in tackling online harassment of women journalists, designed to yield concrete recommendations for different stakeholder groups, including media organizations, social media platforms, professional associations, and national authorities including the judiciary. This project will be rolled out over the course of 2019 and will be accompanied by multistakeholder consultations to ensure input and feedback from diverse actors. The first consultation and kick-off session was organized in February 2019 at an OSCE Conference on Safety of Female Journalists Online (#SOFJO).



*Resources:*

- ➔ Portal on the UN Plan of Action and related resources: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/safety-of-journalists/un-plan-of-action/>
- ➔ Strengthening the Implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity Consultation: [https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/options\\_geneva\\_consultation.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/options_geneva_consultation.pdf)
- ➔ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe: Safety of Female Journalists Online - <https://www.osce.org/representative-on-freedom-of-mediasafety-female-journalists-online>
- ➔ Acting on UN Human Rights Council Resolution 33/2 on the Safety of Journalists (Article 19): [https://www.article19.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/safety\\_of\\_journalists\\_WEB\\_23.10.pdf](https://www.article19.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/safety_of_journalists_WEB_23.10.pdf)
- ➔ What If Safety Handbook for Women Journalists- <https://www.iawrt.org/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2017/11/IAWRT%20Safety%20Manual.Download.10112017.pdf>
- ➔ PEN America: Online Harassment Field Manual- <https://onlineharassmentfieldmanual.pen.org/>

# 6. ENGAGING IN SOCIAL NORMS CHANGE

## Overview

Preventing violence against women and girls requires a coordinated approach across different segments of society. It involves multiple strategies that mutually reinforce each other reaching individuals where they live, work, learn and play, as well as, broader communities and society at large. The evidence-base shows that there are a range of individual, community and societal characteristics and conditions that can either create greater or lower risks for violence committed against girls and women. Among these are gender-discriminatory laws and policies, unequal power relations between men and women and social norms, behaviours and attitudes that contribute to discrimination and inequality. The UN Prevention Framework to Underpin Action to Prevent Violence against Women brings together this evidence-base and articulates a comprehensive approach to prevent violence, requiring the development of interventions that address cultures, structures and practices across organizations; interventions that reach a wide range of people and organizations at the local, regional and national level. The framework recommends the use of a variety of entry points for social norms change, including the use of media and popular culture (UN Women, 2015).

Media is an important reflection of and driver of prevailing norms and to some extent values in any given society. Its influential role and broad reach make it a critical entry point for purposefully promoting ideas of equality, non-discrimination and non-violence. Undoing harmful norms that underpin violence and promoting pro-social or positive norms, requires addressing 'everyday' attitudes, beliefs, practices and behaviours that reinforce traditional gender stereotypes and roles which discriminate against girls and women. It requires challenging notions of masculinity and femininity, power dynamics between men and women, boys and girls and hierarchies of privilege based on gender identity, race/ethnicity, religion or any other characteristic. It also entails framing of the issue as a social phenomenon. In other words, individual incidents of violence cannot be treated in the media as independent and isolated instances but must be positioned within a broader understanding/explanation of the factors that allow abuse against girls and women on such a large scale.

This work is about 'flipping the script' to uphold narratives of equality, women's rights, non-discrimination and zero tolerance for abuse of any kind.

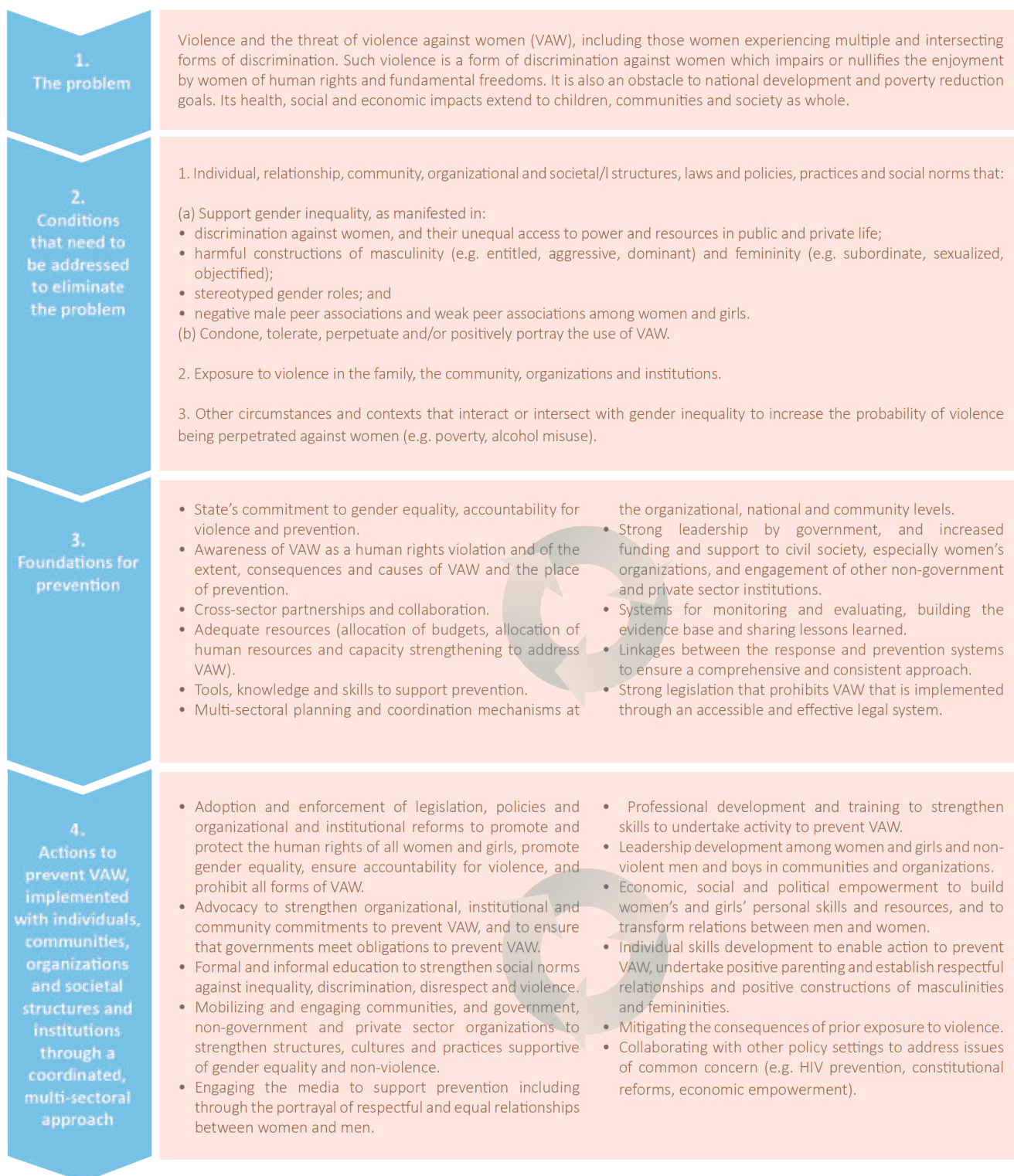
## Stereotypes

Gender and other stereotypes are at the heart of discrimination. Stereotypes are harmful when they result in a violation or violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, when they limit women's and men's capacity to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives and life plans. Harmful stereotypes can be explicitly hostile/negative (e.g. women are irrational, weak, etc.) or can appear harmless (e.g. women are nurturing, social, etc.), but inadvertently perpetuate discriminatory ideas. It is for example based on the stereotype that women are more nurturing that child-rearing responsibilities often fall disproportionately or even exclusively on them. Even in instances

of Gender based violence, gender stereotyping and predisposed notions of and beliefs about women's behaviour results in victim blaming, rather than holding the perpetrator to account.

In a survey conducted by Ipsos and the Female Quotient across 28 countries with men and women, it was found that (Unstereotype Alliance, 2018)

## A framework to prevent violence against women





## Illustrative Gender Stereotypes and Gender Discriminatory Roles

- Men as tough, unfeeling, aggressive, and expected to conceal or suppress emotional vulnerability - 'stiff upper lip' culture.
- Men as dominant in the family, within intimate relationships and in social settings with women.
- Men as the sexual initiator or entitled to sex with women. Some groups of men in minority groups as more sexually violent and more controlling (based for example on income levels, regions, ethnicity, and/or religious affiliation).
- Culture of acceptance or victim-blaming around rape, especially framed in the light that if the survivor 'had been drinking alcohol', 'wearing clothes considered provocative', 'walking home alone at night', or was 'leading' the perpetrator 'on'.
- Men's social standing and reputation as upheld by the loyalty, obedience and fidelity of their female spouses, siblings and children, the absence of which may be a justification for violence.
- Men considered as effeminate and weak if they are gender egalitarian or support feminist movements.
- Notions of femininity based on passivity, vulnerability, purity and heterosexuality.
- Women who assert, speak out, or defend equal rights as 'man-hating' or unwomanly.
- Lesbian, bisexual, and transgender women as outside the feminine 'norm' and as needing policing/correction.
- Some groups of minority women as inherently more sexually available or "up for it".
- Families and elders as entitled to control girls' and women's behaviour more rigidly than boys'/men's, and to make decisions about marriage, dating, and other aspects of women and girls' social lives.
- Women as hypersexualised, and their bodies for the pleasure and spectacle of men.
- Double standards regarding nudity:
  - Censorship of women's bodies which are considered sexualised and indecent as compared to men's, especially on social media and online platforms.
  - Women's bodies expected to meet specific beauty standards but considered lewd in their natural state (e.g. during menstruation, showing bodily hair, breastfeeding, diverse body shapes and skin colours).
- Policing of women and girl's clothing and the idea that certain styles of dress are distracting to men and boys.
- Blaming and/or stigmatization and shaming of sexual violence survivors, and women and girls who report sexual violence as promiscuous, liars or 'out to get' the perpetrator.
- Men as breadwinners and women as care givers/home makers.

