



Gender, Media, ICTs and the Post 2015 Agenda Position paper

A call to action

It is incredible that we are heading into the post 2015 era, in which media and ICTs will play a crucial role in shaping attitudes, norms and perceptions, with barely any mention of these powerful forces or their gender dimensions. While it may be too late to rekindle the call for a stand-alone goal on media and ICTs, GAMAG calls for:

- A specific target and indicators on gender equality *in and through the media and ICTs* under goal five (gender equality).
- Stronger indicators in the provisions on ICTs in Goal Five.
- Indicators on gender, media and ICTs and in goal 16.
- Detailed recommendations in the Table at *Annex A*.

Synopsis

This is an urgent call by 500 media and freedom of expression organisations across the globe to governments meeting in New York from 23-27 March to *get gender and the media on the post 2015 agenda before it's too late!*

The Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG) brings together over 500 organisations and networks concerned with gender equality *in and through the media* across the globe (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/crosscutting-priorities/gender-and-media/global-alliance-on-media-and-gender/about-gamag/international-steering-committee>). GAMAG used the 59th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) media side event to issue a strong call for the inclusion of specific and measurable global targets and indicators on media, ICTs and their gender dimensions in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – see <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/article/csw59-gender-media-and-communication-are-intrinsic-to-who-we-are-2015-03-12>.

In the absence of a stand-alone goal on media and ICTs, GAMAG calls on the UN to integrate media indicators in the existing goals and targets. “To forge a development agenda so blind to both the possibilities and dangers of the information revolution, including for gender equality, is ill advised,” noted GAMAG Chair and Gender Links CEO Colleen Lowe Morna.

Rationale

Media access and the right to communicate are a basic human right, espoused in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on freedom of expression and access to information. Media access and freedom of expression are therefore enablers to the achievement of development goals.

Gender equality is intrinsic to freedom of expression, participation and human rights. UNESCO and World Summit on Information and Society (WSIS) stipulate “ Access to information and the capacity to be able to enjoy the “right to communication” are essential to the realisation of greater equity in a global society. Information and

communication are both 'resources' whose ethical usage and distribution create the conditions for democracy and greater well-being."¹

Twenty years ago, Section J of the Beijing Platform for Action recognised the make or break role of the media and ICTs in shaping perceptions, opinions and norms that can either continue to render women and girls invisible victims, or shape a powerful new narrative of dignity and equality. The information and knowledge revolution of the last two decades constitutes the greatest change known to humanity since the Industrial Revolution.

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

Section J strategic objectives include:

- Strategic objective J:1. Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication.
- Strategic objective J:2. Promote a balanced and non-stereotypical portrayal of women in the media.

Critical areas of Section J include:

- Content and representation
- Access
- Women's participation in decision-making at all levels of media and ICT processes and structures
- Policy development
- Media and information literacy
- Freedom of expression
- Women media workers' working conditions and safety of women in media and online

Gender gaps

Research shows that progress towards these objectives is slow at best and backwards at worst. The International Women's Media Foundation (IWFM) 2011 Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media reveals that globally, men occupy 73% of the top management jobs compared to 27% occupied by women. Men comprise nearly two-thirds of all reporters, compared to 36% women. However, among senior professionals, women now constitute 41% of those in the newsgathering and editing categories.

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

The World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) 2010 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) shows that women constitute a mere 24% of news sources globally, up from 17% in 1995, but still moving at a snails pace.

Stereotypes still abound in media, and especially in advertising with governments leaving the watchdog role to civil society. Non-governmental agencies have been at the forefront of mainstreaming gender in media content. The preliminary findings of the 2015 UNESCO Global Survey on Gender and Media notes that only 14% of governments have budgets to promote gender equality in media staffing and 29% of governments in media content. 19% of the surveyed countries say publicly owned media have developed specific gender awareness programmes.

An estimated 4.4 billion people – mostly poor, female, rural and living in developing countries – have no access to the Internet. The Broadband Commission (2013) estimates that there are currently 200 million fewer women online than men, and warns that the gap could grow to 350 million within the next three years.

The Internet has become an important space for political debate and engagement. However, violence against women and girls online limits their ability to fully utilise the space. The Association for Progressive Communicators' (APC) recent monitoring survey on sexual rights and the Internet shows that while 98% of sexual rights activists see the Internet as critical for their work, 51% of them have received violent threatening messages.

