Gender and Media Campaigns

Women face discrimination from the men
Making Every Voice Count: a Southern Africa Case Study  
By Colleen Lowe Morna

Abstract
The Gender and Media Baseline Study, conducted in southern Africa in 2003, revealed glaring gender disparities in the media and in its editorial content. With its goal to “promote gender equality in and through the media,” Gender Links (GL) has worked with a broad range of partners to try to redress these gaps through research, advocacy, and training, targeting media producers, those who influence news content, and consumers. GL, and the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) network that it hosts, are also developing a Gender and Media Diversity Centre, to enhance the sharing of knowledge in this important but relatively new area of work.

Key words
gender, media, activism

Gender in the media
During question time after a presentation to the South African National Editors’ Forum (SANEF) on the Gender and Media Baseline Study in June 2003, an editor asked the billion-dollar question: Where in the world is there gender balance in the media? And if no such place exists, why should South Africa be any different?

Some weeks later, at another gathering, the answer came to me more clearly than I could articulate it at the time. Why is it, I asked, that in relation to every other issue, South Africa wants to be measured by, and exceed, world standards? Yet when it comes to gender, we are happy to be counted with or below the lowest common denominator! There is no other country, I said, that understands the pain of being silenced as intrinsically as South Africa. Why then can’t we take the lead where gender and the media are concerned?

This question is at the heart of the work of Gender Links (GL), a non-governmental organisation (NGO) based in South Africa, that over the last six years has gained a reputation as a “small organisation with large footprints,” (Mupawaenda and Minnie 2006), in its bid to “promote gender equality in and through the media.” This paper explores how GL, working with key strategic partners, has sought to position itself in relation to the mainstream media,
based on an understanding that “we have no choice but to grapple with the lion in its den.”1 It provides the context and background to gender and media work in southern Africa, the strategies employed, an assessment of whether or not these strategies are working, and discusses some future challenges.

Context

Twelve years after the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, gender disparities in the media remain significant. Across the globe, women are grossly under-represented in the decision-making structures of the media. The only news-making category in which women predominate, as evidenced in all three Global Media Monitoring Projects, is that of TV producers. The Global Media Monitoring Project, conducted before the Beijing conference, showed that women constituted 17% of “news sources,” that is those whose views and voices are consulted and relayed in news reports. Five years later, that had increased by a mere 1% to 18%, and ten years later (in 2005) to 21%. At this rate, it will take more than a few lifetimes for the media to reflect the views of women and men equally!

In 2002, GL, the Media Institute of Southern Africa and the Media Monitoring Project of South Africa conducted the Gender and Media Baseline Study, covering 12 southern African countries. This study found that women constitute 19% of news sources in South Africa and that black women, who constitute 41% of the population, account for a mere seven% of news sources. Across the 12 countries of the southern African region, women constituted 17% of news sources (Gender Links and Media Institute of Southern Africa 2003).

While women politicians in southern Africa account for about 20% of politicians, they accounted for only eight percent of the politicians whose voices were actually heard during news broadcasts. The study found that women’s voices are virtually absent in a range of mainstream areas, including the economy, politics, and sport, and that older women are effectively missing from news pages. Women are most likely to be portrayed as homemakers, fashion models, or as victims of violence, and rarely as citizens participating in the building of their nation (Gender Links and Media Institute of Southern Africa 2003).

Strategies for change

Organisations pressing for change have used several different approaches to the issue of women’s representation and portrayal in the media. These include:

- empowering women journalists;
- creating alternative media for women’s voices to be heard, particularly low-cost Internet and email-based media;
- organising consumer protests and boycotts, especially against offensive advertising; and
- seeking to bring about gender balance in the institution of the media as well as in its editorial content.

Figure 1: Approaches to gender and the media

None of these strategies are mutually exclusive. Each touches in some way on altering the behaviour of three groups of people from whom action is required: those who produce the news; those who are well placed to shape the news; and those who consume the news. GL has specifically chosen to focus on the last approach, because in the long term we believe there is no alternative to ensuring that the mainstream media reflect and promote gender equality.

Activist research and networks

Gender and media summits

Media monitoring is one of the most powerful tools for holding the media to account. The Global Media Monitoring Project and the Gender and Media Baseline...
Study have been at the centre of GL’s advocacy strategies, as has the strategic alliance with the Media Institute of Southern Africa, the mainstream media institution that promotes freedom of expression in the region.

National action-planning workshops took place in all 12 southern African countries that participated in the Gender and Media Baseline Study in 2003. During the workshops, media practitioners, decision-makers, analysts, and activists devised a range of strategies for addressing gender disparities in the media. The workshops culminated in a Gender and Media Summit in 2004, where representatives from each country reported on practical strategies they had adopted to achieve greater gender balance and sensitivity in coverage.

The summit also led to the formation of the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) network. The GEMSA secretariat is based at Gender Links, and now includes 12 institutional members, and over 300 individual members, in ten countries where local GEMSA chapters have been registered. The second Gender and Media Summit took place in September 2006, held under the banner “Media diversity, good for democracy, good for business.” Both summits featured the now well-known Gender and Media Awards. The awards served to make the point that gender-aware reporting is primarily about good, thorough, thought-provoking, investigative journalism.

*Mirror on the Media* reports
Following the groundbreaking study on Gender and Advertising in Southern Africa which was launched in July 2007, Gender Links has extended the Gender and Media quarterly trends survey to tabloids. Other research that has been conducted includes “Who talks on radio talk shows” and “Who makes the news” which is an analysis of the 2005 GMMP findings in Southern Africa. The latest study which is the 6th edition of the Mirror on the Media series focuses on (Gender and tabloids in Southern Africa). This research focused on gender representation and portrayal in tabloids and audience responses to this. This is the first time that GL and GEMSA have conducted research on tabloids.

**Audiences, consumers, and media literacy**

*Audience Research*
Audience research conducted by GL in collaboration with partners shows that across the board, women and men would like to see women depicted in more diverse roles, and that they find sexual images in the media uncomfortable and degrading to women. The research also showed that both women and men would like more local and human-interest news, and that women would like more news on women’s rights (Lowe Morna, Rama, and Muriungi 2005). Research such as this begins to debunk the commercial arguments for sexist coverage. It also opens an important new area of work, around media consumers and media literacy.

*Media Literacy*
In this course, participants learn how gender biases creep into media construction, how monitoring and audience research are conducted, and how they, as citizens, can engage with the media. Building on the successes of the pilot phases of the media literacy course between 2006 and 2007, Gender Links seeks to roll out this project in the region. The pilot to date included a training of members of the public, a training of trainers course, and a one week course with high school learners.

Loga Virahsawmy, media Watch Organisation and GL board member at Gender Advertising in Southern Africa launch Credit: Trevor Davies
**Policy**

From the outset, GL has stressed that activism and research must be rooted in policy, to bring about sustained change. Policy changes need to be at both the national and the regional level, as well as within newsrooms themselves.

**Media regulation bodies**

GEMSA has conducted a gender audit of media laws and institutions in the region, and is developing a network of media regulators. Working with GEMSA, GL embarked on a pilot project last year with media regulators in three countries, to develop gender policies. These include two self-regulation bodies, the Press Council of Botswana and the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) of Mauritius, and a statutory regulator, the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority.

The case of ASA Mauritius is a good example of how consumer activism in some countries is bringing about change. The Mauritius Media Watch Organisation, the local chapter of GEMSA, has taken up various complaints with ASA Mauritius, as a result of which 12 advertisements have been removed from the airwaves and from billboards. These included posters on dustbins wishing that women’s breasts were brains (see illustration). As a result of this pressure, the advertising body has been forced to take note of gender as a factor in its work.

This advertisement from Mauritius was the subject of a complaint made by the Mauritius Media Watch Organisation. As a result, the advertisement was removed.

**Working with media organisations to develop gender policies**

Over the period 2003-2004, GL worked on pilot projects developing gender policies with media organisations in the region. These were presented at the first Gender and Media summit, where media managers shared some of the simple practical steps they had taken to improve gender balance and sensitivity in the news.

At Kaya FM, a commercial radio station in South Africa that took part in one of the pilot projects, practical steps included rotating the gender “beat,” or area, of news coverage, so that each reporter had a chance to cover it. The idea was that in so doing, reporters would learn how to integrate gender issues into all their coverage. In addition, each reporter was required to contribute at least four women’s contact details to the database of news sources, and to ensure that one out of every four sources they consulted was a woman.

Progress in all these areas was then reviewed at weekly editorial meetings. A favourite anecdote of the then news editor, Portia Kobue, concerns the day she assigned a reporter to do a story on farming, and he immediately phoned the white male spokesperson of the commercial farmers’ association. She sent him back to the field to find a black woman farmer, who told a far more interesting story!

**Media Action Plan**

In an attempt to increase the impact of their policy work, in 2005 media NGOs joined forces with the Southern African Editors’ Forum (SANEF) to launch the Media Action Plan (MAP). Projects so far have focused on HIV, AIDS, and gender, and on the small numbers of women working in the media at senior levels.

An audit undertaken by GL as part of MAP showed that out of 350 media organisations surveyed, only ten percent had HIV and AIDS policies, and only eight percent had gender policies. Among the objectives of MAP are to ensure that 80% of media institutions have workplace and editorial policies and programmes on HIV and AIDS and gender in place by the end of...
2008. At the time of writing, 55% of media houses had committed to this idea and 30% had drafted gender aware HIV and AIDS policies.

**Training**

From the outset, GL has developed close links with media training institutions. A media training needs assessment undertaken by GL for the media training sector showed that more than half of the journalists in the region have never undertaken formal journalism training, but that there is a move towards upgrading and requiring higher level media training (Lowe Morna and Khan 2002).

Many media training institutions run short in-service courses, for people who are already working as journalists. Early on, GL worked with the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism in South Africa, to develop gender training modules for all areas of in-service media training, from sub-editing and newsroom leadership to coverage of specific areas like crime, the economy, and politics. Since then, GL has run training courses on different themes, with in-service media training institutions throughout the region. These have included courses on gender violence, HIV/AIDS, and gender and elections. Currently, GL is running a series of training workshops on gender and economic reporting entitled “Business Unusual.”

In the longer term, there are no shortcuts to mainstreaming gender into entry-level media education. Working with GL, the Polytechnic of Namibia undertook a three-year gender-mainstreaming project in which gender was integrated into every facet of the polytechnic’s entry-level journalism courses, and tested in a student news agency set up for the 2005 elections in Namibia. The students’ increased sensitivity to diversity resulted in high quality, issue-based coverage documented in a final evaluation. A primer on the process and outcomes is being used as a basis for work with a network of media trainers committed to integrating gender into their curricula (Lowe Morna and Shilongo 2004).

**Building bridges between gender activists and the media**

GL acknowledges that the challenge is not just to make the media more gender sensitive, but also to make gender activists more media aware. GL’s training manual, Getting Smart: Strategic Communications for Gender Activists (Lowe Morna and Overland 2002) has been used to conduct training with women’s organisations across the region, with a specific focus on the Sixteen Days of Activism campaign that runs from 25 November to 10 December.