- 72% feel “most advertising does not reflect the world around me”.
- 63% claim “I don’t see myself represented in most advertising”.
- 60% say “I don’t see my community of friends, family and acquaintances represented accurately in most advertising”.
- 64% think “Advertisers need to do more to eliminate traditional or old-fashioned roles of men and women in their ads”.
- 84% “really like when ads include a positive message about making the world better”.
- 75% of consumers say they “feel more positive toward companies that demonstrate in their advertising that men and women have the same capabilities and roles”.

In addition to broad-based gender stereotypes that exist, different contexts generate unique social norms and gender roles, which can vary even within the same geographic or socio-political setting for different groups of women and girls (Fergus 2012).

Compounded gender stereotypes can have a disproportionate negative impact on certain groups of women, such as women in custody, women from minority or indigenous groups, women with disabilities, women from lower caste groups or with lower economic status, migrant women, LGBTI women, etc. Changing social norms so that VAWG can be eliminated is inevitably a discussion about power between women and men. It is also a wider discussion about power between different social groups. Addressing VAWG requires rooting the discussion more broadly to encompass gender norms and the intersection of multiple inequalities, to ensure that the various risk factors that perpetuate discrimination and abuse are captured for all segments of the population.

A 2018 survey (Unstereotype Alliance, 2018) of 1000 women in South Africa, Brazil and India examined gender together with other factors, such as race, class,

language, education, appearance and sexuality that tend to compound gender-based discrimination. In South Africa, 66% of single, black women believe that society expects them to be feminine, dutiful and obedient, with this figure rising to 72% for married, black women. In India, 62% of younger unmarried women feel underrepresented in media, while 51% of younger, married women feel under pressure to stay at home, as opposed to 44% of women as a whole. In Brazil, 79% of women feel they’re not fairly represented in society. This figure is even higher for single women, where 85% feel unrepresented. Failing to successfully reflect intersectionality in advertising could lead to a damaging and restrictive idea of ‘normality’ that leaves millions of women feeling disenfranchised and excluded.

A gender lens requires that programmers and media personnel are familiar with the specific gender dynamics and social and cultural reference points that prescribe the roles of men and women in any given society. This requires socio-cultural research and analysis to understand what the norms and expectations are for men and women in any given context and how this might affect portrayals, interpretations and presentation of the issue. Intentional attention should be paid to how these notions interact with and influence the attitudes and behaviours of the target audience and surrounding community, to ensure that negative gender stereotypes and discrimination against women and girls are deconstructed and not reinforced.

Perceptions of social norms are equally if not more powerful in reinforcing negative stereotypes and practices, even if they are not reflective of the true attitudes and beliefs of a given population. Research (new or existing) can be helpful in exposing misperceptions, by revealing that the majority of people in a group do not hold the attitudes or behaviours that gender norms suggest. Understanding what is actually common in a group, is critical to getting the messaging and approach right, which can provide an incentive to change and in time can set new social expectations.

The aim of prevention work with media partners is partially to move away from focusing only on individual incidents of violence as if they are one off and unique, to situating the violence as a social phenomenon that

## Lessons learned from FGM Campaigns

Early campaigns to eradicate female genital mutilation/cutting were focused on criminalization and raising awareness of the health consequences. The campaigns were largely driven in a 'top down' style without consultation or engagement of the communities that were most affected. Campaigns became more successful later, when they were based on in-depth knowledge of the social norms involved in the practice. Ongoing engagement with communities unveiled the deeply held views on parenting and the desire for families to do what they thought was in the best interest of their children (e.g. beliefs related to protecting them from sexual assault and ensuring their marriageability). It then created face-to-face opportunities for continued dialogue and an eventual collective rejection of the practice.

For more information, see: Heise, L. (2011) What Works to Prevent Partner Violence? An evidence overview, London: DFID <http://www.oecd.org/derec/49872444.pdf>

is based on a common cause of unequal gender power relations. The bigger conversation would bring-in various elements to demonstrate this, including: the costs and consequences of violence on women, families, communities and even nations; the inter-connections and commonalities between different forms of violence; the role of gender stereotypes, harmful masculinities, discrimination and inequality in perpetuating VAWG; and the ways in which these dynamics intersect with other identities (e.g. race, sexual orientation, etc.) and social inequalities (e.g. poverty) and that may impact the experience of violence differently for certain groups of women and girls.

### 6.1 Entry points for social norms change

#### Understanding target audiences of media

When designing a partnership with the media on VAWG prevention, it is key to determine the objectives that are to be reached, the appropriate target group(s) of the intervention, as well as the best media channels to reach them. Determining your target audience and objectives requires an understanding of the global evidence-base on how to prevent violence against women and girls together with a sound understanding of the locally identified factors that put boys and men at greater risk of perpetrating and women and girls at greater risk of experiencing abuse. Compiling

existing research on these social norms and risk factors is critical to designing appropriate interventions with different segments of the population and ensuring the messaging contributes to broader understanding of the issue.

In some cases, an initiative may be targeting a mass or broad audience on general principles of equality, non-discrimination and non-violence. In others, a specific audience or audiences will be targeted in a tailored way to address the specificities of a population's context and issues. In some cases, there will be a mix of mass outreach, together with more tailored interventions. Interventions that aim at transformative change to tackle widely held attitudes and beliefs that condone violence against women and girls would require mass outreach on a sustained basis, accompanied by more substantive outreach and programming at the community level through educational systems, mobilization of community members, working with families and others who may be influential (e.g. faith-leaders).

#### Media consumption of target audiences

Identifying the media consumption patterns of your target audience(s) will be critical for designing the communications strategy and interventions. Media consumption can be vastly different within countries, communities or families. For example, young people are far more likely to use social media and mobile phone

or tablet applications (e.g. online streaming services) to play games, receive news and enjoy entertainment. Understanding the media consumption habits of target audiences provides insight on which media channels and organizations to engage and begins the process

of untangling what is feasible in any given context vis-à-vis available resources and objectives. Although it depends on the context, there is a considerable amount of research and information available about media consumption and audiences that can be drawn upon.

## Media Consumption Sources

BBC Media Action regularly publishes and collates the latest research on media consumption habits in low and middle-income countries. Their reports and data portal are available online: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/research-and-insight> and <http://dataportal.bbcmediaaction.org/site/>

Internet searches can provide valuable information using queries such as:

- what are the most popular radio stations in X
- how many people listen to / watch....
- what proportion of people in X have internet enabled smartphone

Questions can also be broken down by different groups of people, 'how many women... young people... people with low incomes...', etc.

*Wikipedia* often maintains a directory of media outlets, types of media and their audiences by locality. Queries for various countries can be conducted by typing 'communications in X' in the search bar- <https://www.wikipedia.org/>

Media consumption is determined by a variety of factors, including: consumers' interests and preferences; affordability; accessibility; gender and other social norms that proscribe use. Factors such as radio or television ownership or access to them in the community; mobile phone ownership and internet access; the prices and availability of print media and literacy rates; among others are all important to consider when deciding the type of media to be engaged in prevention work.

Media use is not simply determined by affordability. Other factors may have an impact, including:

- Professional activity, as small traders, for example, might prioritise having a mobile phone because it is essential to their business, while broader parts of the population may rely on radio reports for weather alerts and agricultural information.

- Media diversity, as the range of media options and plurality of voices heard can limit access to information and participation in media, particularly for marginalized groups;

- Gender, as gender stereotypes can determine the kind of information available to both women and men. For example, women in low and middle-income countries are significantly less likely than men to own a mobile phone, and when they do own one they use them less than men (GSMA 2016), or;

- The position individuals occupy in the family, as women and young people may have less access to the household phone or radio.

This information can play a crucial role in designing appropriate interventions, resisting the temptation to target only traditional or like-minded media partners.



It is critical to expand messages and communications objectives to media organizations and audiences that could have a catalytic impact on changing social norms.

## 6.2 Framing and messaging of media content

The way that an issue is ‘framed’ across the media - which means the exact language used and what the issue is related to – has a significant impact on the way it will be heard and understood (CCF, 2018; Lakoff, G 2006). Gender stereotypes and roles can also be endorsed or challenged through the use of particular ‘frames’ in talking about VAWG.

Violence against girls and women is a complex social issue and each form of VAWG can be described (‘framed’) in very different terms, which can implicitly support or condone the practice concerned. The issue may also be presented from different angles, in order to highlight something specific. For example, discussing domestic violence with a focus on the health consequences for women and their children; discussing violence against women with respect to the financial costs to the family, community and society at large; or how gaps in state laws might be failing indigenous women, whose cases are being brought only to local adjudication mechanisms, etc. The way a story is pitched or framed will influence the way the audience perceives and understands it.

### Using a Safety versus a Freedom Lens in the UK

Research in the UK showed that audiences responded quite differently to reporting on violence against women when it was presented from a safety perspective as opposed to a freedom perspective.

The research revealed that listeners had a negative reaction and feelings when sexual assault and sexual harassment were discussed in terms of the need to protect women’s safety. Audiences interpreted this as a certain level of abuse is inevitable and that a response by government or police was the solution. By placing the focus on safety as a specific women’s need, the fact that perpetrators should be dealt with or that men have a role in stopping abuse was made invisible. It also conveyed the message that women need to be protected which infantilizes them and removes their agency. In some contexts, this type of reporting can even inadvertently advocate for practices that further violate the rights of women and girls. For example, through restrictions on their movement, ability to attend school or work, and/or isolating them further.

When messages were used instead to refer to women’s freedom and how VAWG may restrict women’s mobility, respondents reported being more alerted to the equality implications of VAWG and to the fact that the current situation is unfair and that it is not inevitable and does not have to be this way.

Source: EVAW (2014) *Unpublished public attitudes research among 1,000 UK adults by YouGov for the End Violence Against Women Coalition*, UK.

To find the right “frame”, it is important to:

- Highlight how commonly accepted gender roles and stereotypes are implicated in the perpetration and acceptance of VAWG - e.g. men’s sexual entitlement as a justification for sexual violence.
- Show the connections and commonalities between different forms of violence and general stereotypes e.g. the way racist stereotypes are used to explain VAWG in minority groups and communities.
- Present strong, intelligent, empowered and diverse women role models and voices in media coverage.

