COUNTRY REPORT: RWANDA

GMMP+30

Global Media
Monitoring
Project

WACC
communication for all

:Fojo
Linnaeus University

In Partnership with

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FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

Acknowledgements

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Gender Equality in the News Media Index (GEM-I) 2025

−4.6

−83.4

1. The GEM-Index calculates the average gender gap in the news based on 6 GMMP indicators. A score of +100 means that all persons in the news (subjects, sources and reporters) are women. A score of -100 indicates that all persons in the news are men. 0 indicates gender equality. 2. The map is based on the latest GEM-I values for each country. GMMP 2020 values are applied for those that did not participate in the 2025 edition. 3. See the report for details on the calculation.

Map: GMMP · Source: Global Media Monitoring Project · Created with Datawrapper

PREFACE

Global Context

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action premised that "Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace" (United Nations, 1995). Specifically, the Declaration in its Section "J" established the following objectives related to women and media: Strategic objective J1. "Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication. Strategic Objective J2. Promote a balanced and nonstereotyped portrayal of women in the media" (United Nations, 1995).

The first global monitoring was sparked by a need for empirical evidence on women's place, role and participation in the news.[1] The Beijing Platform for Action thereafter enshrined media monitoring as a strategy to achieve strategic objective J1. Non-governmental organizations

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[1] Read more in the full text of the Bangkok Declaration, outcome of the 1994 "Women Empowering Communication" conference at which the idea of a GMMP was birthed. https://whomakesthenews.org/wp-content/uploads/who-makes-the-news/Imported/documents/bangkok%20declaration.pdf

and media professional associations were encouraged to establish "media watch groups that can monitor the media and consult with the media to ensure that women's needs and concerns are properly reflected" (para 242a)

The GMMP evolved into the largest and longest-running research and advocacy initiative for gender equality in and through the news media. In five-year spurts since 1995, the GMMP takes a snapshot of key gender equality dimensions in the news. Across thirty years to date, the GMMP has built the data from over 160 countries, with at least one observation for each variable and country.

The global news media landscape has changed profoundly, yet women's place within it has not. The evolution of women's encounters with the sector across the period has not been as dramatic. The GMMP reveals that, in many ways, the status quo of gross underrepresentation and misrepresentation in content has persisted.

Global findings. The highlights

The global findings are based on 29,935 news articles containing 58,321 people and 26,560 news personnel in 94 countries on the 7th global monitoring day, May 6, 2025.

1. Thirty years ago, the report of the first GMMP called for a shift in coverage beyond the male-dominated realms of political and economic power. Not only has the hierarchy of "hard news" in legacy media persisted across time, it has also crossed over into digital outlets.

Digitalization did not bring a radical break from the patriarchal norms of traditional journalism. Instead, it continues to reinforce and amplify a news hierarchy that privileges spheres and issues centred on power, namely, those dominated by men. The challenge is threefold. First, to dismantle the "hard news" bias, second, to integrate more intentionally spaces and issues of greater concern to women, and third, to enable visibility and voice to women present in traditionally male-dominated spaces.

2. After a period of slow but steady improvement, progress toward gender parity in the news has flatlined since around 2010, failing to reach 50% in any media type.

Thirty years after Beijing, women are 26% of those seen, heard, or spoken about in legacy news (29% on news websites). The needle has shifted 9 points in legacy media since 1995, and 4 points in online news during the past 10 years.

Minority groups are five points more likely to be present in digital news than in legacy media. The probability of minority women being featured in the news as the main protagonists or as interviewees is two in a hundred in traditional media (3% for men) and 4% on news websites (5% for men).

3. Women's visibility in political and economic news has increased significantly – by 15 points each – over the past three decades.

The severe underrepresentation noted in 1995 (7% in political news, 10% in economic news) has improved. Women's presence in sports news is abysmal, at only 15% of news subjects and sources.

4. The proportion of women providing expert testimony has grown remarkably over the decades, showing the highest increase (+7 points) in digital news since 2015.

In legacy media, the gender gap in authoritative roles as experts and spokespersons has closed at a slower pace than for persons providing testimony based on popular opinion and personal experience – ordinary roles that require no specialized knowledge.

5. Patterns of gender-biased portrayal endure despite decades of change in women's roles in the physical world

Women have remained about twice as likely as men to be portrayed as victims since 2010. Historically, women were most often portrayed as victims of accidents or poverty. This pattern was overturned in 2025, with "other crime" and "domestic violence" (by intimate partners and family members) becoming the top victim categories.

Women depicted as survivors in legacy media were most likely to have survived "accidents, natural disasters, poverty, and disease" in previous GMMP studies. In 2025, they are most frequently portrayed as domestic violence survivors in equal proportion to accident/disaster survivors.