The GL Opinion and Commentary Service is another “bridging mechanism,” that involves working with gender activists, who write articles that GL edits and markets to the mainstream media. As part of this service, GL has also started various ‘I’ story series, first-hand accounts on subjects such as living with
HIV, surviving gender violence, or being a woman in local government. This series has been especially popular with the mainstream media and audiences, because of its strong human-interest value.

In response to the argument frequently given by people working in the media that “there are no women sources”, Media Watch Organisation in Mauritius took the initiative to profile 218 women (along with their contact information), all experts in their own fields, who can talk on a wide range of issues, including culture, economics, the environment, human rights, and politics, among others. The directory is a practical example of how activists and the media can work together to improve the representation of women in the media.

Making progress?

Measuring progress in any area of social change poses major challenges. Yet there is a need to measure and record even small successes. In late 2008, GL and partner organisations will repeat the Gender and Media Baseline Study and HIV baseline studies, to gauge if there has been any improvement since the first studies were completed.

As an interim measuring exercise, GL worked with the Media Monitoring Project in South Africa to measure progress in the region against the Global Media Monitoring Project study in 2005, as well as against the 2003 Gender and Media Baseline Study.

Overall, the number of women consulted as news sources in the region had increased from 17 %, as recorded in the Gender and Media Baseline Study in 2003, to 19 % in the Global Media Monitoring Project in 2005 (compared with the global average of 21 %). However, in countries where gender and media activism had been strongest, the increases were higher, for example from 19 % to 26 % in South Africa, and from 17 % to 24 % in Mauritius and Namibia. Only two countries (Botswana and Angola) slipped backwards.

An innovation in the 2005 Global Media Monitoring Project study is that it records what different sources are asked to talk about, and why they are consulted. When GL undertook this exercise for southern Africa, the findings showed that, as compared to men in each of the categories, women are least likely to be the subjects or focus of the event or story (23 %), to be official spokespersons (16 %), or to be experts and commentators (20 per cent). They are more likely to be consulted for “human interest”, or to recount personal experiences (25 %), as eyewitnesses (37 %), or as part of popular opinion surveys (43 %). These last three categories are the ones in which, overall, the smallest number of sources is consulted.

Two important conclusions can be drawn from this. One is that a deliberate effort needs to be made to ensure that more women are consulted as the main subjects of news reports, as official spokespersons, and as experts or commentators. The other is that journalists working in the region need to use a more balanced range of news sources. At the moment, reporting tends to be oriented towards covering individual events, and to rely on single, invariably male, news sources. The news is dominated by reports of what ministers or decision makers (usually men) say about a particular event or issue, with little or no comment from those most affected (often women).

This is not good journalism, by any definition. Getting away from the single source, official, or pronouncement that dominates the news is not only good journalism; it would also open more space in which women’s voices could be heard. It would turn the media into the tool that it should be in society, giving voice to the voiceless and ensuring that citizens women and men are able to participate meaningfully in democratic processes.

Going forward

While it is understandable that advocacy efforts to date have focused specifically on gender disparities in the media, as we move forward there is a need to situate these within broader debates on human rights, media diversity, ethics and professionalism in the media, growing markets, and media sustainability. This approach will not
only help to overcome the resistance that is apparent in some quarters, but will also foster the notion that gender awareness is not just a matter of being “politically correct”, it is also a question of enlightened self interest.

Against this background, GL and GEMSA, working with tertiary institutions and other media development partners, have established a Gender and Media Diversity Centre. The GMDC has a physical base at the offices of the two organisations, but is primarily a virtual knowledge management and exchange centre, that aims to promote diverse, representative, and responsive media. Given the global nature of the gender gaps in the media, which cut across the broader divides in ownership and access, it is hoped that the centre will eventually extend its influence well beyond this region, to bring a keen appreciation of why fairness and diversity are important at all levels of society, including the media.


Lowe Morna, C. and P. Shilongo (2004) Gender in Entry Level Journalism: Lessons from the Polytechnic of Namibia Department of Media Technology/Gender Links Pilot Project, Johannesburg: Gender Links


© Writers Bio
Colleen Lowe Morna is executive director of Gender Links, which she founded in 2001, and chairperson of the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Network. Lowe Morna worked as a journalist and editor in various posts in southern Africa, and as Africa Editor of the New Delhi-based Women’s Feature Service, before working for the Commonwealth Secretariat for seven years. She also served as founding CEO of the South African Commission on Gender Equality.

Notes
1 Former GL Chairperson Thenjiwe Mtintso, speaking at the launch of the organisation in 2001.
2 The Global Media Monitoring Project is an ongoing study that documents the participation and portrayal of women and men in the world’s news media, at five-yearly intervals. Studies have so far been carried out in 1995, 2000, and most recently in 2005 (Gallagher 2005). For more information, see www.whomakesthenews.org/about_us/what_is_gmmp (last accessed June 2007).
In Practice: SADC Gender and Development Protocol Campaign

More and more gender, and other, activists are refining their advocacy strategies to take greater advantage of media as an important tool in campaigns. Media coverage has the power to sway both public opinion and policy priorities. Activists who are able to engage with media, both in terms of producing content and encouraging journalists to be more aware of certain issues, are more likely to see their issues at the forefront of national, and international agendas. A case in point is the SADC Gender and Development Protocol Campaign.

The Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance (the Alliance), a network of more than 16 organisations and individual experts from the SADC region, launched an advocacy campaign in 2005 for the adoption, ratification and implementation of a SADC Gender and Development Protocol (the Protocol). This is in support of the efforts by the Gender Unit (SADC GU) in the SADC Secretariat which has been spearheading this intergovernmental process in the region.

The adoption of a Protocol, a legally binding instrument, by SADC governments, will pave the way towards consolidating the region’s commitments to gender equality and women’s empowerment, as well as accelerating delivery on those commitments; there are clear benchmarks and measurable targets outlined in the proposed Protocol. The Protocol was deferred for further consultations by SADC Heads of State in August 2007, and it is to be resubmitted for adoption at Summit 2008. The Alliance is currently being coordinated by GL, and a number of activities have been undertaken during the course of the year.

Campaign Objectives

- Making technical inputs into all drafts and processes relating to the Protocol
- Engaging with key stakeholders at all levels to influence the process and content of the Protocol
- Participating at all key meetings to ensure that all substantive Protocol issues are on the agenda
- Producing briefing notes, brochures and other materials for use by stakeholders
- Engaging the media at national and regional levels to profile the Protocol processes
- Skills building of Alliance members to effectively implement campaign activities
Engaging with the Media

Commentaries and Supplements
Media is a vital component of the strategy to advocate for the adoption of a comprehensive Protocol. Aside from writing numerous articles and opinion pieces for circulation in national and regional media, GL produced a news supplement Lentsoe La Basali – Women’s Voices’ in time for Summit 2007. The Supplement was distributed in one of the widest circulating newspapers in Zambia, the 2007 host country for the Summit, as well as to Summit delegates and other civil society groupings. It is also one the flagships of the Alliance Protocol campaign, as it has continued to be distributed to other countries after the Summit as an awareness raising tool. In January 2008, Alliance members developed articles and opinion pieces for a news supplement scheduled for publication in April 2008 in time for the SADC Heads of State Poverty Summit to be held in Mauritius. The news supplements and regular articles are accompanied by press releases at key moments of the campaign where specific issues for action are highlighted in the media.

Alliance Members’ Skills Building
The focus of the skills building training for Alliance members is that they should be informed by and applied to the Protocol campaign strategies. Media is a critical tool for mobilising and raising the profile of the Protocol, so Alliance members participated in two training sessions on writing for media. The training are undertaken in tandem to other meetings, and concrete outputs are opinion or commentary pieces that are published regionally. In January 2008, Alliance members pitched at least 15 story ideas and developed them into opinions and commentaries for an upcoming news supplement. All outputs raise the issues that are at the core of the civil society campaign for the adoption of the Protocol.

Materials Production
GL, on behalf of the Alliance, produced brochures with fact sheets on key issues in the Protocol as well as posters, during the course of the year. These have been widely distributed nationally and regionally and serve as an important information source on the significance of the Protocol process. Each of the fact sheets are valuable resources for media, provide key facts and issues at a glance. More materials are planned for 2008.

Notes
1 The Alliance Members are the Botswana Council of NGOs (BOCONGO); Federation of African Media Women (FAMW) – SADC; Gender Links (GL); Gender and Media Southern Africa Network (GEMSA); Justice and Peace (Lesotho); Malawi Council of Churches; Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA); NGO Gender Coordination Network Malawi; SAMIDS; Society for Women and AIDS in Africa Zambia (SWAAZ); Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF); Women in Law in Southern Africa (WLSA); Women, Land and Water Rights Southern Africa (WLWRSA); Women in Politics Caucus Botswana; Women’s Leadership Centre Namibia; Young Women’s Christian Association Botswana (YWCA); Zimbabwe Women’s Resource Centre (ZWRCN).
Abstract
Activists have employed multiple strategies to use the media as an advocacy tool. This has often been received with mixed reactions by media practitioners who view their role as being the mirror of society and imparting information in the manner that they receive it. On the other hand activists see the media, when used effectively and responsibly, as holding the potential for effecting social transformation. Media coverage of Sixteen Days of Activism against Gender Violence has largely gravitated towards media activism over the years. This was initially instigated by gender activists but journalists and media houses are increasingly being proactive as they begin to feel that it is their duty to report on the campaign as a contribution towards ending the scourge.

Key words
media activism, gender violence, Sixteen Days of Activism, social change

Defining media activism
Media activism is activism that uses media and communication technologies for social change. Americans refer to this as civic or public journalism which “seeks to extend the work of the press (media) beyond news pages into civic life itself. (It is) not about agenda setting by the media/journalists but strives to take the responsibility of agenda setting back to the community.” It works hard to get real people’s voices into stories and seeks to show not just life’s problems but the possibilities that exist as people seek solutions (Ukpabi 2001). Alternatively it could also be viewed as communication for social change which is defined as a process of public and private dialogue through which people define who they are, what they want and how they can get it.

Sixteen Days of Activism is the period between 25 November (International Day of No Violence against Women) and 10 December (World AIDS Day) used to raise awareness on violence against women.

Why media activism
Media forms a powerful tool which shapes public opinion and the social discourse. Media is an important, but not exclusive tool for advocacy. Coupled with the development of more gender sensitive media, Gender Links (GL) believes there is the need to sharpen the communication skills of activists in the gender field. Many gender initiatives have faltered for want of strategic and targeted interventions in the policy and decision making
processes, as well as being able to project campaigns such as Sixteen Days in the mainstream media. (UNICEF 2008)

The trends in media coverage of the Sixteen Days of Activism demonstrates the positive impact of activists engaging with the media to ensure events are covered and analyses provided. The trend has seen increased media coverage and resultantly increased public awareness of the campaign. This did not just come about overnight but has been a process of constant engagement.

Gender and media activists have employed multiple strategies to use the media as an advocacy tool. This has often been received with mixed reactions by media practitioners who view their role as being the mirror of society and imparting information in the manner that they receive it. Journalists argue that this is in the interest of maintaining objectivity.