- Provide the other side of the story with existing research and evidence.

For example: Instead of 30% of men in Togo believe that it is acceptable for a husband to ‘beat his wife’,(Tran et al 2016) it can be reframed as 70% of men in Togo believe that it is unacceptable for a husband to ‘beat his wife’.

Changing gender norms means using clear, consistent and accessible communication objectives that media partners and the community can understand and relate to and that can also be echoed by other groups

and partners working in the same and complementary areas. It also means working with media to craft messages or communication objectives that help to challenge harmful gender roles and stereotypes.

Consistent messages or communication objectives being delivered by diverse groups and individuals, including those with star appeal (e.g. sports figures, actors, politicians who have been vetted for upholding gender equality values and practices), can help to increase media workers’ perception of an issue as having legitimacy and urgency.

## 11 Ways to Work with Media (Australia)

There are some very useful guides on media messaging for violence against women and girls. Below are three key themes adapted from a recent Australian resource:

- **Talk about gender equality as key to preventing VAWG**

Use statements and information that show the influence that gender stereotypes and inequality play in creating and supporting VAWG. Daily and simple terms to explain this drawn from the local context are most effective and better resonate with the target audience.

- **Discuss how other social factors support VAWG**

Discuss that while changing gender inequality is fundamental to preventing VAWG, other factors such as racism, war, or government corruption, among many others may create an environment that can manifest in greater incidences of violence or in more extreme forms. Challenging and pervasive circumstances can also create normalization of violence and the risk of acceptance. Media should diligently deconstruct these international exchange and research in their communications and reporting. Examples drawn from the local context and in comparison to other similar contexts can be useful to highlight patterns.

- **Give examples of what people can do to prevent VAWG**

Make it clear that everyone has a role to play in preventing VAWG, including governments, media, schools, workplaces, communities, families and individuals. Give practical examples relevant to your context including small tasks that can be done as part of everyday life as well as large-scale societal level changes that are needed. Ensure that the onus of responsibility in cases of violence against women and girls does not fall on the victim and make it clear that it is not her fault, nor her job to prevent it from happening.

See the full guide: [http://www.thelookout.org.au/sites/default/files/11\\_Ways.Full\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.thelookout.org.au/sites/default/files/11_Ways.Full_Guide.pdf)

Using media messages or communication objectives and facilitating conversations which challenge gender roles and tackle inequality can take many different forms:

- Using drama that does not position women in a ‘passive’ role and men in an ‘active’ role. Visible, empowered female role models are absolutely critical to having girls, boys, women and men see that women and girls can live their lives differently to the current expected ‘norm’.
- Using social media to increase the visibility of women from minority groups that face discrimination as role models in leadership roles, both locally and nationally.
- Using alternative forms of media, including social media and community radio, to facilitate inspiring conversations about women and girls’ experiences, views, activism and resistance.
- Approaching news and entertainment media partners with real life stories that highlight women’s resilience in the face of violence instead of just focusing on their victimisation. These might include ‘fly on the wall’ reports (“unmediated reports which aim at showing the real behaviour of people, without the mediation of cameras or interventions from the journalists) about the work of interesting women activists of all ages and backgrounds, or what inspired the setting up of a women’s support service; or the women behind a grassroots campaign to challenge VAWG.

## Engaging Survivors

Having survivors involved in the communications can be very powerful for listeners, viewers and for the survivor who may find the experience empowering and cathartic. However, given the ethical and safety issues that are extremely sensitive in cases of violence, informed consent and measures to support and protect the victim are paramount. Journalists can sometimes push for victims/survivors to “tell all.” For some women, this kind of public story-telling can be a positive and empowering experience. For others, it can be unexpectedly distressing/retraumatizing; can affect the outcome of their case (if it is in a judicial

proceeding); and can also increase the risk of further violence against them or their children, for example, through unintended exposure of their location to a violent partner.

There have been cases where after the woman discussed the violence she had experienced in media, she faced further attacks from the perpetrator or other family members, resulting in further harm, including death.

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**Example:** In Spain, a woman was murdered by her ex-husband in 1997 thirteen days after appearing on television and reporting the violence that she had suffered because of him. This case was followed by other comparable cases in 1998, 1999 and 2007. As a result of these incidents, the Spanish Law on Gender Based violence included provisions on media reporting. Specifically, it articulated that “reports concerning violence against women, within the requirements of journalistic objectivity, shall do the utmost to defend human rights and the freedom and dignity of the female victims of gender violence and their children. They shall take special care in the graphic treatment of such items”. (Article 14 of Spanish Organic Law 1/2004.

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*Sources:* <http://www.lavozdegalicia.es/espana/2007/11/22/00031195735083733946925.htm> and <http://justiciadegenero.com/en/organic-law-12004-of-28-december-on-integrated-protection-measures-against-gender-violence-spain/>

As such, it is important to consider at the outset whether victim/survivor story-telling is truly relevant to the media partnership that is being supported. If it is the case, discussions with media organizations must be engaged early and a relevant protocol should be developed which also addresses ethical and safety considerations, including acquiring informed consent from the individual(s) being interviewed and referrals to support services and/or having a counsellor on hand.

## Survivor Advocates (Australia)

In 2000, in Australia, a victim/survivor advocate programme was established within a family violence crisis service. The programme was one part of a strategic framework developed across the state of Victoria to improve media reporting. The framework recognized that a key part of improving news media reporting of VAWG was meeting media requests for stories that could put a face and human element to the statistics. Such programmes now exist across the state, including on sexual violence, and involve training women victims/survivors who want to tell their stories on what to expect and how to manage media interviews, so that they feel empowered and confident to discuss VAWG, as well as provision of support leading up to, during and after interviews (including linking them into ongoing support services if required). The programmes have been highly successful at ensuring that women who tell their stories of violence are informed, supported and empowered, while simultaneously increasing the number of survivors who can advocate through the media and public events.

For more information on the survivor advocate programme in Victoria, Australia see <https://www.safesteps.org.au/our-advocacy/survivor-advocate-program/> and <http://whe.org.au/what-we-do/prevention-of-violence-against-women/>

### Resources:

- ➔ WHO Ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies: <http://endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/WHO%20Ethics%20and%20Safety.pdf>
- ➔ WHO Ethical and safety recommendations for interviewing trafficked women: <http://endvawnow.org/en/tools/view/670-who-ethical-and-safety-recommendations-for-interviewing-trafficked-women-2003.html>
- ➔ WHO Putting Women First: Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on Domestic Violence Against Women: <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/251759/1/9789241510189-eng.pdf>

## 6.3 Exploring opportunities through media content

Media content is diverse, communicating vast information and experiences for audiences. Some of the

most common types of media are news and current affairs, entertainment and creative media, and social media, reaching populations through mediums, such as print, audio, digital and visual formats. Working with media to promote gender equality, respect for diversity and non-violence may require engagement with a particular industry, the content being produced, as well as the mediums through which the content it is being channelled.

### 6.3.1 News and Current Affairs

The news media - media that focus on delivering news to the general public or a target public – cannot be disconnected from the subjects and events they report on. As news media actors select, articulate, and disseminate information, they are implicated in the public discourse that informs social beliefs and behaviours. News media is at once an indicator and a propagator of the state of affairs in any given society, it serves as both “a mirror and an agent” (Galvão IDB 2015). The manner in which violence against women is treated in media discourse is crucial: if the subject is not treated carefully, media actors risk inadvertently further harming the victim and/or compounding and perpetuating the enabling environment for violence against women. Alternatively, it can play a crucial role

in addressing those social norms and stereotypes that condone violence.

Global research indicates that women's representation, gender equality and violence against women reporting are very weak and have remained so for decades. The Global Media Monitoring Project found (GMMP 2015):

- Since 2000, only 10 per cent of all stories have focused on women with the number declining to 7 and 5 per cent in the areas of political and economic news respectively.
- In digital news and news tweets, the number rises to 26 per cent, but remains well below parity.
- Gender stereotypes continue to be firmly entrenched with only 4 per cent of news (television, print, radio and digital) challenging gender stereotypes.
- Domestic violence survivors are still largely portrayed negatively though there has been improvement over a decade, with 27 per cent being portrayed as survivors in 2015 as opposed to 6 per cent in 2005.

### Understanding values and practices of news media

Broadly, the key guiding professional and ethical values of news journalism are a commitment to: accuracy, fairness, balance and impartiality. The news media in most contexts, especially where it is not state controlled or heavily influenced, usually does not see itself as having a 'proposition' or as being aligned to any particular social or political cause. The values of neutrality, autonomy and freedom should be central to editorial decision-making. Media workers expect to be approached, less on the basis of the positive "moral" impact that the story may have on society, and rather on the basis of a potential story with a strong 'news value'.

Regular editorial meetings usually determine which news stories should be covered under tight deadlines and news journalists may then have only very limited time to find substantiating information and to set up interviews and debates. News stories can change

extremely fast under the '24 hour news cycle' as events unfold and different people respond, meaning that many journalists often rely on people they know instead of seeking out for new contributors. Positively influencing this challenging context requires a multi-faceted approach.

### Approaching news media

Appropriate planning is necessary to design interventions for the news media, including those that can respond to the shorter-term, ad-hoc and often hectic news cycle needs, as well as, those that can contribute to a longer-term change through capacity-building of the organizations and its personnel (staff and freelancers).

### Recommendations include:

- Establishing relationships with news media producers to share findings on content analysis that has been undertaken; identify challenges to improved reporting; and develop a plan to support longer-term changes (e.g. forging relationships with issue experts to review content before it is published; provide ongoing gender training for journalists; assisting with the production of gender-sensitive policies and content guidelines, etc.)
- Developing contacts at the target media outlets as early as possible and meet them at their convenience. *Google News*, *Twitter* and other social media provide useful information about which journalists work where and what they are interested in.
- Learning the schedules and timelines for news production and advocating for the inclusion of specific stories in the media outlets' planning diaries can help. Practitioners can liaise with existing media focal points or media expert within or outside their organization on an ongoing basis or can develop media contact in advance of specific events or days of significance, such as the International Women's Day (8th March), Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25th November) and Human Rights Day (10th December).

