



“Halfway to the end point of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the world is failing to achieve gender equality, making it an increasingly distant goal [...] With the clock ticking, urgency mounts.”

-- *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The Gender Snapshot 2023*.

UN Women and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division

The pushback against gender equality is growing, with patterns of increasing resistance to women’s rights. The 2023 UN report on the SDGs states that the gender equality goal may not be achieved without urgent action. Priority actions identified in the Gender Snapshot report (UNW/DESA, 2023) include to challenge biased social norms in order to bring about the transformation that gender equality requires.

The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), a worldwide research and advocacy initiative for gender equality in and through the news media running since 1995 in more than 100 countries, has consistently sought to bring news media accountability into the struggle for gender equality and women’s human rights. In recent years, the Project has made the case for gender equality, diversity and inclusion as a hallmark of media professionalism. The 2025 edition will mark the 30-year milestone of the GMMP.

THE STRATEGY

Media monitoring makes it possible to shift the conversation from anecdotes to statistical evidence necessary for dialogue and change. The GMMP’s strategy of taking the pulse of gender in the news media once every five years has led to the collection of time series data spanning the period 1995 to 2020, with the next global monitoring scheduled for 2025. GMMP media monitoring is a collaborative effort involving volunteer media monitors from civil society, academia and the media industry in more than 100 countries. The global, regional and country comparative statistics and analyses on gender dimensions in news media across time inform advocacy, critical media literacy from a gender perspective, and evidence-based media/communication policy-making.

A BRIEF HISTORY

The GMMP began with a mandate from the Women Empowering Communication conference (Bangkok, 1994) to organize one day at the start of 1995 for the monitoring of all media and use the data as the basis for an analysis of where women were. WACC had convened the conference in partnership with Isis International (Manila) and the International Women’s Tribune Centre (New York) informed by insights from a series of regional and national consultations on the need for a global women’s conference to reassess communication developments and plan actions for the future. Since then, five global monitoring studies have been carried out and the results published in [Global Media Monitoring: Women’s Participation in the News](#) (MediaWatch-Canada, 1995) and the WACC-issued *Who makes the news? The Global Media Monitoring Project* [2000](#), [2005](#), [2010](#), [2015](#) and [2020](#) reports. By 2020, GMMP participation had expanded into 116 countries covering news published in print, broadcast, news websites, including social media platforms.

POLICY MANDATE

The GMMP responds to recommendations in the 1994 [Bangkok Declaration](#), the 2017 [New York Declaration](#) and [Section J](#) of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (PfA) adopted at the Fourth UN World Conference on Women. The PfA notes: ‘The continued projection of negative and degrading images of women in media communications – electronic, print, visual and audio – must be changed’ (para 236). The issues on lack of a balanced portrayal of women’s diverse lives and contributions to society, the negative effects of violent or degrading media on women and their participation in society and the potential limits posed to women by media reinforcement of traditional gender roles are raised. Concerns about media portrayal are echoed in Para 125 (j) that underlines the need to “raise awareness of the responsibility of media in promoting non-stereotyped images of women and men, as well as in eliminating patterns of media presentation that generate violence, and encourage those responsible for media content to establish professional guidelines and codes of conduct; also raise awareness of the important role of the media in

The GMMP is run by WACC – an incorporated charitable organisation in Canada (438311-7) with its global secretariat at 80 Hayden Street, M4Y 3G2, ON, Canada. WACC is also a UK Registered Charity (296073) and a Company registered in England and Wales (2082273) with its Registered Office at First Floor, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1BE, United Kingdom.

informing and educating people about the causes and effects of violence against women and in stimulating public debate on the topic." Further, para 129 (d) recommends encouraging "the media to examine the impact of gender role stereotypes ... which foster gender-based violence and inequalities, and how they are transmitted during the life cycle and take measure to eliminate these negative images with a view to promoting a violence-free society".

RECENT IMPACT

In 2015, the GMMP contributed evidence to the UN General Secretary's report on the 15-year review of the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women's participation in peace processes. (UN Women, 2015. <https://wps.unwomen.org>).

The 2020 data collection tools made provision for country partners to integrate indicators of special interest in the national contexts. In Latin America this led to insights on the participation of indigenous peoples in mainstream news. Similarly, in other regions and countries, evidence was gathered on news media portrayal and representation of persons with disabilities, migrants, racialized, ethnic minorities and other marginalized groups. The data are crucial to build understanding and to provide a basis for action towards inclusive media that recognize and respond to the needs and interests of all of society.

The 2020 experience was brought to bear in delivery of a policy innovation lab for municipal regulators from Spanish speaking countries participating at the 6th Ibero-American Summit of Local Gender Agendas. The findings lent evidence to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) parliament to strengthen the 2022 Joint Declaration of the Special Rapporteurs on Freedom of Expression and Gender Justice. In numerous countries, the findings continue to be applied in media professional training and lobbying of local media and communication regulators.

The work of GMMP Network partners is anchored in the respective national and regional women's rights and gender equality instruments. In Africa for instance, network partners underline the centrality of media for the achievement of the 2003 Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol). They apply the methodology in training programmes and use findings as a yardstick and tool for progress monitoring and measurement. In Uganda, the partner applied the methodology to carry out a gender media analysis on media laws due for reform, and to draft a national strategy to mainstream gender in Uganda's media sector. The Kampala-based African Centre for Media Excellence references GMMP findings in its awareness-building initiatives.

Partners worldwide collaborate with UN Women country offices and other international development bodies in various ways. Across Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe, they bring the expertise gained from the GMMP to intervene on key issues of concern such as, media training on gender-responsive reporting on violence against women, gender analysis of political and election news, and evidence-based policy advocacy. Various network members worldwide bring the knowledge and skills to strengthen local women's rights and gender equality movements through approaches such as critical media literacy capacity-building for women, youth and general civil society.

INNOVATIONS FOR 2025 (GMMP+30)

The project will extend the time series data collected since 1995. It will broaden participation to countries for which no data exist. The data collection tools will continue to make provision for country partners to integrate indicators of special interest in the national contexts. We will seek to deepen attention on intersectionality, bringing to the foreground the roles, voices and concerns of multiply marginalized groups. GMMP 2025 will gather new data on the global top priority concerns, with plans for a special focus on gender in climate change reporting, as well as a strengthened emphasis on gender-based violence journalism in offline and online news platforms. The GMMP's digital media analysis component will expand the special focus on coverage of GBV to gather evidence from the related user comments sections on news websites and news social media platforms.

In view of the 20th Anniversary of the World Summit for the Information Society (WSIS 2025), the report will incorporate actions to support gender-related recommendations adopted at the Summit aimed at advancing a gender-violence-free digital sphere. Finally, GMMP 2025 purposes to contribute to the 30-year review of progress in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action scheduled for the same year and specifically, the critical areas "violence against women" (section d) "women and media" (section j).

For further information, please contact the coordinator GMMP@waccglobal.org.