Sometimes journalism’s allegiance to “objectivity” often comes at a price of community understanding and engagement. For example a journalist participating in a blog contended, “I’m one of those who takes the dharma of being a journalist seriously, believing that the vocation brings with it certain responsibilities? But I don’t think activism is one of them. The practical argument for that is that if all journalists took up activism for the causes they believed in, the good ones would eventually have no time left to actually write. More importantly, I believe that the function journalists ideally perform, of providing information and insight, is too important to be diluted by anything.”

On the other hand activists see the media, when used effectively and responsibly, as holding the potential for effecting social transformation. Media coverage of Sixteen Days of Activism against Gender Violence has largely gravitated towards media activism over the years. This was initially instigated by gender activists but journalists and media houses are increasingly feeling it is their duty to report on the campaign as a contribution towards ending the scourge.

For instance, Narco News views its role on Latin America as “Combining journalistic integrity with a commitment to justice, Narco News has been an essential tool for anyone wanting to break through the corporate media’s veil of ignorance and disinformation regarding Latin America.”

Measuring impact

Media monitoring conducted by GL and Media Monitoring Project South Africa (MMPSA), since 2004 shows that there is a difference between the media coverage of gender based violence during the Sixteen Days of Activism Campaign compared to the rest of the year.

The numbers of stories on gender violence increase while more women are quoted as sources during this period. Stories of gender based violence are now referred to as such and are more likely to be put in context compared
To the usual sensationalisation. For example coverage of gender violence as a topic has increased since 2004 to 2006 from 20% to 33% to 59% of all topics.

The South Africa Government Communication Information Services (GCIS) among other things has tracked public awareness of Sixteen Days in 2003, 2005 and 2006. Over a 12 month period, awareness was rated at 16% in 2003, 26% in 2005 and 33% in 2006. 2007 results were only available for the first two quarters at 32%. On further analysis during the peak time in the year, the actual Sixteen Days campaign period, awareness is even higher: 23% (2003); 31% (2005) and 41% (2006) with the 2007 results still unavailable.

This shows that more and more people have access to information about the campaign with GCIS tracking the medium through which the citizens surveyed obtained their information. The majority of respondents heard or saw the campaign via mainstream media (TV, radio & newspapers). Television (81%) & radio stations (46%) are the most used media. These are followed by newspapers (18%) and the “word of mouth” (12%) from family members & friends. Least used are media were magazines, pamphlets, outdoor media, imbizo, etc (Between 1-2 %)

How has this been achieved?

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication (SC IHDC) and GL have used different strategies to engage with the media.

For instance SC IHDC uses edutainment which based on advocacy through “edutainment,” which is a mixture of education and entertainment. The success in this approach lies in the fact that the mixed media used by SC IHDC is accessible at different levels, and powerfully persuasive as it is rooted in community experiences, as well as successfully responding to complex social and health issues. The information provided impacts on social norms, attitudes and practices, aimed at the individual, community and socio political environment. Violence prevention and children's life skills development are some of the key areas of focus.

GL engages with the media in a number of ways: providing gender aware ready to use content that is more analytical compared to event based reporting; media kit with fact sheets defining the issues for media as they sometimes do not have time to investigate and engage in debate with media practitioners during the period. GL has also pioneered Cyber Dialogues which provide a complete package for media during Sixteen Days. The organised face to face discussion and IT based dialogue provides sources from experts and ordinary people, they are thematic so the issues are well articulated and provide a space where those most affected are free to articulate themselves through cyber space. In addition GL also works with women who have suffered abuse to tell their stories through the ‘I’ Stories project and these are published in mainstream media. This has always proved to be therapeutic for victims who often emerge as survivors of gender violence by completion of the project.
Next steps

It is quite evident that awareness of gender violence has increased in South Africa and the interface between media and gender activists has played a significant role in achieving this. However gender and media activists working with the media have to take the campaign a further step to move beyond awareness to actual behaviour change. In South Africa UNICEF, working with the National Prosecuting Authority – SOCA Unit and GL, conducted a mapping of promising violence prevention models available in South Africa that can be replicated. It was realised that one of the cornerstones of achieving this lies in media savvy, for example, NGOs such as GL and Soul City working with different media practitioners including new media (IT) to influence behaviour change. The objective will be have the public move from awareness to gaining knowledge to attitude change until gender violence has been eradicated.

References:

Writers Bio
Loveness Jambaya Nyakujarah is the Gender Justice Manager & Assistant Director at Gender Links.
The Power of the “I” Story
By Mariette van Dijk

Abstract
The “I” Stories are a series of first hand accounts of gender violence from across Southern Africa produced annually by the Gender Links (GL) Opinion and Commentary Service for the Sixteen Days of Activism. These stories share women’s real experiences with violence - domestic violence, child abuse, contracting HIV after sexual assault, being attacked because of their sexual orientation, and any other story that the women wish to tell. All these stories are powerful for different reasons; they are stories of abuse, but also of struggle and survival. For the writers they are empowering - telling their story often forms the transition from victim into survivor. For the media who pick up the stories it is a meaningful form of journalism to inform the public about gender based violence. For readers, the stories are often shocking and upsetting, yet through reading them, they become more aware of gender violence and its impact on their friends, families, and communities.

Key words
violence, Sixteen Days of Activism, media

Introduction
The creation of the “I” Stories is a multi-part process. Though stories are invited from across the region, and local partners encouraged to hold country workshops, available resources to date has meant that the main workshop for the programme occurs in South Africa. Due to the sensitive nature of the stories, and the need for the women to have coaching in a supportive environment, these workshops are vital to the process. Gender Links, in collaboration with organisations working with survivors of violence, invite participants who want to tell their story to a workshop co-facilitated with counsellors. In the supportive and open environment, survivors are more at ease to talk.

The women share their individual stories in small groups. For many women, this may be the very first time they have told someone about the abuse, and the session is often very painful. Afterwards, they each go away to
write the first drafts of their stories, which are typed out and edited for them. In a second session, the women come together to read their own edited story, which is often very comforting. For many of the participants, discussing their life stories with other women and turning them into a publication is therapeutic. Once the editing is agreed upon, the women decide if they would like to use their own name in the by-line, if they want to have their photo taken, and if they would like to participate in other types of media, for example, personal appearances, radio or television interviews. The boundaries set by the women are ALWAYS respected. The finished stories are compiled into a book, as well as distributed to mainstream media.

Although there is no empirical data to say that the “I” Stories project prevents gender-based violence, there is evidence that the stories create awareness and generate discussion, which may contribute to women leaving abusive relationships, greater incidences of reporting, as well as greater sensitisation of men in their role to prevent violence. The stories are also helpful in secondary prevention, which is helping women participants to deal with the emotional aftermath of abuse, and possibly sensitising service providers who may provide treatment and counselling to other women. They can also be an inspiration to other women who read the stories and who find themselves in abusive relationships to seek help.

“These stories are not for your comfort, but are told with the rawness and pain with which they have been experienced.

They will shock and upset you… But they will also give you hope. Hope that women in our region are speaking out. Hope that many years too late politicians have recognised that women’s rights are human rights. Hope that our best bet in getting action taken is by breaking the silence.”
- excerpted from the forward, “I” Stories 2006

The power of telling your story – the case of Sweetness Gwabe

Many participants say that the workshop and experience of participating in the project is very empowering. Sweetness Gwabe, one of the participants in the 2007 “I” Stories workshop says,

When I was participating in the workshops at GL and told my story for the first time to others it was then that I realised how much I was hurt. I started breaking and crying in front of others, what I had never done before. It all came out. The interesting part of it was that when I read my own story, I asked myself ‘how did I manage to stand all this nonsense for so long.’ It shocked me to read my own story, especially because I started feeling guilty towards my children. That I have allowed them to undergo all of this and didn’t pull out of it long ago. At the time I stayed because I wanted my children to have a father, because I had never known mine, but after reading my own story I felt responsible for their suffering.

While Gwabe grew up in a well-off, loving family, her self-esteem was gone by the time she finally, after years, left her abusive husband after another violent incident. Gwabe recalls, “While I was at the shelter I wrote a poem for a POWA (People Opposing Women Abuse)
GENDER AND MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

competition, and afterwards they asked me to participate in the “I” Stories. They explained me what it was about and that the stories would be published. That time I was really afraid to be published and therefore I did not use my own name. When someone constantly tells you that you are worth nothing, you believe it and you just want to hide away. I also feared that my husband would hit back and publish against me and spread lies about me, because I know how he is."

Now, a few months down the line, she is happy and feeling confident with herself. “It has changed me tremendously. I realise who I am, a woman of multiple talents. I became myself and not what I have been told I am: useless. I am now a role model to my children. I walk in front of them and am confident, because I know that children who grow up in an abusive home often lack confidence. The way I feel now, I wish I had not hidden my name.”

A lot has changed in the last months since Sweetness published her I Story. During her abusive marriage, Sweetness would sometimes run away, but it never solved anything. “I stayed at the Miriam Makeba orphanage from 2003 to 2005, while I was working there as a housemother. Then I went back to the house where my husband was staying. I needed to divorce him to really get away.”

Since August 2006, she has been living with POWA, after a violent escalation.

I didn’t want to bother anybody else, so I separated myself from Makeba organisation and didn’t ask help from relatives. After the publication of the I Stories I was interviewed by a television show Masekuleme (Let’s Talk) during the 16 Days Campaign. They filmed me from behind (anonymously) but a social worker from Makeba home recognised me. Miriam Makeba found out and asked me to come back, which was now 2 weeks ago. Now she wants me to publish my poems and stories. I have written many for instance about Mandela and Apartheid. She also asked me to write and compose Xhosa songs for her. She realised that I am talented, but due to the abuse I was locked, but now she stimulates me to use my talents. It is frustrating when you know you are talented, but you can’t do anything.

Miriam Makeba never knew about the abusive relationship and felt guilty. Even relatives felt guilty, that I had gone to POWA shelter and not to them, but I didn’t want to bother anybody anymore. I gave Makeba my I Story and after she finished reading it she said to me: That is why I divorced 5 times, because I couldn’t stand it any longer.

Although Sweetness did not tell anyone of her I Story at the time of publication, she has now bought copies of the book to give to friends and relatives, including her children.

The thing with abuse is that you get used to it and think everything is right. Even when others criticised my husband, I would still defend him and say he is like this, you will get used to him. I saw nothing wrong. Later he isolated me from my friends and family and locked me and the children in the house. My house became a prison. I want my friends and family to read my story and explanation.

When I distribute the “I” Stories book to them, it is not necessarily about my story, because all stories are effective. I am empowering my daughter and other women not to repeat my mistakes. When you are with your spouse and you read these stories you will be able to pinpoint some mistakes to your spouse. It is vital that your spouse must know your likes and dislikes. You mustn’t compromise. A yes must be a yes and no must be a no. That is another thing that kills us women, we keep on compromising. When they read these stories, women will be empowered.