- ➔ For a full calendar of international days, see: <http://www.un.org/en/sections/observances/international-days/>
- ➔ Directory of media for women by women: <http://www.wifp.org/publications/directory-of-womens-media/>
- Maintaining updated lists of experts, relevant reports, briefing notes and evidence to be provided to journalists when they need them.
- ➔ She Source Expert Database: <http://www.womensmediacenter.com/shesource/>

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### Women’s Media Center: She Source (USA)

SheSource is an online database of female experts working across diverse topics related to gender equality, including VAWG, available to speak to the media. It was created by the *Women’s Media Center* (WMC) in response to the lack of female experts in media, and is designed to serve journalists, producers and bookers who need female guests and sources. Women can register themselves as experts and journalists, producers, and bookers can search the database for the expertise they need. The WMC also supports women who do not feel they have enough media experience to be comfortable being interviewed through their ‘Progressive Women’s Voices’ programme, a media leadership training programme that gives women advanced training and tools to position themselves as media spokespeople in their fields, helping to change the conversation on issues that fill headlines.

Read more about the Progressive Women’s Voices programme: <https://www.womensmediacenter.com/about/training/progressive-womens-voices>

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### Women Make the News Thailand Online Database (Thailand)

The Bangkok Office of UNESCO launched a database containing the names of Thai female reporters and expert journalists to contribute to the promotion of gender equality in Thai media.

Access the database: [www.WMNThailand.org](http://www.WMNThailand.org)

For more information, see: <http://bangkok.unesco.org/content/gender-equality-media-and-better-stories-nbtc-bolsters-support-women-make-news-thailand>

In addition to planning engagement ahead of time, there are often opportunities to piggyback on current events. This entails using ongoing stories and news coverage to relay specific communication objectives or to draw attention to relevant campaigns and interventions.

## Piggybacking Examples

- A news story arises involving trafficking, a high-profile prosecution, or a well-known person's comments on sexual violence. This can present an opportunity to call news desks and offer existing research/knowledge and campaign/advocacy messages. This also provides opportunities to offer guest commenting or support for direct news production by recommending individuals from an expert database.
- A storyline relating to VAWG is prominently being featured in an ongoing TV drama/telenovela. This presents an opportunity to frame the issues through radio news programmes and phone-in shows or through editorials in newspapers.
- Blogs, *YouTube* videos or podcasts that portray violence against women, sexist, discriminatory or stereotypical representations of men and women can present the opportunity to comment within the discussion thread or can be used together with a discussion guide through social networks and/or in training.

Radio can also provide an important platform for engaging news and current events. Approaches specific to radio can include:

- Building the capacity of mainstream radio announcers, DJs, MCs and hosts to incorporate gender-sensitive topics, messages and discussions in their existing programmes.
- Developing and pitch a long-term engagement series that can be aired on a regular (e.g. weekly) basis to cover a range of topics related to gender equality, ending discrimination, harmful practices and violence against girls and women.
- Identifying stations which broadcast interviews on social issues and propose to be their guest, e.g. for an interview, a call-in program or a talk show.
- Mobilizing like-minded network partners and constituencies to call and support your point. Where possible, ask the radio or TV station to provide you with a recording of the interview – this can be a helpful reference and can be used in other media formats, campaigning or community mobilization efforts.

## Examples of Feminist Radio and Talks

For examples of radio stations, see:

- Women's Liberation Radio News - <https://wlrnmedia.wordpress.com/>
- Women's International News Gathering Service - <http://www.wings.org/>
- Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press - <http://www.wifp.org/>

For Feminist Podcasts, see:

- <https://player.fm/featured/feminist>

For examples of how video talks have been used to disseminate powerful messages around important topics, see the following Ted Talks categories:

- Feminism - <https://www.ted.com/topics/feminism>
- Violence against Women – <https://www.ted.com/search?q=violence+against+women>
- Gender Equality - <https://www.ted.com/search?q=gender+equality>
- Masculinities - <https://www.ted.com/search?q=masculinities>

Feminist radio is women-centred radio programming that promotes non-sexist and non-stereotyping communications focusing on issues affecting women and girls. Many feminist radio organizations are community-based, broadcasting increasingly over the internet to reach a wider audience. Other audio formats that have gained in popularity and provide greater reach include podcasts and streamed video talks.

*Resources:*

- ➔ The International Federation of Journalists Guidelines for Reporting on Violence against Women - <http://ethicaljournalisminitiative.org/en/contents/ifj-guidelines-for-reporting-on-violence-against-women>
- ➔ Media Guidelines for Reporting on Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Contexts- <http://gbvaor.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/GBV-Media-Guidelines-Final-Provisional-25July2013.pdf>
- ➔ GLAAD's Media Reference Guide- <https://www.glaad.org/reference>
- ➔ The Diversity Style Guide - <https://www.diversitystyleguide.com/>

➔ Handle with Care: A Guide to Responsible Media Reporting of Violence against Women- [http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/handle\\_withcare\\_zerotolerance\\_2011.pdf](http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/handle_withcare_zerotolerance_2011.pdf)

➔ Responsible Reporting Guidelines for Journalists - <http://www.evas.org.au/images/docs/Responsible-Reporting-guidelines-2013.pdf>

➔ Gender-Sensitive Language Guidelines- <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/gender-inclusive%20language/guidelines-on-gender-inclusive-language-en.pdf?la=en&vs=2129>

➔ Gender Terminology Database- <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/gender-inclusive-language>

➔ Gender glossary - <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/view.php?id=36>



### 6.3.2 Advertising

Advertising uses images and audio for the express purpose of marketing ideas, services and things for people to consume. Images can be as or more powerful than words in conveying messages about the roles and perceptions of men and women in society. Research related to gender equality in advertising reveals that women are underrepresented (especially when considering that they dominate purchasing); have less screen time; less speaking time; and far less words spoken associated with power and achievement (Geena Davis Institute 2017). Advertising can have a powerful impact on the mindsets of girls and boys and girls, women and men. Advertising continues, in many instances, to reinforce negative gender – stereotypes including objectification of women’s bodies used in the sale of various commodities. Advertising images and messaging affect the perceptions that women

and girls have of their bodies and images affecting ideas of self-worth and self-esteem. Men and boys can be similarly affected by feeling that they must live up to and adhere to the macho depictions that are presented in advertising.

Research has demonstrated that when women and girls do not feel good about the way they look that they are very likely to opt out of important life activities; stop themselves from eating or otherwise put their health at risk; have not been assertive in their opinion or stuck to their decision; feel under pressure to never make mistakes or show weakness; and believe media and advertising set an unrealistic standard of beauty most women can’t ever achieve and should do a better job of portraying women of diverse physical attractiveness (Unilever 2016).

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#### The Association of National Advertisers #SeeHer (USA)

The Association of National Advertisers (ANA) launched the #SeeHer movement in 2016 to improve the accurate portrayal of women and girls in advertising and media by 20 percent by 2020, the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote in the U.S. To track success, it created GEM™, a data-driven methodology that identifies unconscious gender bias. GEM™ provides measurement standards for ads/TV programming. The methodology was made open source for the marketing, media, and entertainment industries, and is used by marketers, researchers, agencies, and content creators throughout the advertising and media communities. Increasingly, GEM™ is being integrated into advertisers’ media strategy, implementation, and review criteria.

Since launch, almost 60,000 ads have been tested by ABX, ANA’s syndicated research partner for GEM™. To ensure the best context for ads, twice a year GEM™ scores are captured for Nielsen’s top programs and member-selected broadcast and cable shows.

- Ads with positive GEM™ scores drive purchase intent by 26 percent among all consumers; 45 percent among women.
- Ads with positive GEM™ scores increase brand reputation by 11 percent.
- Ads that portray women accurately work better when paired with programming that also portrays women and girls realistically.

To learn more about the initiative, see: <https://seeher.com/>

The nature of the advertising industry might make it challenging to approach, however, more recently, the industry itself is demonstrating increased interest and commitment to addressing negative gender stereotypes and inequality through large-scale campaigns and initiatives. Research conducted across 33 different categories (e.g. cosmetics, insurance, social causes), found that men continue to dominate visual and audio spots and that this discrepancy had hardly changed over a 10-year period (Geena Davis Institute, 2017). The same research also found that dialogue spoken by men was 29% and 28% more likely to be associated with words related to power and achievement. Unilever conducted a year-long audit of the advertising industry, documenting that 40% of women did not relate to the way women were portrayed in ads. Men too were portrayed in very basic and stereotypical ways (i.e. tough, rugged, heterosexual, homophobic and aggressive) (Unilever, 2016). On the contrary, the research showed that progressive ads are a quarter more effective and delivered better brand impact (UNILEVER, 2016).

Broad recommendations for eliminating stereotypes from ads, include (World Federation of Advertisers, 2018):

- Encourage diversity in teams that are producing the ads.
- Identify where the brand can make a real difference in its supply chain, with consumers and workers to identify structural challenges that inhibit the brand from embracing and celebrating diversity.
- Go beyond gender-sensitive marketing and address other aspects of diversity (e.g. race, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, etc.) and ensure these measures run through the whole value chain, including suppliers.
- Avoid one-off or short-term initiatives (e.g. advertising campaigns) and invest in long-term commitments that demonstrate real change.
- Track performance over time.