There is need to develop and strengthen processes and mechanisms that enable the full, active and equal participation of women and girls in the ICT sector.

Key imperatives

Goal five on gender equality needs to include a specific target and indicators on the attainment of gender equality in and through the media and ICTs. GAMAG notes that Goal 5b calls on member states to 'Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women' yet the indicators are limited to mobile phone use and individuals with ICT skills.

GAMAG further calls on the UN to strengthen the language of goal 16, which refers to media and ICTs and public participation in different institutions, to be gender responsive. GAMAG is of the view that media fits in within the larger objectives of this goal which focuses on 'promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels'. As the fourth estate, media plays a key role in holding the other three arms of governance accountable.

GAMAG proposals are summarised in the table that follows:

ANNEX A: GAMAG Proposals for Gender, Media and ICT indicators in the post 2015 SDGs

Goal	Current target	Proposed media and ICT indicators	Rationale
Goal 5: Attain gender equality, empower women and girls everywhere.	5.5. Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.	Proportion of women in decision-making in the media and entertainment industries on Internet governance in national ICT organisations.	Women occupy 27% of media management jobs globally ²
	5b. Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.	Proportion of women with access to the internet and mobile phones.	Women must have equal access to ICTs.
	5c. 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.	Proportion of media, entertainment and ICT regulatory and self-regulatory bodies including advertising, with gender aware codes of conduct and ethical principles that make provisions for freedom of expression.	While 98% of sexual rights activists see the Internet as critical for their work, 51% of them have received violent threatening messages. ³

² <http://www.iwmf.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/IWMF-Global-Report.pdf>

³ 2013-Women’s Rights, Gender and ICTs

<http://www.giswatch.org/en/womens-rights-gender/need-prioritise-violence-against-women-online>

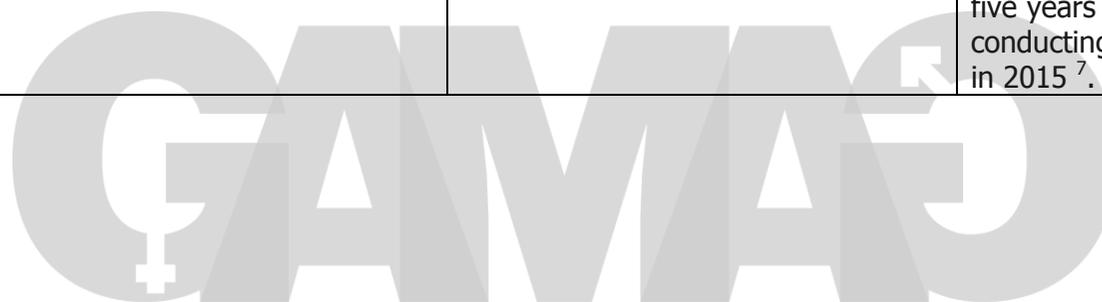
Goal	Current target	Proposed media and ICT indicators	Rationale
Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.	9c. Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020.	Existence of gender aware legislation and regulatory frameworks for freedom of expression.	Gender equality should be intrinsic to freedom of expression.
Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies, rule of law, effective and capable institutions	16.6. Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels	Proportion of women and men who are able to engage critically with the media.	A media and information literate citizenry can hold the media accountable and contribute effectively to discourse around the role of media and information in society.
	16.7. Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels including in the media. ⁴	Proportion of women as news sources overall and in various functions and topic categories.	Women make up just 24% of news sources globally yet they constitute 51% of the world's population. The Global Media Monitoring Project, supported by UNWOMEN, has been conducting this research every five years since 1995 and will be conducting this research again in 2015 ⁵ .

⁴ We are proposing adding media to target 16.7

⁵ 2010 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP)

http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/reports_2010/global/gmmp_global_report_en.pdf

Goal	Current target	Proposed media and ICT indicators	Rationale
	16.10. Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements	Proportion of women as news sources overall and in various functions and topic categories. ⁶	Women make up just 24% of news sources globally yet they constitute 51% of the world's population. The Global Media Monitoring Project, supported by UNWOMEN, has been conducting this research every five years since 1995 and will be conducting this research again in 2015 ⁷ .



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⁶ Indicators on women sources in the news media are relevant for both goals 16.7 and 16.10

⁷ 2010 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP)

http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/reports_2010/global/gmmp_global_report_en.pdf

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Other Members of the GAMAG International Steering Committee, visit GAMAG website at: www.unesco.org/new/en/gamag.



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