When I read other stories, I compare them and think my story wasn’t as worse as theirs. I cried reading the other stories, they are too brutal, and thought I would not have allowed that to happen to me. But I realise if others read mine they might say the same. I keep on reading them, they never bore me.
Role models

Martha Seloane, who stayed in an abusive relationship for more than 10 years, participated in the “I” Stories project in 2004. Seloane says that, “If you are in an abusive relationship you are not always aware of it, until you wake up and realise this is not a normal situation anymore.” In 2004, Seloane filed a case against her husband in the Protea court. It was there that she got in contact with Nisaa, which had an office in the Protea court, and who offered her and her children a place to stay in their shelter.

Seloane decided to use her own name for her story. “I had no problem with that, because other women in my situation often don’t know how they can help themselves. As long as they don’t talk about it, they stay in the relationship for long, like I did, because they are not aware of it. Only at Nisaa I started thinking about my situation, while talking to the social workers. Since then I am no longer a victim, but survivor. I am strong now and I know that I will never let anyone abuse me that way again. I also believe it is much better for my children that I left. I know they have seen the book and saw me on TV, but we never really talked about it.”

At the time she was in the abusive relationship, Seloane was not working and fully dependent on her husband. Now she is divorced and works as a senior personal officer at the Department of Justice.

Telling their story openly is not only empowering to the women themselves, but can have an impact on other women in their community. After Seloane’s I Story was published, during the 16 Days of Activism, she appeared on radio and two television shows. When friends and colleagues told her they had seen her on TV, she would initially joke, saying “that wasn’t me, but my sister.” Soon women from her community would come to her house for help. Seloane recalls, “They explained about their abusive relationships, and that they didn’t know where to go for help. They also wanted to leave and tell their story on radio or television, but didn’t know how to approach this. I would refer them to Gender Links or Nisaa. Therefore I believe the “I” Stories are powerful, because they open up the eyes of women, who before not always realised they were in an abusive relationship or did not know where to get help.”

Media coverage and reaction

The fact that most of the women who approached Seloane had not read the book, but came to her house because they had seen her on television, proves the importance of the media in publishing the “I” Stories. Nicole Johnston, editor of the Mail and Guardian, believes the “I” Stories work for journalists because “they are about real people.” Johnston recalls, “In 2006 we published the two

stories of the lesbian women. I believed they were really good and interesting. Too often NGO’s want to write about policy, while readers are interested in real stories. The trick is to write about policies, by mixing it into a real personal story.”

Journalist Sandy McCowen of SABC News, started covering gender violence in 2003, and often used the “I” Stories as a guideline.

“Writing the story was like a gift to me, because I knew people are going to read my story. I didn’t do it anonymously because I wanted people to see me, to relate to me, for my community to see how tall and proud I am walking even though I wrote about my abuse and to see that even though it happens you will heal and can start all over again and be something in your life.”

- Maleshoane Motsiri

According to McCowen,

The “I” Stories were awesome. I used them as a guideline and then did my own follow up. I asked GL to approach some of the participants to ask if they wanted to do an interview with me. One woman was HIV positive but hadn’t told anyone at work. She decided on World Aids Day to tell all her colleagues in the entire company. She allowed us to film it and it became an absolutely amazing story. We filmed people’s reaction to her explanation, how she handled it afterwards and how people were so shocked at first and then started supporting her. It started with her first story, but we took it further and since then we did three follow ups with her. Another great story was about a man who had raped and who was repenting what he had done. In the “I” Stories book it was mostly about him and what he had done, but I interviewed him about how he had changed through rehabilitation and how he was trying to change men’s minds and how men get involved in ending gender violence. My boss used to think I had the most awesome ideas, but in the meantime half of them came from the “I” Stories. It was absolutely brilliant. I have won 6 awards in total, all were for my coverage on gender based violence.

Just like Seloane, who received visits from women in her community seeking help after she had appeared on television, McCowen’s news items also lead to reactions from the public. According to McCowen, “I have had many women phone me at SABC over the years asking for help. After listening to their story I would refer them to the right NGO’s.”

Susan Smuts, Deputy Managing Editor of the Sunday Times, also said, “The “I” Stories are amazing. The feedback I have received has been very positive. People recognise themselves and their family members and friends in the stories because they are about human beings. They make us see what the real impact of domestic violence is, in ways that statistics and analysis cannot do (not that there is not room for those types of stories too).”

Readers and listeners respond

Maleshoane Motsiri’s I Story of her abusive relationship was published in 2006. After first being a victim and later a survivor of abuse, she now works as a councillor at POWA. Although it wasn’t her participation in the “I” Stories that empowered her, as she had already left her husband and job to start over, writing and publishing her story made her more open-minded and understanding towards others. According to Motsiri, “After reading my own story I cried, especially after reading my own advice. I learned...
not to judge, to blame or to criticise other people’s choices, beliefs, and decisions. I also had my beliefs that led me to the choices I made. Every time a client is telling me something, I explore options with them on advantages and disadvantages of staying. At the end of the day, it is their decision to make. And whether they choose to stay or leave, I will always support them."

After the publication of her "I Story, Motsiri gave a radio interview, after which listeners could phone in and ask questions. Motsiri recalls, “One man asked me why I had stayed in the relationship for so long. I didn’t feel offended at all and explained how difficult it was to leave and that everyday I searched for a reason to stay, also for my children. He was sorry for me and was compassionate. Another man phoned in and said it was good we talked about it, because men also get a chance to learn and understand how abuse affects women. Other practical questions came from women, asking me how long I was in the relationship, how I got out etc.”

Gender Links also occasionally receives requests from people or other NGO’s who want to buy the "I" Stories book for a resource or redistribution. For instance, Maureen Shabonga, from Khaya Lethemba shelter in Braamfontein, bought twenty copies to give to staff and clients at the shelter, after a woman in her shelter who participated in the "I" Stories in 2007 had shown her the book.

According to Shabonga,

Everybody who read it was amazed, surprised even shocked that this is all happening. The book is informative as well as powerful. Most of my clients don’t know anything about the court procedures when they open a domestic violence case. They are often not informed about something like a protection order and end up going back to their husbands. A project like the “I” Stories can help my clients as they can learn from procedures other women went through. They also realise they are not the only one in what they are experiencing. Some clients say it is better to live in the streets than in this shelter. Maybe the staff doesn’t always understand their clients and what they have been through or it is a lack of respect for human beings. Whomever reads the “I” Stories realises the severity of abuse and it will have the impact that we are more likely to act now to stop it. For this we need to involve men. Not all men are abusers. I believe it can help if men read the “I” Stories.

The power of the “I” Stories to evoke responses from people that are so much stronger than typical reportage is apparent. During 16 Days of Activism 2007, Media 24 website in South Africa created a special section that highlighted the GL “I” Stories. The website has a function that allows readers to comment on what they read. One story which particularly captured attention was “I can not leave my abusive husband.” Readers wrote to the website posting their comments about their own experiences of abuse, how they left abusive situations, and their frustrations at a society that continues to allow this to happen. Following are just a few examples of readers’ responses:

I have been there and at the age of 40 told him to go as I did not need the verbal as well as the physical abuse. There are jobs out there and people are willing...
You have nothing to fear but fear itself. His anger at you is a result of his being insecure and a coward. He can't take his frustration out on anyone else so he is using you. Leave him and when he tries to woo you back with empty promises be wary of him and finally have faith in the almighty and hope for the best. You have to take the first step. My prayers and tears are with you.

Overall, it is evident that there is a place for the real stories of gender violence to be heard. For the women telling their stories, their courage is a very big step towards their own healing, and in creating a culture that says, “no more violence.”

I’ve also gone through this kind of abuse, 5 broken noses, a fractured cheek bone, a fractured skull, 56 stitches on my head after being hit with a hammer, 30 stitches in my fingers after blocking a jab from a sword that was meant for my stomach. I know all about it, it’s hard to leave an abusive relationship. Honestly speaking, I didn’t leave him, the Lord intervened in His Devine way and my husband got sentenced to 134 years imprisonment for shooting 6 people of which 4 died in a bar fight. I’ve been abuse free for four years now after 8 years of hell. My message to abused women? Speak to a professional about your situation because if you are staying in such an abusive relationship it means that you can’t think rational about it all anymore - you might be too damaged emotionally. There is help out there, it’s up to you to accept it.

You have nothing to fear but fear itself. His anger at you is a result of his being insecure and a coward. He can’t take his frustration out on anyone else so he is using you. Leave him and when he tries to woo you back with empty promises be wary of him and finally have faith in the almighty and hope for the best. You have to take the first step. My prayers and tears are with you.

Overall, it is evident that there is a place for the real stories of gender violence to be heard. For the women telling their stories, their courage is a very big step towards their own healing, and in creating a culture that says, “no more violence.”

I’ve also gone through this kind of abuse, 5 broken noses, a fractured cheek bone, a fractured skull, 56 stitches on my head after being hit with a hammer, 30 stitches in my fingers after blocking a jab from a sword that was meant for my stomach. I know all about it, it’s hard to leave an abusive relationship. Honestly speaking, I didn’t leave him, the Lord intervened in His Divine way and my husband got sentenced to 134 years imprisonment for shooting 6 people of which 4 died in a bar fight. I’ve been abuse free for four years now after 8 years of hell. My message to abused women? Speak to a professional about your situation because if you are staying in such an abusive relationship it means that you can’t think rational about it all anymore - you might be too damaged emotionally. There is help out there, it’s up to you to accept it.

Writer Bio
Mariette van Dijk works as an intern with Gender Link as assistant Gender Justice Programme Manager and Researcher. She holds a Bachelor of Journalism (School of Journalism, Utrecht) and Masters International Development at the ISHSS (International School for Human Social Sciences) University of Amsterdam.
Human Trafficking in Southern Africa

In the wake of ongoing preparations for the 2010 FIFA World Cup and the inevitable influx of tourists, Southern African human rights organisations as well as governments are gearing up, concerned that the increased economic activity could lead to bigger business for human traffickers.

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is one such organisation, and its Southern African Counter-Trafficking Assistance Programme (SACTAP), which commenced in 2003, is a key player in Southern Africa’s efforts to tackle and respond to human trafficking. Active across the Southern African region, SACTAP aims to support and develop the capacity of governments and civil society groups to deal with the problem of trafficking in Southern Africa while also offering assistance to victims and raising awareness among the general public.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), human trafficking is the third most lucrative illegal industry in the world, falling only slightly behind weapons and drug trafficking. However, because of its clandestine nature, many people are unaware of how it happens and easily fall victim to traffickers, who make appealing offers that are difficult to refuse. With its porous borders, high rates of poverty, and pervasive gender inequalities, Southern Africa is ripe ground for human trafficking. Compounding the situation is the fact that people are often trafficked by someone known to them – a friend or neighbour, even a family member.
that they will be better able to recognise false offers and migrate more safely, thereby decreasing the number of people who are trafficked each year.

This is not as straightforward a task as it may seem, as trafficking does not only affect a certain sector of the population. While education and income level play a significant role in who is ultimately at a higher risk, it is too simplistic to say that rural, economically poor people with little formal education comprise the only risk group. The desire to have a better life, access more opportunities than are available at home, or to escape conflict are the main factors that drive people to migrate, and can affect anyone.