### Advertising guidance on depicting gender stereotypes likely to cause harm or serious or widespread offence (CAP and BCAP, UK)

Two Committees in the UK covering non-broadcast advertising and direct and promotional marketing and broadcast advertising put forward guidance on the interpretation of the UK codes related to the same. The guidance was developed to support advertisers, agencies and media owners on how to interpret the codes. The guidance covers topics, including:

- Scenarios featuring gender-stereotypical roles and characteristics
- Scenarios featuring pressure to conform to an idealised gender-stereotypical body shape or - physical features
- Scenarios aimed at or featuring children
- Scenarios aimed at or featuring potentially vulnerable groups
- Scenarios featuring people who don't conform to a gender stereotype

See the guide: <https://www.asa.org.uk/uploads/assets/uploaded/f39a881f-d8c9-4534-95f18od1bfe7b953.pdf>

## Unstereotype Alliance

The Unstereotype Alliance convened by UN Women with a powerful global coalition of more than 30 industry leaders behind the common goal of eliminating gender bias and harmful gender stereotypes from their advertising is developing new standards and tools to advance the agenda and measure changes.

The Alliance has progressed toward its objective to develop tools to measure progress towards ending stereotypes in advertising. It has agreed to adopt a proven methodology developed by UN Women and the UN Global Compact, the Gender Gap Analysis Tool, to assess business practices. Building on tools like GEMTM, a widely used methodology in the United States, the Unstereotype Alliance aims to embrace a global advertising measurement tool which will help brands tackle stereotypes and track progress across developed and emerging markets.

To learn more, see: <http://www.unstereotypealliance.org/en>

### 6.3.3 Entertainment and Creative Media

Entertainment and creative media, whether through television, video, film, radio and live drama, allows a kind of engagement that other media such as news media does not provide. This medium is highly popular across age groups with the potential to reach mass inter-generational audiences. Like other media types, entertainment media (movies, shows, games, music, apps, books, magazines, etc.) often reinforces traditional gender roles and perpetuates negative gender stereotypes. Research that looked at gender roles in 120 films across ten of the most profitable film territories in the world found that women are not well represented, that casts are not well balanced; that women have much less speaking time on screen; and that they are often portrayed in stereotypical and sexualized ways (Geena Davis Institute, 2014). These depictions have a considerably negative impact on viewers, especially on young people who are heavily influenced by popular culture.

One stream of work within popular culture and entertainment is advocating for change as within any other industry to ensure more gender-equitable representations in the industries themselves as well as within the content that is produced to ensure non-discriminatory and non-violent depictions and messaging, while encouraging content that is female empowering, equitable and respectful of diversity.

#### Resources:

- ➔ GeenaDavisInstituteonGenderinMedia:<https://seejane.org/research-informs-empowers/>
- ➔ Common Sense Media: <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>

Another stream of work entails the identification of entry points to co-produce or develop programming with the express purpose of tackling negative social norms and advancing pro-social values, beliefs, attitudes and practices. Entertainment education, commonly referred to as “edutainment” has been a popular and ever-increasing entry point for achieving this. Over decades, evaluations have shown positive impacts of using edutainment to impact on social norms (Singhal, Arvind and Rogers, 1999; Airhihenbuwe and Obregon, 2000).

Examples of edutainment span television, digital streaming, radio series and in-person theatre, using formats, such as games, public service announcements (PSAs) and dramas/soap operas/novelas. These portrayals allow the viewer/listener to see the causes and consequences of violence against girls and women through the context of individual characters and through their dilemmas, emotions and lives. They allow listeners/viewers to empathize and think about what they might have done in a similar situation. These formats, when well designed, can also help to undo stereotypes and myths related to gender, race, disability and other characteristics often used to discriminate against certain groups of people.

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## AdhaFULL (India)

A UNICEF and BBC Media Action project in India, *AdhaFULL*, aims at getting young people to examine social norms for girls and women which lead to sex-selective abortion, child marriage and restrictions on girls' education. It is based around a 78-episode TV 'whodunnit' drama starring three young people.

The show is focused around Kitty, Tara and Adrak, three average teenagers who work together to solve cases and mysteries in their small town, while dealing with the trials of growing up.

The project seeks to encourage young people to challenge traditions that perpetuate gender stereotypes as well as increasing the ability of teenagers to take action to improve their lives. A radio discussion show *Full-on-Nikki* runs alongside the TV show, and new media is being mobilised to continue the conversation online, including *Facebook* and *Twitter* profiles, a smart-phone game, and audio content for mobiles, all based on study of the target audience's media habits.

For more information, see: <http://unicef.in/PressReleases/420/Launch-of-the-AdhaFULL-initiative-by-UNICEF-and-BBC-Media-Action-India>

As with any media production, the best drama/edutainment projects aimed at preventing VAWG will be produced when practitioners in the field of VAWG work in a well-established and trusting partnership

with the media workers involved. This is also the best way to create long-term relationships and future collaboration, both of which are key to creating broad and sustainable change.

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## Soul City - South Africa and beyond

Soul City is one of the world's longest running media programmes aimed at preventing VAWG. Running since the early 1990s, it has become a very popular national flagship show. It runs in seasons of 13 one-hour episodes which are accompanied by radio output, advertising and published materials. It has dealt with multiple VAWG issues, reaching millions of people in South Africa and beyond. It has been funded by Government, multilateral donors and corporates. It has been externally evaluated and it also publishes its own research on audience reach and impact on its website.

Using an edutainment strategy, all Soul City series are developed through a rigorous formative research process. This involves consulting both audiences and experts. All materials are thoroughly tested with audiences to ensure that the materials are effective. Through formative research, the lived experiences and voices of the communities are captured, giving the materials resonance and credibility. In Soul City's process, the following steps are crucial to designing appropriate messaging:

- Consulting widely with experts, audience members and key stakeholders on the topic issues. This includes government as well as civil society which include non-governmental and community-based organizations, activists, and academics.

- Consulting audience members about what they know, their concerns, their attitudes to the issue and the barriers that exist to positive change.
- After broadcast, the materials are evaluated. Lessons learned are integrated into future productions.

Soul City is a very significant series and has a long-term commitment to portraying and proactively tackling complex social issues including VAWG. Evaluations of the programme show a real change in willingness of VAWG victims/survivors to seek support and for relatives to support victims/survivors, alongside greater awareness of the availability of the national helpline. Those surveyed were more likely to recognize that domestic violence is serious, however, broader norms around its acceptability were less obviously shifted (Heise, 2011). These findings reinforce the success of reaching large audiences through this medium and the need for an accompanying strategy of direct community engagement to improve outcomes related to attitudes and behaviour change.

To learn more about the initiative see: <http://www.soulcity.org.za/projects/soul-city-series>

Depending on the type of production (e.g. a television show) can be costly and complex, making it challenging to persuade media houses to produce them. However, the success they have demonstrated has gone a long way in obtaining support from governments and donors.

Locating and approaching drama makers can be done in different ways. It is possible to have a good media idea but be unclear how to find the right media people to talk to. Who to approach depends to some extent on the scale of the intended intervention, and the way media is produced in the local context. Some questions to consider include: Is original drama made locally? Is there buy in? Is there an audience for online/streaming video? Are public service announcements a feasible and effective method? Does the target audience use mobile phones or are TV, radio or in-person mediums preferred?

There is not a single right way of making the first approach. Some ideas include:

- Contacting a scriptwriter that may be able to provide an introduction to the media house.
- Identifying a writer online and connect to them by talking about some of the work they recently produced and how it relates to the work that you want to do.

- Seeking support early on from a TV company owner/director and/or Government as a key sponsor/partner. This is especially important if the intent is to develop a significant media production or original TV drama.

Prior to making a first approach, read about other edutainment work and how it came about and which people made it happen. The case studies in this handbook provide a good starting point. Next, conduct research on entertainment media workers through some of the following methods:

- *Google* drama makers' recent and previous work
- Check their work on *Twitter* and other social media
- Look up any awards they have won or interviews they have given
- Use media companies' website descriptions of their productions and workers
- Use *Wikipedia* and the arts and media trade press to find out who has made what and where they are working. It should however be noted that information about Global South media practitioners may not be readily available online or on *Wikipedia*

## Girls Not Brides – Lessons from Edutainment

Girls Not Brides undertook a study to determine the value of Entertainment-Education initiatives in changing attitudes related to child marriage. The study used desk research, key informant interviews and an assessment of undertakings in nine regionally diverse countries. The main findings and lessons identified where:

- **Different channels allow social messages to be reinforced.** The Entertainment-Education approach is usually and should be part of a larger behavioural change communication programme employing various strategies and formats. Projects often combine several formats and delivery channels. Choosing the edutainment format depends on various factors, such as the existing media market, the availability of different media in a specific region, the budget and the preference of the intended audience.
- **Individual, community and broader society need to be taken into account.** Initiatives help to address social norms by starting conversations at the individual, community and broader societal level and targeting actors in the community such as girls, boys, parents, community members and leaders.
- **Using diverse characters/people to target specific audiences works well.** By choosing different transitional role models, tailored approaches can be taken for a specific target group.
- **Initiatives must be based on a deep understanding of social norms, stigmas and misconceptions prevalent in the target community.** Before an initiative starts, it is essential to find out more about the audience and to understand why people are doing what they are doing and who influences them.
- **Collaboration between substantive and technical experts is essential.** Brainstorming with behaviour change professionals and creative professionals is the first step in the creative production and design workshop process. This enables both tacit and explicit professional knowledge to be shared.
- **Investment must be made to measure progress and understand how change happens.**
- **Edutainment is cost-effective in the long-run, offsetting the high initial costs.**
- **It is important to be mindful of unintended and undesired consequences and be ready to respond and mitigate any harm.**

To learn more about the initiative and the findings, see: <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Entertainment-Education-and-child-marriage-scoping-study-Jan-2017-2.pdf>

If feasibility or garnering buy-in is an issue, alternatives can be employed, such as independently producing through a streaming service or engaging through radio and/or community theatre.

Community drama and popular theatre have been successfully employed in low-resource settings, where people may be able to access media as

consumers but not as producers. Evidence has demonstrated the effectiveness of community drama in re-creating scenes from TV shows and movies inside the community to highlight different issues, including VAWG and gender inequality. These techniques are useful for linking social issues to media products and for creating community advocates who can lobby for change.

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### Arts in Action (Eastern Caribbean)

UN Women in partnership with the Bureau of Gender Affairs in Dominica, supported an applied arts training programme for theatre practitioners based on a model developed by Arts in Action (Department of Creative and Festival Arts of the University of West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago). The training programme is a key strategy and intervention in UN Women's social mobilization programme to prevent and respond to violence against women in the Eastern Caribbean. The methodology highlights social issues through the performing arts allowing artists to express problems and negative behaviours in a way that their audiences can feel how these problems touch them personally.

For additional information, see: <https://www.facebook.com/artsinactiontt>

Radio is another medium that has wide reach, especially in low and middle-income countries. This outlet has often been used to address social norms change and radio partners are likely to remain important in media interventions preventing VAWG. This is especially important for communities and populations whose access to information and self-expression are often marginalized from mass channels of communication. More sharply focused, customized and essentially small and local media are crucial in giving

voice to women and girls, making their views known on decisions that concern them. Community radio also provides an opportunity to share timely and relevant information on development issues, opportunities, experiences, life skills and public interests. In the age of multimedia and online communication, community radio can provide a bridge from local communities to the global information society and by sharing information and knowledge derived from the Internet in response to listeners requests and interests.

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### The Forum for Women Journalists for Gender Equality (Angola)

In Angola, the *Forum for Women Journalists for Gender Equality* (FWJGE), apart from providing gender-sensitive training for journalists, has also brought women journalists together, across news and entertainment sets, to create media work on gender equality and VAWG prevention. The group helped create the long-running radio drama *Estrada da Vida* ('*Streets of Life*') which focuses on tackling violence against women and girls and on the value of engagement in local politics. The programme combines media information and entertainment to foster public discussions about the realities of women's lives and how they can improve. The main goal was to inform people about their rights, particularly as Angola was emerging from a period of war and harsh economic challenges. In this case, drama was considered the appropriate means to reach the whole population, as the language used in news broadcasting was considered too complex for this purpose. Using simple language communicated through relatable characters made the drama resonate with a vast audience.

For more information, see: <http://forumdemulheresjornalistas.org/>

## Worth 100 Men (Arab States)

“Worth 100 Men” is a radio fiction series in 30 episodes commissioned by the Womanity Foundation, which works on women’s empowerment using media. The series aimed at engaging audiences in the Arab States region in a constructive debate on women’s rights and gender roles, by providing information and reinforcing positive behaviours towards gender equality. Through a compelling and entertaining story line, the radio fiction depicts examples of common situations faced by Arab Women, namely as it relates to women’s social and economic empowerment, participation in public life, exposure to domestic violence and sexual harassment, family relationships and romance.

The series was broadcasted between March and September 2014, in 10 radio stations across the Arab world, namely Palestine, Egypt (on 3 stations), Morocco, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. The broadcasting was followed by radio talk-shows focusing on issues such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, economic empowerment, and gender roles. The evaluation of the programme demonstrated the value of such facilitated discussions, as its participants were more likely afterwards to recognize abuse when they encountered it and encourage others who experience it to speak out, while they were less likely to express attitudes justifying violence. Long-term change still needs to be tracked to identify the full impact beyond the initial promising research findings.

For more information about the project: <https://womanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/150223-FINAL-report-B100-Ragl-no-annex.pdf>

### Resources:



Community Radio Handbook  
- <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/community-radio-handbook/>



Community Media: A Good Practice Handbook  
- <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/community-media-a-good-practice-handbook/>



How to Do Community Radio: A Primer for Community Radio Operators

- <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/how-to-do-community-radio-a-primer-for-community-radio-operators/>

Creating an ongoing conversation along with the edutainment programme, through both other media formats and face-to-face engagement in the community, is the critical place for having these conversations about women and men and inequality and challenging stereotypes. This contributes to building an alternative vision, and helping the community see that others are moving and changing too.



## Leh Wi Know/Let Us Know (Sierra Leone)

The complementarity of an edutainment-based project with additional media work and the essential community outreach was successfully demonstrated in Sierra Leone. From 2014-2016, *BBC Media Action* produced a regular, compelling 15-minute drama programme, 'Bamba Community', and followed each episode with a 45-minute phone-in, "Leh Wi Know" (Let Us Know) which explored an issue covered in the drama including domestic violence and women's ownership of land. The phone-ins included guests who were experts on women's rights and the law, so that callers could access advice on their situations as well as critically discuss social norms around gender.

There is no single radio station of large reach in Sierra Leone so BBC Media Action worked with many local radio partners in the country to deliver the programme. Local youth NGO *Restless Development* was enabled to use the planned programming to deliver community workshops to talk with teenage girls about their rights.

For more information, see: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/where-we-work/africa/sierra-leone/womens-rights-radio-show>

Successful initiatives have demonstrated that bringing the characters and themes of the edutainment programme into peoples' lives (through social media, social events, billboards, flyers and community interventions) has a significant impact in questioning existing norms and motivating victims/survivors of violence and harmful practices to "speak up" about their experience.

It also involves people hearing that other people are changing their minds, which is a decisive step towards social norms change. When individuals are exposed to a drama highlighting harmful practices or exploring different forms of power, control and abuse, they

might think 'yes but that is very unusual' or 'this has nothing to do with me', but a radio phone-in scheduled directly following the segment might involve many people disclosing 'that happened to me'.

Depending on the organization's capacity, some traditional media campaigning techniques can also be adopted to increase the impact of the edutainment project.

## C'est la vie!: a pan-African educational TV Show

« C'est la vie! » is a unique inter-agency initiative (WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women), informed by best practices and supported by the French Muskoka Fund to reduce maternal, newborn and child mortality. In 2016, the programme had over 20 million viewers in 7 African cities.

“C'est la vie” is articulated as: (i) An educational TV show (Season 1: 26 episodes of 26 minutes each / Season 2: 36 episodes) broadcasted on pan-African TV channels and a potential network of 40 national TV stations across Africa, (ii) A regional multiplatform campaign designed to tackle issues on reproductive health and rights, family planning, maternal and child health, quality of care, gender-based violence and to promote debates on these topics. The initiative was carried out through a radionovela (being piloted in Niger), radio and TV spots, TV and radio talk shows, mobile and web counselling, visuals and brochures, the internet and social media sites. Information websites keep visitors up-to-date and further develop the show's main characters online, additional scenes and plots are published on social media and visitors are invited to share their opinions or to suggest new topics and storylines for the show.

Its communication campaign relies on intensive use of mass media and multiplatform media and an innovative public-private partnership in order to:

- I. Inform a wide audience across the African continent with a high cost/efficiency ratio, and
- II. Stimulate debate on social norms and personal behaviour, while questioning traditions and promoting positive social change.

For more information, see: <http://www.comminit.com/edutain-africa/content/cest-la-vie-television-programme>

### 6.3.4 Social Media and Information Communication Technologies

Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) continue to redefine and revolutionize the way we all live and work. They provide unprecedented prospects for increasing the opportunities and overall well-being of women and girls. ICTs have the potential to accelerate their connectivity, voice and agency within the political, economic and social fabric of society. Harnessing this technology to advance gender equality and women's empowerment is not only vital for women and girls, but critical throughout the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Technologies, in and of themselves, may be neutral and their potential the same for men and women, however, social and cultural norms and structural barriers mean that in practice there are great differences

in access, use and safety between them. As of 2017, the gender digital divide remains significant. Women are less likely to make use of the Internet in most countries particularly in developing countries. This underrepresentation is more obvious in least developing countries, where only one in seven women uses internet compared with one in five men. This divide has grown significantly as tracked over a five-year period (2012-2017) in Africa (ITU, 2017).

The gender digital divide goes beyond simple access issues and is inextricably linked to factors such as technical know-how; education about the benefits and applications of technology; the content and methods by which relevant skills are taught; and the ability of women and girls to use technology and engage with the internet without the fear of and/or experience of discrimination and violence.

Working in the social media space is not only about leveraging technologies and platforms to promote and advocate for social norms change, but also requires working to improve access, the skills to engage and the rampant abuse that women and girls face online and via other communications technologies.

- ➔ Common Sense Media: <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/social-media>
- ➔ UNODC Safer Internet for Children- <http://www.unodc.org/dohadeclaration/en/news/2018/02/leading-our-children-to-a-safer-internet--from-preschool-to-high-school.html>

The global scope and magnitude of violence against women online is not known, but studies indicate that a large proportion of women have experienced some form, including, but not limited to: sexist and derogatory comments, intimidation and threats, stalking, doxing, trolling, non-consensual sharing of personal and private content and images, and luring for the purpose of exploitation, among other abuses (ADD APC et al).

Various measures are required to prevent online abuse and respond appropriately when it does occur. Evolving work in this area, includes: better defining what constitutes online violence against women; development of international and national guidelines, regulations, legislation and standards (with regard for freedom of speech and privacy); collaboration and support to internet intermediaries to engage in institutional change processes that include gender-responsive policies, protocols, codes of conduct, self-regulatory guidelines and standards, staff training, internal mechanisms for identifying, tracking and reporting (with transparency) on abusive content and complaints related to abuse; investments in the development, refinement and use of a gender-responsive ICT architecture; to continued digital literacy education for boys and girls, women and men, among other interventions that are being explored in this constantly evolving area.

#### Resources:

- ➔ Internet Governance Forum (IGF) 2015: Best Practice Forum (BPF) on Online Abuse and Gender-Based Violence Against Women: <http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/documents/best-practice-forums/623-bpf-online-abuse-and-gbv-against-women/file>
- ➔ #HerNetHerRights Resource Pack on ending online violence against women & girls in Europe: [https://www.womenlobby.org/IMG/pdf/hernetherrights\\_resource\\_pack\\_2017\\_web\\_version.pdf](https://www.womenlobby.org/IMG/pdf/hernetherrights_resource_pack_2017_web_version.pdf)
- ➔ Hollaback Online Harassment Resources: <https://www.ihollaback.org/resources/> and <https://iheartmob.org/about>
- ➔ Association for Progressive Communications Technology-related Violence against Women: <https://genderit.org/onlinevaw/>

The exponential growth of the internet and new technologies are changing the rules of the game for media. As of 2017, 80 per cent of youth across 104 countries were online (ITU 2017). This is an important context for violence prevention work. The impact of other media (and non-media) interventions can be considerably enhanced when accompanied by social media activities, which enable reaching large audiences to engage in a dialogue. On social media, various options exist, such as live discussions at appointed times on *Twitter*, *Facebook* and other platforms, or through *Facebook* forums. Other linkages can also be created using *YouTube* or *VIMEO* channels and developing videos discussing the issues identified and inviting comments. For all these formats, practitioners are encouraged to hold moderated conversations given the sensitivity and backlash potential of the issues discussed.