Another challenge is reaching people who have already been trafficked, as they are generally kept hidden from the public, isolated from other people in the community. They may not speak the language of the country they are in or may be reluctant to come forward, fearing further harassment from officials or deportation, as well as retribution from their traffickers against themselves or their families.

There is also a great deal of stigma attached to trafficked people, especially women and children who end up in the sex industry, because of the work traffickers force them to do.

Because of this, the communication strategies that organisations use need to be diverse and appeal to a wide range of people. They also need to be sensitive to the situations in which trafficked people are living. In this context, how an organisation develops and puts
forth messaging is a key challenge to overcome. The project plan must keep communication for social change principles in mind. Key messages must be identified through consultation with community members and experts in the field. Other related issues, such as xenophobia, root causes of migration, customary and religious considerations, etc., need to be considered and appropriately incorporated into the messaging. In addition, the communication method must be as important as the messages themselves. If the messages are good but the medium is inappropriate for the audience, the project will not be effective.

For these reasons, IOM often looks to popular media like theatre and radio drama to reach their audiences in Southern Africa.

**Drama to combat trafficking**

Using radio drama and theatre for social change can be very effective, as messaging can be creatively woven into a strong, exciting story. Audiences engage with the issues through their emotional involvement in the story and the characters. By identifying with the characters and traveling alongside them as they face conflicts and make decisions, audiences are also forced to face those conflicts, and live through those decisions.

This idea comes from the social learning theory developed by Albert Bandura. This theory suggests that people learn by first observing other people’s behaviour and the consequences they experience because of it, rehearsing what would happen if they followed that behaviour, trying it out and comparing their experience with other people’s, and finally confirming their belief in the new behaviour (Fossard 1996).

Communication strategies using drama also draw on participatory theatre and popular education models developed by Augusto Boal and Paulo Freire. By giving people the opportunity to consider behaviours or actions via fictional characters, it allows them to rehearse the behaviour or action in a safe, non-threatening environment giving them the confidence to enact that behaviour or action in the real world. In Boal’s participatory theatre model, audiences literally become “spectactors,” first watching, then acting out possible solutions for a common problem, or dealing with difficult situations by trying new behaviours (Boal 1979).

**IOM's Counter-Trafficking Information and Awareness Raising Campaign in Southern Africa**

IOM's Southern African Counter-Trafficking Assistance Programme (SACTAP) has been running multi-media campaigns across Southern Africa that seeks to inform people about human trafficking, prevent vulnerable people from falling victim to traffickers, encourage people who have been trafficked to seek help, and to advertise its toll free hotline numbers.

The campaigns use print, film and television, radio, theatre and media coverage to reach audiences across all sectors of the population. Since the campaign started, the IOM has produced posters, flyers, stickers and billboards that have been posted anywhere from border posts to inner city streets. They have run both television and radio adverts in local languages, and have produced a documentary detailing South African trafficking trends.

*Khuluma Afrika!*, a participatory community theatre production, and *Dealers/ Troco*, a 13-part serial radio drama in English and Portuguese, produced by CMFD (Community Media for Development) Productions, are part of these campaigns. These projects were made possible with the generous funding of the Norwegian Embassy in South Africa, the US Department of State's Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration, and South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs.

Though theatre and radio drama have very different reaches and advantages, they both have great mass appeal, especially in the African context. One of the advantages to radio is that it can reach a large number of people at once, whereas theatre must generally cater to a smaller audience. However, because of the intimate audiences, there is more opportunity for interaction and direct dialogue about an issue. More importantly, both media rely on oral storytelling, thereby bypassing the need for basic literacy, allowing a message to be passed on in a much more creative way. Storytelling has strong roots in most African cultures, making radio drama and theatre very palatable media.
IOM’s Southern African Counter-Trafficking Assistance Programme (SACTAP) recently initiated two popular media projects that work to address issues of human trafficking and migration in both source, transit and destination countries, using the creative media expertise of CMFD to implement the projects.

Khuluma Afrika!

Khuluma Afrika! was a dynamic community theatre production workshopped and performed by a local youth group, Alertas da Vida. The show was created for IOM by CMFD to conduct outreach around human trafficking and related issues among the Mozambican community in South Africa, particularly in mining communities.

Performed in Portuguese, with some Shangaan, Zulu and English dialogue, the performance aimed to raise awareness of human trafficking, make people aware of the IOM hotline number, and encourage people who may have been trafficked or potential whistleblowers to seek help.

Workshopped over a two-month period by the Alertas group, Khuluma Afrika! told the story of two sisters, drawn to South Africa by false promises of a better life. Separated, desperate and exploited, the sisters seek solace in letters to one another that express their hardships, hopes and dreams of home.

The aim of participatory theatre is to give individuals and communities the opportunity to talk about and act out issues that affect them, working on the assumption that because they are from the community affected, they are best equipped to speak on the issue. It also ensures greater engagement from audiences, as they are much more likely to relate to and identify with the characters and the story, and understand the messages as coming from their own people and not from an outside influence.

This idea is especially important in countries like South Africa and Mozambique, where initiatives that appear neo-imperialist or driven by outsiders are highly resented. Participatory theatre also allows the participants or cast members to think critically about issues in their communities and gain new insights, and can create a sense of ownership of the problem, encouraging participants to take on the issue in their communities.

Participatory theatre was chosen for the Khuluma Afrika! project for several reasons. By having the cast members involved in the production from script development through to performance, it allowed them to gain a solid
grasp of the issues they were dealing with and the reality behind the story they were telling.

Culture was also a factor in the decision to use theatre. Mozambican culture has a strong emphasis on oral communication and storytelling, so theatre seemed an obvious strategy. Even the cast members, although some were not trained actors, took easily to the medium, seemed to have a solid sense of how to tell a story, and often knew when and how to emphasise or play things up for audiences to increase their enjoyment of the show.

This also ties into the way in which the messages were put across in the drama. By carefully weaving messaging into a story with well developed characters and conflicts, Khuluma Afrika! avoided the pitfall of becoming overly didactic. The show was able to capture audiences’ attention and keep them engaged, even in busy areas such as street corners and markets, because the story was interesting, and the drama was entertaining and well acted. The entertainment value increased audiences’ understanding of the messages in the play. Because audiences were emotionally engaged, many people paid closer attention during the production, and participated more in post-performance discussions, asking questions and thoughtfully filling out evaluations.

Another advantage of theatre is that it is largely a non-threatening medium. This means that the show was able to go into places where perhaps even traffickers could be present, and this was not seen as a threat. As well, it allows people to reflect on sensitive issues, such as violence against women, through the characters. While discussing the characters, people actually reflect on their own lives.

Using theatre allowed IOM and CMFD to produce a highly effective, informative, and entertaining production that combined careful messaging with quality entertainment.

The messaging for Khuluma Afrika! was developed through a process that included both research and consultation with key stakeholders and community members. The first step was to determine the target audience. It was decided that this would be:

- people who have been or know people who have been tricked/ misled into a trafficking situation;
- Mozambican miners’ wives/ domestic workers;
- people/ service providers in mining/ migrant communities – churches, shops, hairdressers;
- miners;
- urban brothels/ sex workers;
- people involved in transport; and
- potential victims and people who can raise awareness among potential victims.
The main drama was accompanied by comedy skits, also created by the Alertas group, that talk about life in the mines, being away from home, migration and discrimination. The show, which toured mine hostels, an informal settlement, public spaces like parks, clinics, churches and street corners in 2006-2007, incorporated drama, music and dance. Because it had few technical or set requirements, it had the unique ability to be performed anywhere.

Where appropriate, actors led a post-performance discussion and evaluation, where audiences could make comments, ask questions and get more information. Feedback from the production was overwhelmingly positive. One audience member at a drop-in centre for sex workers in inner city Johannesburg remarked that the show reflected her own experience of coming to the city from a rural area, saying that someone told her they were arranging a job for her. When she arrived, they brought her to a brothel and forced her into sex work.

An interesting spin-off in the project messaging was that people from various audiences took an anti-discrimination message from the play. In post-performance discussions and written evaluations, many people gave comments like, “no matter where you come from we [are] still the same”, and “we should help each other as Africans.” Without expressly intending to do so, the production engendered a pan-African sense of caring together for each other. This strengthened the overall message of the play, and though it was originally targeted for the Mozambican community, the additional message gave a heightened relevance for non-Mozambican audiences.

In addition to the theatre production, CMFD received a grant by the Global Fund for Women to add a musical component to the project. CMFD worked with local musicians to develop music to deliver messages about gender-based violence, human trafficking and migration. Like the play, it was also developed with a particular focus on community engagement and education.
focus on production value, on creating music that people listen to because it’s good, not because it has a message. The music was incorporated into Khuluma Afrika!, and has been distributed to radio stations and organisations across Southern Africa.

**Dealers/ Troco**

This serial radio drama, set to air in 2008, aims to help people in Zambia and Mozambique, both key source and transit countries, understand what human trafficking is, how it happens, and how to protect themselves if they want to migrate. The 13-part drama weaves trafficking and migration issues into an action-packed storyline, creating a series that is as entertaining as it is informative.

“[The mafia part] gets you interested in the story, then when these other things [like trafficking, HIV, sexual abuse] come in, it’s still interesting, it’s not like you’re just putting out facts. Like on the news or something – people can ignore those things because they’re tired of hearing them. But put in this way it can make you think about it twice.”

- Zambian focus group participant

Titled Dealers in Zambia and Troco in Mozambique, the story follows a family of women traders who inadvertently are caught up in a mafia scandal and an underground human trafficking ring. Through their experiences, and the experiences of their neighbours and friends, listeners are encouraged to ask questions about a range of issues related to trafficking and migration.

There are a wide range of benefits to using radio. It is low cost to produce relative to other mass media like television or film. Since it does not rely on literacy, a wide range of the population can access it. It allows for localisation of the issue, since information about local organisations, interviews with local individuals, etc can follow the drama. Also, community radio in itself is largely participatory, and this can help draw listening communities into the issue. In rural areas especially, listening to the radio is often a family, group or community activity, and radio can make use of these existing listening groups to spark discussion and debate.

The Scan ICT report produced by UNECA states that “Mozambique has a number of radio stations, the most important ones being Rádio Moçambique (RM), Rádio Miramar, RTK, Rádio Terra Verde, RTPAfrica (Portuguese Radio). There are also community radios, which play an important role in the remote areas in the context of information, education, culture, health and civic campaigns. The radio network covers approximately 60-70% of the population throughout the country… However, the global coverage of the national TV broadcasting serves only 15 to 17% of the population” (as of 2001). In addition, UNICEF Mozambique estimates that literacy rates are about 67% for men and 38% for women. Since women are primary targets for the human trafficking message, it is important that coverage is accessible to them. Given access to the various media, concentrating on radio is the strongest media for improving information.