Globally, social media tools have already helped fuel enormous social and political movements and have considerably strengthened the ability of ordinary people to challenge and change power relations in society through platforms that can influence and mobilise people. Online communities continue to grow,

providing alternative voices and perspectives without having to rely on mainstream media. There are a number of examples where social media has been used collectively by women to tell their own stories of VAWG, which have attracted enough attention to

cross over into print and broadcast media. In this respect, social media provides an empowering platform for women's voices and can be a conduit for VAWG prevention work, reclaiming its power as a vehicle for women's resistance and solidarity.

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### Her Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe)

Launched by Fungai Machirori in 2012, *Her Zimbabwe* is an online magazine that aims to harness the potential of digital media to share the stories of Zimbabwean women, including their stories of violence, as well as to nurture young women's digital activism. With support from HIVOS and Free Press Unlimited, in 2016 Her Zimbabwe introduced the Mobile Community Zimbabwe project (ZWM3), a fellowship for young women trained by Her Zimbabwe to apply a gender lens to digital storytelling using mobile phones. The project equips young women with the skills to tell the alternative Zimbabwean stories marginalized by the mainstream media. Her Zimbabwe is well set up for hosting a wide variety of content and has clear and easy to use social media sharing options. It is an ideal platform for reaching specific and broad target audiences to talk about gender stereotypes and VAWG prevention.

For more information, see: <http://herzimbabwe.co.zw/>

An unprecedented example of this is #metoo that went viral with hundreds of thousands of women publicly disclosing that they had experienced sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence at some point in their lives. Though not a new issue, this medium allowed the alarming levels of sexual harassment to be brought to light in a very public way, raising mass awareness of the magnitude of the problem. This initial movement led to intense dialogue across the US and abroad from mainstream media to the streets. It also prompted a number of intensified responses, from the firing of perpetrators from their workplaces; an unprecedented level of criminal and civil proceedings; stepped up attention by workplaces to prevent and respond to violence; and independent initiatives to support women who have experienced abuse (i.e. #timesup).

Similar examples, include:

- #ibelieveher and #ithappenshere have been used to resist victim-blaming during discussion of rape mostly in the United States,
- #whyloiter and #girlsatdhabas have been used to challenge the restrictions on women's access to public spaces in India and Pakistan,
- #lifeinleggings has been used in Barbados to help women speak out about sexual harassment, rape and sexual abuse.

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## The Everyday Sexism Project (United Kingdom)

The *Everyday Sexism Project* was launched as an extremely simple idea by an activist in the UK – a website where women can anonymously upload short accounts of sexist treatment. These stories were more and more frequently shared on social media, often turning into a ‘trending topic’. It has empowered women and girls to speak out and connect with each other. It has also helped media workers to understand some parts of women’s lives including VAWG, that mainstream media were not previously representing, in particular the ‘everydayness’ of sexual harassment, sexist treatment, racist-sexism and its impact on women’s lives. The project has 24 international syndications. It is free and available for replication for women everywhere.

For more information, see: Bates, L. (2014) *Everyday Sexism*, Simon & Schuster: London. <http://everydaysexism.com/>

Social media campaigns can play a crucial role, if appropriately planned:

- Join and use the social media platforms you think may be right for your target audiences and planned VAWG prevention work.
- Spend time looking at how the people and campaigns who attract a wide range of followers succeed - what is special about their content?
- Make partnerships and plan in time to engage and interact on a regular and sustained basis.
- Be prepared to deal with backlash and unsupportive or discriminatory remarks/ comments. Use facts and actual accounts or personal narratives (with consent) where possible.

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## Bytes for All - Pakistan

‘Bytes for All’ (B4A) in Pakistan is a think tank focused on the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for sustainable development and strengthening human rights movements in the country, with a focus on ending technology-driven gender-based violence. In 2013, B4A won an Avon Global Communications Award for Exemplary Material to Combat Violence Against Women, for its Take Back the Tech campaign, a collaborative campaign to reclaim information and communication technology to end violence against women, drawn from the flagship *Take Back the Tech* global project. The campaign harnessed the spread of technology in Pakistan to help strengthen women’s use of technology and digital story-telling to raise awareness of, and combat, VAWG.

During the international ‘16 days of action to end violence against women’, B4A promoted powerful stories of women and girls who experienced, resisted and challenged VAWG in their lives. The stories which were hosted on their website, sought to challenge gender norms by highlighting the resistance and resilience of individual women and girls who had experienced a range of forms of VAWG, including violence online.

For more information, see: [www.bytesforall.pk](http://www.bytesforall.pk) and [https://samsn.ifj.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/ByteBack\\_CombatingOnlineHarassment.pdf](https://samsn.ifj.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/ByteBack_CombatingOnlineHarassment.pdf)

A number of lessons and recommendations have been highlighted when using social media to engage in social norms change (Liou 2013):

- Set time aside for active discussion with followers instead of only pre-scheduled messages at ‘peak’ times
- Use a range of multi-media forms such as photos, videos, podcasts (ensuring appropriateness and consent)
- Develop an online community that can keep the momentum going by providing opportunities for your followers to connect with each other
- Consider how you will respond to any abusive engagement and set up systems for support within your organization or group
- Work to the values of ‘Reward, Recognition, and Influence’; People like to get things, feel recognized by their peers, and know that they influenced something tangible

- Grab attention/aim to trigger the senses by creating something personal, unexpected, visual (show, don’t tell) (Aaker & Smith 2010). This can only be done with full informed consent of the individuals or group involved.

## 6.4 Campaigning

A campaign is an *organized effort to catalyse change in law, policy, institutions and/or individuals to influence structures and actions* (Lamb 1997). Campaigns are not equal to awareness-raising, though a campaign may include an awareness-raising element within its strategy. A campaign has specific objectives or outcomes that it is trying to achieve. Generally, campaigns on violence against women and girls have sought to change laws, institutions and policies or have sought to *change individual attitudes, behaviours* and broader social norms related to gender inequality, discrimination and violence (Coffman 2003).

Campaigns on violence against women and girls often employ a number of multi-media formats to reach audiences, from digital storytelling and video PSAs to billboards and edutainment.

### Bell Bajao/Ring the Bell (India)

**Bell Bajao! – Ring the Bell** is a multi-media campaign launched in 2008 by Breakthrough, a US and India-based human rights organization. It appealed to men and boys in India to take action, whether by speaking out or ringing a door bell, to make sure women in their communities could live free of domestic violence. To connect with audiences across the nation, the campaign used a balanced mix of carefully selected communications tools and techniques, including print, television, radio, touring video vans and the internet to air its award-winning public service announcements, alongside community mobilization activities such as street theatre, public forums and training for young rights advocates. It also developed a range of educational materials such as a campaigner’s toolkit, and a discussion guide on domestic violence in English and Hindi.

The campaign reached over 125 million people. Evaluations of Bell Bajao have found it had strong outreach and impact. In particular, those who were reached by the vans and community mobilization work, as well as, the TV spots, were significantly more likely to report changed attitudes and increased knowledge of women’s rights than those who only saw the TV spots.

Read the full Bell Bajao case study: [http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/bell\\_bajao\\_case\\_study\\_english.pdf](http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/bell_bajao_case_study_english.pdf)

To learn more about the campaign, view the videos and access the evaluation, see: <http://bellbajao.org/>

Campaigns themselves, however, have also been used as a strategy to advocate for change with media related to violence against women and girls.

### End News Media Sexism Campaign

The World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) Network and other partners launched a campaign in 2016 to end news media sexism by 2020. The Campaign encourages and assists national advocacy to change media policy and journalistic practice and aims to support and highlight intensive efforts in several countries with the hope that new evidence will emerge on strategies that work to bring about fair and equal representation of women and men in the news media. The Campaign includes engaging quizzes and games; a media gender equality scorecard; letter-writing and lobbying materials; a media advocacy training toolkit; analytical and other tools.

To learn more about the campaign, see: <http://whomakesthenews.org/advocacy/end-news-media-sexism-by-2020>



For detailed guidance on campaigning, see: <http://www.endvawnow.org/en/modules/view/3-campaigns.html>

### Take Back the Tech! Campaign

The Association for Progressive Communication, Women's Rights Program undertook a number of research projects on the connection between ICT and VAW dating back to 2005. The findings from this research prompted women's rights and communication rights advocates to launch Take Back the Tech! in order to engage more deeply in this critical area. Objectives of the campaign are to:

- Create safe digital spaces that protect everyone's right to participate freely, without harassment or threat to safety.
- Realise women's rights to shape, define, participate, use and share knowledge, information and ICT.
- Address the intersection between women's human rights and the internet, especially VAW.
- Recognize women's historical and critical participation and contribution to the development of ICT.

The campaign is a collaboration among various stakeholders, working to reclaim information and communication technology (ICT) to end violence against women (VAW). The campaign calls on all ICT users – especially women and girls – to take control of technology and strategically use any ICT platform at hand (mobile phones, instant messengers, blogs, websites, digital cameras, email, podcasts and more) for activism against gender-based violence.

To learn more about the campaign, see: <https://www.takebackthetech.net>

## 6.5 Community Mobilization

Effective and promising interventions to address complex social phenomenon, such as violence against girls and women, indicates that stand alone campaigns or media interventions must be accompanied by a more comprehensive approach to make an impact. This can include employing media alongside or within well-planned and longer-term interventions in schools, institutions and communities. When media is the entry point, it is critical to add targeted interventions within communities where the messages are being received to engage people directly in the process of social change.

Radio, television or even online edutainment may be the centrepiece of the intervention, but it is critical

that it is complemented through direct community engagement. The emerging research in this area shows that it is integral to success. This kind of face-to-face, grassroots community mobilisation drives real transformation in attitudes and behaviours (Fergus 2012). These engagements are crucial because they enable people to hear reinforcing messages from various places and opens up the opportunity for them to ask questions and engage with others on the topics through the activities they are participating in. They contribute to bringing the audience beyond receiving information and knowledge to dialoguing with others in a process of questioning their beliefs, attitudes and practices. Discussions on taboo or sensitive topics also help demystify perceptions about what others think or what the perceived community norm is.

### Somos diferentes, somos iguales/We're different, we're equal (Nicaragua)

*Puntos de Encuentro*, a Nicaraguan feminist NGO ran this programme from 2002-2005 which targeted teen girls and boys to talk about and change attitudes and behaviour around sexual violence, LGBT rights, machismo, HIV and condom use, all of which were considered taboo. The 'Somos Diferentes, Somos Iguales' (SDSI) strategy combined edutainment, community mobilisation, and local capacity-building to encourage behaviour change, social support, and collective action as a means to prevent future HIV infections in Nicaragua.

The centrepiece was a weekly TV soap, 'Sexto Sentido' which has also been broadcast in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and the United States. Importantly, a range of different project activities were designed around the show to mutually reinforce the show's messages including a radio phone-in programme aimed at young people. Multiple resources were made available for local groups to use, to encourage face-to-face engagement. These included community-based activities such as training workshops, and coordination with local NGOs, health and social service providers. Evaluation of the work has shown it to have been effective in having encouraged a large proportion of the target audience to talk about the issues raised, to be aware of support services and to report reduced gender-based discriminatory views.

For more information, see: [http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/sextosentido\\_impact\\_evaluation\\_english.pdf](http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/sextosentido_impact_evaluation_english.pdf)

Media content, which challenges VAWG, is not sufficient on its own to change attitudes because it does not necessarily entail an immediate shared reflection. It is important, therefore, to proactively aim at such collective reflection to happen. Research on what is

effective in changing social norms demonstrates that a crucial component of social norms change resides in creating an environment where people feel that they are not alone when they start reconsidering their views and change their stance.



## The 'VOICES' Project (Nepal)

From 2007 – 2010 the NGO *Equal Access*, with support from the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, in partnership with General Welfare Prathistan, trained rural women in Nepal as community radio reporters as part of the 'VOICES' project. The project collected and broadcast voices of the most marginalised women within the country to instigate a grassroots call to action on the twin pandemics of HIV & AIDS and VAWG. Women were trained to collect stories from other rural women to create a radio programme, "Changing our World", which reached two million listeners and covered issues relating to women's human rights, peace-building, and violence against women and girls. Women's empowerment activities were launched alongside the project through innovative radio and training programmes together with outreach activities. Sixty community listener groups were established to encourage grassroots leadership and to promote changes in attitudes and behaviour.

An impact assessment at the close of the programme found that VOICES was successful in its main goals to increase dialogue between family members; improve the link between service seekers and service delivery at the community level; and encourage more community action against HIV/AIDS and VAWG.

For more information on the project and the evaluation, see: [http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/equal\\_access\\_impact\\_assessment.pdf](http://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/browser/files/equal_access_impact_assessment.pdf)

Programmes aimed at behaviour change, should be based in behaviour change theories that target individuals and broader social norms.

➔ The Communication Initiative Network maintains a vast body of research, theories and tools related to behaviour change, see: [http://www.cominit.com/global/search/apachesolr\\_search/?filters=tid:36%20tid:25](http://www.cominit.com/global/search/apachesolr_search/?filters=tid:36%20tid:25)

Community mobilization activities might include public meetings, community workshops or peer training at the time of and immediately following broadcasts of any drama and will be done best when local NGOs with expertise on violence against women are significantly involved.

## A Comprehensive Community Involvement Approach: SASA! Raising Voices (Uganda)

The Centre for Domestic Violence Prevention is an NGO based in Uganda. It embarked on addressing domestic violence through a community mobilization approach over a four year period across an entire Division (Kawempe). The Centre using an approach developed by Raising Voices called SASA!, involved community members, staff from institutions such as the police and health centres, and other key stakeholders in analyzing the situation regarding domestic violence. 'Ordinary' community members (85 in fairly equal numbers of women and men) became community volunteers, counsellors, and activists. They involved their friends, colleagues, neighbours and relatives with help and support from the organization. Opinion leaders such as parish chiefs, traditional 'aunties', and village-level local government officials were engaged as allies, who went about inspiring others and shifting their own practices. For instance, local government officials recently passed the first domestic violence prevention by law in Uganda that covers all of Kawempe Division. Officials from institutions such as the police, religious establishments, and health care facilities

were identified and encouraged to engage in a process of reassessing their existing policy and practice, and were guided toward instituting more pro-woman attitudes and practices. Gradually, as a result of these activities, a new value system was taking root in Kawempe Division. Domestic violence is now seen as a problem in the community, there are local support mechanisms that help women, people are more willing to confront men who use violence, and institutions are more responsive to violence. Domestic violence still happens in Kawempe Division, but there has been a shift in the level of social acceptance of that violence. The Raising Voices approach has since been adapted and implemented in communities across the globe.

To learn more about the initiative and access the resources, see: <http://raisingvoices.org/>

Some of the programming recommendations and lessons learned from community mobilization are:

- Highlight the benefits of human rights and non-violent relationships for both women and men.
- Address violence in the context of healthy relationships and healthy families, rather than taking an individual stance.
- Combine strategies via integrated programmes (e.g. group education with community outreach and mass media campaigns).
- Promote community ownership and sustained engagement by building enthusiasm for members to become activists themselves.
- Explicitly include men.
- Engage directly with members of that community and strengthen individuals', groups' and institutions' capacity to be agents of change.
- Instill hope and excitement regarding alternatives to violence.
- Personalize the process by reflecting that each person can be a part of the solution.
- Frame violence against women as the community's responsibility, not as individual women's problems (Michau 2007).

The Community for Understanding Scale-Up (CUSP) is a consortium of organizations (CEDOVIP, IMAGE, Institute for Reproductive Health, OXFAM, Puntos de Encuentro, Raising Voices, Salamander Trust, Sonke Gender Justice, Tostan, We Can) employing evaluated social norms change programming in communities across the globe. Shared reflections have produced important lessons for others interested in adapting, replicating and expanding existing programmes.

Those include:

- Allow sufficient time for organizations to internalize the programme approach.
- Maintain fidelity to the core principles of the programme.
- Create a strong foundation.
- Engage the programme developers.
- Think beyond numbers (what is changing?).
- Get personal (this work is about values, beliefs, attitudes and practices).
- Adapt and evolve.
- Support innovation.

*Resources:*

- ➔ A Framework to Underpin Action to Prevent Violence against Women: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/11/prevention-framework>
- ➔ What Works to Prevent Violence: <http://www.whatworks.co.za/resources/evidence-reviews>
- ➔ The Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence against Women and Girls: <http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/343-community-mobilization.html>
- ➔ On the CUSP of Change: Effective scaling of social norms programming for gender equality - [http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/CUSP.SVRIpaper.Final\\_.6sept2017.forWeb.pdf](http://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/CUSP.SVRIpaper.Final_.6sept2017.forWeb.pdf)

# ANNEX: 10 Essentials Actions

## Promote Gender Equality, Diversity and Respect

1. Strive for gender equality within the organization, including through the recruitment, retention and promotion of women; ensuring women's voices are part of decision-making bodies and structures; and strengthening company and organizational policies on sexual harassment and abuse, work-life balance, telecommuting and flexible hours (with special attention to more equitable caring responsibilities among men and women staff).
2. Address the safety of women journalists' by implementing industry-wide guidelines to identify and monitor harassment and abuse, including online abuse; ensure victims (staff, freelancers and other personnel) have access to reporting mechanisms and support; and provide practical measure of support to prevent abuse within the organization in addition to specific risks that may arise while on assignment.
3. Conduct training and educational programming that not only familiarizes personnel with the organizational structures, policies, guidelines and codes that have been put in place, but also with direct engagement opportunities that are more transformational in nature to address institutional cultures, so that human rights, equality and non-discrimination are embedded in structures and practice.

## Monitor and Improve Content

4. Conduct media monitoring across mediums (print, screen, radio and ICTs) to determine whether girls, women, boys and men are stereotypically portrayed; whether discriminatory attitudes and views are being reinforced and how violence against women is treated. Use the analysis of the monitoring results to engage with media for positive change.
5. Elaborate guidelines for editorial content and for the engagement of and interviewing of victims to ensure ethical, survivor-centred and human-rights based principles are followed as a matter of standard practice and across all initiatives.

6. Build media and information literacy to empower women and girls (and men and boys) to foster equitable access to information and knowledge and provide them the skills needed to navigate, engage with and critically think about the content they are exposed to. This is especially important given the volume of information and images, including harmful content that is easily accessible through print, audio, video and digital formats.
7. Facilitate access to the voices of survivors from diverse backgrounds who are willing to speak with media outlets. Ensure informed consent of the survivor and provide her with psychological and public speaking support to enable her to effectively communicate her experience and the messages she wishes to convey.

## Partner for Change

8. Design an edutainment strategy focused on challenging gender stereotypes, discrimination, inequality and harmful masculinities to highlight the role of social norms in the perpetration and acceptance of violence against women and girls. Approach production companies or create your own media programme using widely available formats such as community radio or social media. Edutainment may be the centrepiece of the intervention, but it is critical that it is complemented through direct community engagement.
9. Partner with other stakeholders (e.g. women's rights groups, GBV experts, municipal government) to engage in deeper prevention of violence work, especially those which have roots in the local community to reach men and women, girls and boys through face-to-face dialogue and programming to challenge harmful social norms.
10. Create or join an existing network dedicated to gender, violence against women and girls and media to share information and lessons learned, partner on projects and advocate for change where it is needed.

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