In preparation for the development of Dealers/ Troco, formative research was conducted that included interviews with 100 migrant people living in Johannesburg. This research was used to bring out sub-themes like xenophobia, harassment and corruption by police and...
immigration officials, as well as touch on the root causes of migration. Having first-hand interviews was integral to keeping the story rooted in real experience. The scriptwriters could trust that what they were writing would reflect real situations as they had the stories and experiences of migrant people as a base to work from.

The drama was workshopped in English with a team of scriptwriters, and later adapted and translated into Portuguese for Mozambique. Both the initial story outline and the completed scripts were sent to various stakeholders in Zambia, Mozambique and South Africa for feedback to ensure that the story and characters were applicable to both Zambia and Mozambique.

“[The drama] will teach [people] a lot. There are a lot of people who want to leave. They leave with these big plans that don’t ever happen. This will teach them to be more careful.”
- Zambian focus group participant

“The script sounds like what happens on a daily basis.”
- Mozambican focus group participant

“I realise now that anyone can betray you, to be cautious who I trust and also to exercise caution when given a good looking job offer away from my country.”
- Zambian voice actor

Careful adaptation was an important part of the development of Troco. It is relatively inexpensive to adapt a storyline to another country, thereby increasing the reach of the project without a great deal of additional expense. Producing an adapted drama is also a quicker process since most of the sound effects will be the same, with only a few changes or additions to localise the settings. However, key considerations had to be made to ensure the adaptation of Troco was successful. CMFD needed to ensure the language was accurate, both in terms of translation as well as specific words and phrases, local proverbs and references. The translator needed to have a thorough understanding of both languages so that English idiomatic expressions were not directly translated into a Portuguese phrase that made no sense. The adaptation needed to consider cultural differences and changes to certain details were made accordingly. For example, Zambia is a transit country for trafficking from the Congo to South Africa, so in Dealers, one of the lead characters unknowingly assists in the trafficking of Congolese girl. Mozambique is not a transit country for Congolese, so for Troco this was changed to a girl being trafficked from a remote part of Mozambique through Maputo to South Africa.

CMFD held focus groups in Zambia and Mozambique before recording began to make sure the drama was appealing, exciting, and that the characters and situations reflected reality. Feedback from the focus groups was overwhelmingly positive, with participants saying that they enjoyed the story, and that it reminded them that even though you think it won’t happen to you, trafficking is real.

During the recording, the response from the actors involved was much the same. Interestingly, one of the actors in Zambia had recently been offered a lucrative-
sounding job in Canada, and was considering taking it. After recording the drama, and discussing the job offer with other people on the team, she decided the offer was not worth the potential risk, and turned it down.

Though it is too early to make a definite judgment, this may be an indication of the effectiveness of this story, and of radio drama in general, to talk about human trafficking in a way that encourages people to really think about the issues.

Accompanying the drama is a media guide that will give radio presenters or community organisations the information they need to initiate discussion about the characters and the issues they face. Radio stations will be encouraged to have live phone-in discussions after each episode, and there is a possibility of setting up a text-message line where listeners can text their comments, as well as a blog for the drama in both English and Portuguese.

The series will air in English on radio stations across Zambia, and the adapted Portuguese version will air in Mozambique.

Currently, there is very little popular discourse around human trafficking – IOM being one of the only organisations in the region that has run extensive information and awareness raising campaigns. However, with initiatives like IOM’s Khuluma Afrika! and Dealers/Troco creating more popular awareness of human trafficking and related human rights issues, governments will be encouraged to extend these efforts, and with the World Cup just around the corner, action cannot come soon enough.

References:
Boal, Augusto. Theatre of the Oppressed. Theatre Communications Group, New York, New York

© Writers Bio
Tonya Graham is a projects coordinator working with CMFD (Community Media for Development) Productions, currently working on media and drama to address human rights and health issues.
Abstract
The article will explore the issue of media activism and how voices of rural women have been largely sidelined in advocacy work using the media. Using the media, women can air their concerns and at the same time contribute to their development and that of society as a whole. Because the media is an important tool that can empower women, it is imperative that rural women have access to the media and desist from being passive recipients of views constructed by other people, to active recipients who can react and fight for fair and accurate reporting. Rural women can be empowered so that they can respond thoughtfully and factually to opposing viewpoints. Further, I want to suggest that rural women be considered powerful news sources that can steer public debate on important public issues. Media networks and organisations can play the role of empowering women to approach media coverage on issues that affect them with a vigilant and critical eye. At the same time, journalists should take news to rural women and seek their opinion and comment, which can assist in effecting change.

Key words
media activism, rural women, women’s empowerment

Introduction
The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report of 2001 noted that “development, as often stated, is about expanding choices people have to lead lives they value and fundamental to enlarging choices is building human capabilities –both of men and women across the social and economic spectrum of a society” (Balakrishnan 2002). This assertion acknowledges the importance of recognising the value that women can add to the development of their countries. As such, it is important to expand the knowledge among rural women in particular, enhancing their abilities to negotiate for their
resource share and participate in the public sphere to effect social transformation.

One way in which rural women’s capabilities can be fully used to their development is media activism. In this article, media activism means activism that uses different forms of media to produce and publish news for social movement. Such news is an attempt by different groups such as grassroots, community-based broadcasters and non-governmental organisations to give rural women voice in the media. Such voices are meant to be women’s views in informing policy-makers about the issues that affect them. Media activism is also an alternative that is used to disseminate information that is not usually available in mainstream media. In light of this view, it is important at this point to define the current state of the media with regards to the voices of rural women.

Where are rural women?

The lens through which the media reports on women in Southern Africa shows a disparity on how news constructs rural women and their urban counterparts. The voices of rural women are often even less represented than their urban counterparts. The participation of women in the development of their countries, particularly rural women, will be difficult to realise if media continue to sideline their voices. Women have always had interesting perspectives on how development can be taken on board by different governments and therefore giving them a platform will go a long way in effecting positive societal change.

Through news worthiness and other selection criteria for material as well as the presentation of content, the media marginalise women and produce negative and stereotyped depictions, which belittle women’s contributions to society. News and entertainment media cast women in a narrow range of roles, which treat them as sex objects and define women in terms of their relationship to men. As a result, women are depicted predominantly as entertainers or as victims. News on rural women is often about their plight and small income-generating projects that are supposedly seen as ways in which they can bail themselves out of poverty. Such coverage affects women negatively in that they cease to think big, which in turn affects their overall development in society.

Yet the media can largely be a medium that can provide a balanced picture of women’s diverse lives and contributions to society in a changing world. The advances in information technology have facilitated the creation of a global village, which in turn has given women a number of opportunities to participate in the public sphere and contribute to public policy. However, the opportunities posed by new media are far from benefiting rural women due to lack of access and the capacity, among other things, to use those technologies.

Regional concerns... where are rural women’s voices?

One of the steps to successful media activism and participation is that journalists should become analysts by looking at what kind of news is being covered for instance about rural women. It is also imperative to critically look at whose voices are included and excluded in policy campaigns and broader societal issues. In 2002,
the Media Institute for Southern Africa (MISA), in collaboration with its partner Gender Links, conducted the Gender and Media Baseline Study (GMBS) in 12 Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries, publishing the results in March 2003. The report noted that despite women constituting 51% of the region’s population, they only constitute 17% of news sources (MISA and Gender Links 2003).

At regional level, the Southern African Development Community’s Gender Unit (SADC GU) at the SADC Secretariat in Botswana, established in 1997, remains committed to strengthening sub-regional commitment to ensuring effective inclusion of gender issues into the SADC Programme of Action and Community Building Initiative. In December 2005, the SADC GU convened a regional gender and development consultative conference at which a Gender-Based Regional Integration Plan: Strategic Implementation Framework (SIF) was developed to be implemented within a five-year period 2006-2010 (SARDC & SADC 2006). The major concerns in the region on the media are on representation and portrayal of women in editorial content. Thus, the SIF has called on SADC states to ensure 30% women news sources by 2010 and gender balance in news sources by 2015 and this can be a great opportunity for rural women.

The challenge is on governments and states to move from promises to delivery by ensuring that implementation structures are in place to ensure and effect change in the media industry. Journalists can make a difference by sourcing news from grassroots sources so as to include their voices and make sure that their interests are taken on board.

What has been happening?

Most people are aware of the success achieved by media in communicating vital subjects such as agriculture and public health; educating people about new practices; allowing the actors in rural development to express themselves in local languages; building social consciousness; and mobilising and accelerating change. Across Africa, community-oriented media is helping to empower rural women and other marginalised communities by facilitating access to media, as well as encouraging media to engage with issues affecting this often unheard community.

As part of a project with FAHAMU Networks for Social Justice, Community Media For Development/CMFD Productions, an organisation which builds the capacity of communities, non-profit radio stations and media organisations to strengthen the use of media and communication for development, has been involved in empowering rural women in South Africa, Kenya and Sierra Leone. The idea behind this capacity-building process was to enable rural women to address their own social problems through media.

Working in close partnership with local women’s organisations - Rural Women’s Movement and Indiba-Africa in South Africa, FAHAMU Kenya in Kenya, and The Muloma Rural Women’s Development Association in Sierra Leone – FAHAMU and CMFD hosted a series of training workshops. In each, women from rural communities “planned, researched, conducted interviews, wrote scripts and created a series of features covering a range of issues such as evictions of widows from their marital homes, women’s inheritance rights and the impact of HIV/AIDS.” (Walter 2008) Some of the issues receive little media attention, pointing to why media activism is important to communities and could be a major drive towards rural women’s empowerment.

The women of Muloma Rural Women’s Development Association in Sierra Leone learning how to use a voice recorder for interviews. Credit: Daniel Walter
Another organisation that has been promoting programming through participatory communication is the Development Broadcasting Unit (DBU) based in Malawi. The aim of this initiative is to empower rural communities, in particular women, to be able to engage in productive national and local dialogue on and about development. On the other hand, Dzimwe Community Radio with technical support from the Malawi Media Women’s Association (MAMWA) aims to positively image women in news and at the same time to provide a network of women working in the media (Manyozo 2005). MAMWA builds the capacity of journalists to effectively participate in media activism by highlighting those issues that affect women and project these things in a way that empowers them. MAMWA has also managed to launch a rural-based and women-run community radio station in Nankumba. Such a participatory approach empowers women and imparts the knowledge that women can rescue themselves from inequalities.

The Federation of African Media Women in Southern African Development Community (FAMW-SADC) has made efforts to ensure democratisation of the media so that all sections of society, especially women and marginalised people, have access to and can participate in the media. One of the aims of this organisation is to ensure that the concerns of rural women are accommodated. As such, the FAMW Zimbabwe chapter goes out to the rural areas and gathers women in the community with pressing issues which they provide a platform of discussion. They record these discussions on a cassette and which are then “taken to a neighbouring community to listen to and respond to. Their responses are then taken back to the initial community with solutions offered. A report is compiled and sent to the relevant authorities in an attempt to alert them on the issues and possible solutions” (AMARC Zimbabwe country report). The organisation also takes journalists from the mainstream media to rural communities so that they can compile news about what is happening in such communities and include women as news sources in their coverage.

The World Association of Community Broadcasters (AMARC) Africa continues to promote broadcasting that is focused on such issues as poverty alleviation, conflict resolution, HIV/AIDS and gender empowerment. AMARC seeks to promote social change through the development of a strong community radio sector. The Women in Community Radio Network (WIN), one branch of AMARC which subscribes to the principles of the Beijing Platform of Action, aims to ensure that there is “full and equal integration of gender and empowerment of women in all community radio spheres” (AMARC Africa). The network has built the capacity of its members to analyse the role of women in media and to ensure that women’s voices are captured in radio programmes. Women are also equipped with skills to challenge and change negative images of women in the media.

Promoting programming in local languages also enhances women’s participation in media for development. The Zambian Community Radio Project has been working with established local Eastern Province radio stations and together they have produced and broadcast a radio series titled In Our Village. The series is broadcast in three local languages: Chewa, Chinyanja and Tumbuka. The themes that are broadcast include HIV/AIDS, income generation and education. The shows highlight community success stories and the aim is to encourage replication of successful activities in other villages. The programmes have been successful in that rural women have some sense of ownership of the programmes.

Conclusion

Media activism is a great opportunity for including the voices of rural women and it represents a significant manifestation of a women’s public sphere. The activist role is essential for women’s advancement and it is personally empowering. As noted in some of the best practices in the region, media activism is a means of accomplishing broader social and political goals such as educating women on policies that can make a difference in their lives. In addition, media activism has been aimed at correcting some traditional practices that disempower women, such as property inheritance, virginity testing and also persistent sex role stereotypes in media portrayals.

Women should be empowered by enhancing their skills to talk openly about the issues that affect them. They
should also be able to share concrete experiences of successes in addressing similar problems worldwide. On the other hand, it is imperative that NGO’s whose activities are centred on women and the media build capacity of rural women to be able to respond to unfair media coverage, for instance by writing opinion pieces. There are no strict rules that govern the writing of these opinions and they are an effective way of contributing to overall development in society. The role that women play in development cannot be underestimated and the media has great potential to make a far greater contribution to the advancement of women.

References:
MISA and Gender Links. (2003) Gender and Media Baseline Study: Regional Overview, Johannesburg: MISA and Gender Links  

Writers Bio
Saeanna Chingamuka is a researcher and writer in the area of gender and development. She is currently a final year and full time Master of Arts in Journalism and Media Studies student at Rhodes University. Before coming to Rhodes University she worked for the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC), a regional NGO based in Harare, Zimbabwe as a Programme and Research Assistant in the organisations’ gender department.
Portrait of Domestic Violence in Botswana: A Case Study of The Voice And Botswana Guardian Newspapers
By Dr. Eno Akpabio and Patience Mathambo

Abstract
The overall objective of the study was to determine media representation of domestic violence in Botswana by paying particular attention to the coverage of the problem by a tabloid newspaper – The Voice vis a vis a mainstream newspaper – Botswana Guardian. The choice was informed by the fact that tabloids pay particular attention to human-interest stories whereas mainstream papers tend to focus more on hard news stories. The usual slant of tabloid coverage has been to titillate audiences and improve the bottom line. Mainstream papers, on the other hand, attempt to inform and educate the public and hence the study aimed to see whether these papers’ coverage of this issue was consistent with the universal tabloid and mainstream newspaper tradition. Using content analysis, news stories of violence in households and relationships were examined over a five-year period – 2002-2006. The findings indicate that men were still the leading perpetrators of violence against women but other disturbing facts emerged in that children and women have also begun to exhibit the same abusive tendencies traditionally associated with men, amongst other manifestations of this malaise. It is clear that The Voice’s human-interest brand of journalism covers a lot of ground with particular emphasis on the sensational. Moreover, for effect, bold, breathtaking headlines are employed with pictures to grab attention and make the editions a must read. However, the Botswana Guardian reports these crimes in a straightforward and informative manner, presumably to alert society to the crisis the nation faces. From the findings of this study, it is apparent that The Voice and Botswana Guardian newspapers went beyond the call of duty in tabloid and mainstream newspaper tradition in enlisting in the war against the scourge of domestic violence.

Key words
media, domestic violence, family, relationships
In simple terms, this means that events are perceived differently because human beings do not walk around *tabula rasa*. They bring their own experiences, backgrounds and biases to bear on events that they encounter. Therefore, when called upon to relay what happened, everyone slants the report in many different directions. Journalists too are not immune. Reporters from various media houses treat a news event differently. Therefore, the concern should not be with the slant or emphasis but the social utility. So when the media plays up stories of domestic violence, for instance, does it serve to attract attention to the problem with a view to finding a solution or does it result in apathy and passive acceptance; a sort of “narcotising dysfunction”? (Severin and Tankard 1997) There can be no doubt that by setting such an agenda, and because it is a matter of growing concern in the Botswana society, the necessary awareness and publicity that should bring about a change would occur. This is because the agenda-setting hypothesis is played out fully when “a topic is both potentially interesting to an audience and receives the attention of the mass media” (Williams 1989).

This much is borne out by an advert placed by the Botswana Police Crime Prevention Unit on this issue. It had this headline: “Domestic Violence: it takes a few seconds for a quarrel to turn violent.” It went on to list the fallouts: “jobs can be lost, careers can be stalled, families can be destroyed, many precious lives can be lost.” It urges residents to “Report such incidents to the Police. Call us toll free 0800600144.”
The Voice, Botswana Guardian and other newspapers have inveighed against the phenomenon in their editorials based on its increasing occurrence. In one of its editorials, The Voice condemned the underreporting that has characterised this issue.3

In addition, the paper sincerely believes that by highlighting these issues it can help to bring about changes. It cites some examples:

The newspaper has a long history of running various campaigns. We have been active in highlighting issues connected with the HIV/AIDS epidemic and have worked with people living with HIV/AIDS to give them a platform to talk about the issue... Another issue of note concerns a woman who was badly scarred when her former boyfriend burnt her alive. A kind reader raised money for her to have plastic surgery to reconstruct her face (The Voice 2005 company profile).

The Voice and the Botswana Guardian newspapers will have us believe that their choice of stories and the slant towards human interest reporting is intended to highlight and elicit changes and not an attempt to sell more and more of the papers. Perhaps an examination of the treatment of domestic violence issues may give us an inkling as to whether the editorial judgment of the two papers is altruistic o motivated by readers and sales. The rest of the paper will give a breakdown of the various incidences of domestic violence reported in The Voice and the Botswana Guardian newspapers as well as a discussion of the findings, but first the methodology used for the study.

Methodology

To determine the nature of media reports on domestic violence in Botswana, copies of The Voice and the Botswana Guardian newspapers over a five–year period (2002–2006) were studied. Only stories of violence occurring in households as well as violence in relationships were the concern of this study. The Voice and the Botswana Guardian, from which data for this study were gathered, are weekly tabloid and mainstream newspapers respectively circulating in Botswana. The researchers identified and categorised the stories.

Findings

The Voice newspaper reported more domestic violence stories (190) than the Botswana Guardian (148). There was a phenomenal increase in such reports in The Voice in 2006 (28.4%) over and above the 20% or less recorded in other years. For the Botswana Guardian the highest report was recorded in 2005 (31.7%) [See table 1].

The yearly breakdown of the stories indicate that for the year 2002 in The Voice newspaper, violence by men directed at women constituted the majority of the reports (36.8%) followed by violence directed at children by their parents (21%). The percentage of stories depicting violence by women against men and by children against their parents constituted 7.9% each. Violence among siblings accounted for 5.3%, while family violence directed at women, violence by rivals and violence perpetrated by a maid against her employer constituted 2.6% each. Follow-up stories giving new developments on these domestic situations constituted 13.2%. In the Botswana Guardian, violence by men directed at women comprises the majority of the reports at 30.8% followed by violence directed at children by their parents at 27%.

The percentage of stories portraying violence by rivals and follow-up stories presenting the latest occurrences on these domestic violence situations both comprise 11.5% each. Violence committed by men against other men and violence against men committed by women accounted for 7.7% each. Violence against men by family members comprised 3.8% (see table 2).
In 2004, men continued to dominate news reports in *The Voice* and *Botswana Guardian* newspaper in regards to inflicting harm on their wives and girlfriends, rivalled only in this year as reported by *The Voice* by parents’ violence against children (35.5% each). Violence perpetrated by women against men accounted for 13%.

### Table 2
**Breakdown of domestic violence stories in *The Voice* and *Botswana Guardian* newspapers (2002)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of violence</th>
<th>No. &amp; percentage of stories in <em>The Voice</em></th>
<th>No. &amp; percentage of stories in <em>Botswana Guardian</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men against women</td>
<td>14 (36.8%)</td>
<td>8 (30.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents against children</td>
<td>8 (21.1%)</td>
<td>7 (27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow up stories</td>
<td>5 (13.2%)</td>
<td>3 (11.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children against parents</td>
<td>3 (7.9%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women against men</td>
<td>3 (7.9%)</td>
<td>2 (7.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
<td>2 (5.3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family against women/men</td>
<td>1 (2.6%)</td>
<td>1 (3.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By rivals</td>
<td>1 (2.6%)</td>
<td>3 (11.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maid against employer</td>
<td>1 (2.6%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men against men</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (7.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>38 (100%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>26 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2003, *The Voice* newspaper reported 30 domestic violence stories distributed as follows: men against women constituted the majority (60%) while violence directed against children by their parents accounted for 20%. The reported cases of violence perpetrated by women against men was 6.7%. Violence by children against their parents, family against a member and employer against domestic worker as well as those emanating from divorce proceedings accounted for 1% each. There were 26 domestic violence stories in *Botswana Guardian* distributed as follows:

Violence perpetrated by men against women, which were the highest, amounted to 38.6% while follow-up stories that had been reported earlier by the newspaper made up 27%. Violence by women directed at men and violence by children on parents both accounted for 11.5% each. On the other hand, violence by men against other men, on children by parents and on maid by the employer each accounted for 3.8% (see table 3).

### Table 3
**Breakdown of domestic violence stories in *The Voice* and *Botswana Guardian* newspapers (2003)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of violence</th>
<th>No. &amp; percentage of stories in <em>The Voice</em></th>
<th>No. &amp; percentage of stories in <em>Botswana Guardian</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men against women</td>
<td>18 (60%)</td>
<td>10 (38.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents against children</td>
<td>6 (20%)</td>
<td>1 (3.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women against men</td>
<td>2 (6.7%)</td>
<td>3 (11.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow up stories</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7 (27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children against parents</td>
<td>1 (3.3%)</td>
<td>3 (11.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce proceedings</td>
<td>1 (3.3%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer against maid</td>
<td>1 (3.3%)</td>
<td>1 (3.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family against men</td>
<td>1 (2.6%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men against men</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (3.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>30 (100%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>26 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Violence by siblings and those emanating from divorce proceedings as well by children against parents accounted for 3.2% each. Follow up stories on domestic violence earlier reported by the newspaper accounted for 6.5%. Similarly, Botswana Guardian newspaper reports in regards to men inflicting harm on their wives and girlfriends was an alarming 48%. Violence by men against men followed with 21.7% and violence on children by parents and follow-up stories accounted for 13% each. Violence perpetrated by family members on women was least with 4.3% (see table 4).

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of violence</th>
<th>No. &amp; percentage of stories in The Voice</th>
<th>No. &amp; percentage of stories in Botswana Guardian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men against women</td>
<td>11 (35.5%)</td>
<td>11 (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents against children</td>
<td>11 (35.5%)</td>
<td>3 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women against men</td>
<td>4 (13%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men against men</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (21.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow up stories</td>
<td>2 (6.5%)</td>
<td>3 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family against women</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (4.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children against parents</td>
<td>1 (3.2%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
<td>1 (3.2%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>1 (3.2%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31 (100%)</td>
<td>23 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2005, The Voice recorded 37 domestic violence stories, the highest being violence by men against women with 46%. Follow-up stories were the next in line with 16.2%, followed closely by violence perpetrated by children against parents with 10.8%. The percentage of violence of family against men, siblings and men against men were 5.4% each. The least was violence by women against men, which accounted for 2.7%. The breakdown for 2005 for Botswana Guardian shows that violence perpetrated by men against women remained high (36.2%). While on the other hand violence by parents against children and violence by men on men accounted for 17% each. Violence by women against men followed at 8.5%. The follow-up stories that were recorded were 6.4% and violence of family against men was also the same percentage. Violence of children against parents constituted 4.3% and violence by siblings accounted to 4.3% (see table 5).

Table 5
Breakdown of domestic violence stories in The Voice and Botswana Guardian newspapers (2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of violence</th>
<th>No. &amp; percentage of stories in The Voice</th>
<th>No. &amp; percentage of stories in Botswana Guardian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men against women</td>
<td>17 (46%)</td>
<td>17 (36.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents against children</td>
<td>3 (8.1%)</td>
<td>8 (17.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow up stories</td>
<td>6 (16.2%)</td>
<td>4 (8.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women against men</td>
<td>1 (2.7%)</td>
<td>4 (8.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family against men</td>
<td>2 (5.4%)</td>
<td>3 (6.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
<td>2 (5.4%)</td>
<td>2 (4.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men against men</td>
<td>2 (5.4%)</td>
<td>8 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children against parents</td>
<td>4 (10.8%)</td>
<td>2 (4.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37 (100%)</td>
<td>47 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In examining the specific treatment of domestic violence stories, the discussion will take the form of these sub-divisions:

1. Violence by men against women

From the findings of this study, according to both *The Voice* and the *Botswana Guardian* newspapers, this particular form of violence was more rampant than other forms. Usually, it is this form that readily comes to mind in any discussion of domestic violence, although from the tables above the malaise is spreading in various directions. From the news reports, this particular aspect of domestic violence had various manifestations. One being denial of conjugal rights and associated violence as this news report indicates – “lack of sexual appetite lands man in court.” According to the report, Clophas Sizeze dismissed his wife of fourteen year’s allegation that he cannot perform his conjugal duties because he was cheating on her, even though he admitted being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of violence</th>
<th>No. &amp; percentage of stories in <em>The Voice</em></th>
<th>No. &amp; percentage of stories in <em>Botswana Guardian</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men against women</td>
<td>29 (53.7%)</td>
<td>19 (73.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents against children</td>
<td>8 (14.8%)</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow up stories</td>
<td>1 (1.9%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women against men</td>
<td>2 (3.7%)</td>
<td>1 (3.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family against men</td>
<td>2 (3.7%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man against family</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (3.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
<td>1 (1.9%)</td>
<td>1 (3.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men against men</td>
<td>4 (7.4%)</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children against parents</td>
<td>3 (5.5%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women against women</td>
<td>4 (7.4%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>54 (100%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>26 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
unable to satisfy her sexual yearnings. The wife appeared to be adamant that he live up to his responsibilities, postulating that:

I even asked him to see a doctor about the elapse (sic) of his sexual interest but he just ignored me. Last night when I woke him up so that we could make love, he punched me in the face and threatened to attack me with an axe if I persisted with my sexual demands.

Some of the reports in the two newspapers were about senseless violence that resulted in murder, terrible scars and damage to property. In an article entitled “Married man beheads young lover,” yet another gruesome act of passion-killing is evidenced when the life of a young primary school teacher is ended by a man, suspected to be her lover!

In some other instances, jilted men took out their rage on their ex. In an article entitled, “Teenager kills girlfriend,” one such man repeatedly stabbed his girlfriend because she wanted to end the affair. In some other cases, as in this story captioned “Man batters wife and leaves her for dead,” the scorned Kanye man could not live with his wife’s poor financial management and out of frustration beat her to a pulp with a dehorning iron and left her for dead. Another woman was stabbed between the legs by her lover.

2. Violence by parents against children
Even parents who are supposed to care for their children also wreaked untold havoc on them. In The Voice newspaper, this form of violence took various forms. “Old man on rape trial” reported the rape of the daughter of his step-daughter. Another killed his 10-year-old daughter and yet another couple imprisoned their daughter at home for thirteen years in the belief she was possessed by ancestral spirits.

Some violent forms just go to show the warped minds of their perpetrators. In a story captioned “Daddy’s girl: Daughter’s affair with step father divides family,” the infuriated stepfather dispatched the girl to the great beyond because she was no longer interested in him, having fallen in love with a younger man. Another man killed his daughter on the advice of a traditional witch-doctor in the belief that his cattle would multiply.

Articles in the Botswana Guardian also indicate that men are not the only perpetrators of this form of violence; women also played a role in this ignoble form of abuse. A case in which police found a baby dumped underneath a Motopi tree in Selebi Phikwe by the mother suggests that she wanted the baby to die. Another newly born baby was found in a bush at Area W in Francistown. The baby, who is alleged to have been crying loudly, was found by people passing near the area. The baby was still alive and taken to the hospital.

In a strangely disturbing story entitled “Father faces rape charges,” a 59-year-old man allegedly had sex with his 11-year-old daughter. According to reports, the old man had been sleeping with his school-going child for over a year.

In both papers, there were also other reports of fathers refusing to pay child maintenance.

3. Violence by women against men
The women were not wholly innocent when it comes to abuse. In a story captioned “Burning passion,” when a popular local musician took a new girlfriend, his former girlfriend went to his apartment, locked herself in and set fire to the building. The police eventually rescued her, but not before damages to property were made, put at P12000. Some others did more than arson. A staff nurse confessed to the murder of Sergeant Kotlhao Phatshwane in a story captioned “Girlfriend arrested for BDF soldier’s murder.” In some instances, their actions had unintended consequences as in the news stories “Jilted lover sets himself ablaze” and “Dead man talking”, when the men got in harm’s way because they lost the love of their lives.

4. Children’s violence against parents
Children also had stories in the newspapers, showing that they were not entirely harmless in their relationship with their parents. In a news story entitled “A hungry man is an angry man,” the report had it that:

Police in Francistown are holding a 23-year-old man who allegedly killed his mother over a plate of food for
Botswana Guardian newspapers have devoted a lot of attention/space to this phenomenon. One of the reasons why the problem has developed horns and hoofs is the cover-up associated with the malaise. People want to give the impression that their homes and marriages are heaven on earth when so much abuse is going on behind closed doors. Highlighting the problem is a first step to solving it.

Much good comes from newspapers’ reports on domestic violence as this brings the issue forcefully into the public domain. Moreover, it is gratifying to note that in a number of instances, in both papers, the law enforcement agents responded in a timely manner to these incidences. In fact, a number of the reports were either sourced from court proceedings or attributed to the police.

Publicising such attempts at enforcing one’s rights should embolden other victims of abuse to come forward and get perpetrators punished.

In spite of these positives, it is also worrying to see so much domestic violence going on. And even though the findings uphold the ubiquitous reality that men are the main culprits when it comes to abusing women, women also manifest very violent tendencies.

While it is true that the media cannot correctly reflect society in its entirety, as they seem to pander to the sensational, the number of reports and the forms of violence within this five-year period is a cause for concern. This is because there would be more cases of abuse than are reported to the authorities or make it to the pages of newspapers. It is worth repeating that the case of Botswana is a shining example of how these matters ought to be treated. Many in Africa endure hell in their households and relationships and refuse to report such abuses. Such posture has to do with the belief, albeit erroneous, that it is ok for a man to beat his wife. Reports of such beatings brought to the attention of in-laws are often papered over as normal.

One criticism against the media has been the tendency to give one-off treatment to issues in the news. This means that from making headlines, stories can recede into the inside pages and eventually disappear off the radar. This is in spite of the fact that audience members
GENDER AND MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

may still be interested in following the event to its climax. The two newspapers have successfully made efforts to follow some stories, hence giving readers an opportunity to keep abreast of events as they unfold. However, of course, there were many other stories that did not have follow-up and it is not because they were terminal! Overall, the papers deserve commendation for helping to highlight and curb the problem of domestic violence.

Newspaper sources

1. The Voice Friday May 31, 2002 p.7
2. The Voice Friday July 12, 2005 no page number indicated
3. The Voice Friday August 2, 2002 p.6
4. The Voice Friday January 1, 2004 p.1
5. The Voice Friday March 1, 2002 p.3
7. Botswana Guardian October 8, 2003 p.3
8. Botswana Guardian September 6, 2002 p.2
9. The Voice January 14, 2005 p.2
10. The Voice Friday May 21, 2004 p.7
11. The Voice Friday January 23, p.3
12. The Voice Friday May 2, 2003 p.1
13. The Voice Friday June 20, 2003 p.1
14. The Voice Friday March 12, 2004 p.2
15. Botswana Guardian May 27, 2005 p.1
16. Botswana Guardian November 11, 2005 p.1
17. Botswana Guardian October 11, 2002 p.9
18. The Voice Friday March 12, 2004 p.3
19. The Voice Friday February 21, 2003 p.5
20. The Voice Friday November 15, 2002 p.2
21. The Voice Friday September 5, 2003 p.1
22. The Voice Friday April 5, 2002 p.2
23. The Voice Friday April 19, 2002 p.5
24. The Voice Friday March 28, 2003 pp 1-2
25. The Voice Friday July 26, 2002 p.5
26. The Voice Friday July 12, 2002 p.5
27. The Voice Friday June 25, 2004 p.2
28. The Voice Friday November 22, 2002 p.5
29. The Voice Friday January 24 2003 p.1
30. The Voice Friday October 24, 2003 p.5

References:


Writers Bio

Eno Akpabio, Ph.D is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Media Studies, University of Botswana. Prior to joining the department, he was a Lecturer in the Department of Mass Communication, University of Lagos, Nigeria. His publications include two books (African Communications Systems: An Introductory Text and Writing to Win Hearts and Minds), many chapters in books as well as numerous articles in journals. His research interests spans applied and indigenous communication as well as popular culture. He has served as facilitator/guest speaker in the areas of creative writing, news writing and editing, marketing, public relations and communication skills amongst others.

Patience Mathambo, is a Staff Development Fellow in the Department of Media Studies at the University of Botswana. She has a degree obtained at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth, South Africa where she majored in Public Relations Management.