The over-representation of women as homemakers/parents decreased from 81% in 2000 to 73% in 2025, indicating progress although a persistent journalistic bias toward defining women by domestic roles, despite women's current unprecedented engagement in work outside the home. Underrepresentation in occupations and in positions of power has remained consistent.

The tendency to describe women by their age and physical attributes has also persisted. They have been photographed more often than men (a 7–9-point difference) over the past two decades, with qualitative analysis continuing to show patterns of sexualized portrayal.

6. Gender inequality in the news is much more acute than in the lived experience.

Gender equality in the news, measured by the GEM Index, is moderately correlated with gender indices in other development sectors such as the Gender Social Norms Index. Between 65% to 75% of media gender inequality cannot be explained by reality, indicating

the presence of other confounding factors at play that co-mingle to produce the prevailing gendered news narratives.

7. Women's share as reporters in stories published in newspapers and aired on television and radio has risen and stagnated in spurts since 1995.

Globally, the proportion of women as reporters in legacy media rose 6 points from 2000 to 2005, stalling at 37% for 10 years until 2015, rising 3 points again between 2015 to 2020, and gaining just two points in the past five years.   The regions approach and consistently fail to achieve parity, except for the Pacific and the Caribbean, exactly at equality, and North America just a single point below. The findings suggest most news systems are willing to absorb a certain proportion of female labor in the reporter role, but not to cede to full numerical gender equality.

In legacy news media, the gender gap in political reporting has narrowed the fastest (+13 points in 25 years) – outside the sports beat – yet it remains the topic least reported by women. For the first time in 25 years, women now constitute a majority (52%) of science and health reporters. The new tracking of sports news reveals a severely low proportion of female reporters (17%).

Women's share as reporters in national and international stories has seen significant long-term growth (+18 and +16 points, respectively).

8. The sex of the journalist influences the gender lens in stories

The gender lens has historically been found to be sharper in articles by women reporters. Across three decades, a consistent 5–6-point gender gap has existed in source selection, where female reporters feature more female sources than their male colleagues. This gap is even wider (9 points) in digital news. The gender-lens gap between female and male journalists is largest on the indicator regarding women's centrality in the news. The difference is just 1-2 points on other indicators measuring news quality from a gender perspective, but that it exists is an important finding.

9. Gender-based violence is a blind spot in the news. When GBV makes the news, however, the gender lens in reporting is sharper than in stories on all other topics.

Less than 2% of stories cover gender-based violence. This low count is at odds with the serious nature of GBV affecting one in three women and girls worldwide.

Stories on gender-based violence produced by female journalists are more likely to raise gender (in)equality issues than those by men.

While the gender lens is sharper in GBV stories compared to other major topics, there remains enormous room for improvement if news media are to participate in creating a society in which GBV is understood as deviant, criminal, and a violation of fundamental human rights.

10. The bulk of news stories remains deficient in the GMMP dimensions of quality from a gender perspective

The proportion of news stories that clearly challenge gender stereotypes rose from 3% (2005) to 6% (2010) but declined and has remained stagnant at 3-4% since 2015. This indicates an entrenchment of stereotypes in reporting and a consistent journalistic failure to produce content that disrupts stereotypical narratives.

The regional comparisons show significant variations. North American news is exceptional, clearly challenging gender stereotypes in 19% of stories, in sharp contrast to Middle Eastern news, where only 1% overturn simplistic narratives about the roles, attributes, and capabilities of people based on gender.

Gender stereotypes are most prevalent in stories about politics and the economy, both spheres where men are the majority power holders. Over time, challenging stereotypes remains largely confined to topics in which it is safer to challenge the skewed gender power relations status quo. These are celebrity/arts/media, and social/legal news. GBV stories challenge gender stereotypes more than any other news, at 17%. While commendable, this level is insufficient to transform the harmful norms that perpetuate such violence.

The likelihood of news stories to cite human rights or gender equality frameworks has fluctuated modestly, hovering between 7% and 11% over the 15 years that this indicator has been measured. A human rights lens is absent in approximately 9 out of 10 stories.

Online stories are less likely to integrate a human rights lens than those published in legacy media, but the probability of women being the central protagonists in a news story is higher in digital news (15%, compared to 10% in traditional news).

In all story topics except for GBV news, the sex of the reporter matters slightly for the integration of a gender lens. 3% of stories by women clearly challenge gender stereotypes, compared to 2% of those by men. 12% of stories by women highlight gender (in)equality issues, compared to 10% for men. 8% of articles by women adopt a human rights framing, compared to 7% of those by men. In the case of GBV stories, for instance, female reporters are more than 10 points more likely to call attention to gender inequality than those by men.

The GMMP message in 2025, thirty years post-Beijing, is a global news industry whose progress towards gender equality has reached a crossroads.

The almost standstill pace of change in the past 15 years points to a need for a radical shift in strategies by all actors in the news ecosystem to break the inertia. Under the current

conditions and with the current tools, remarkable change towards gender equality is unlikely.

The negative impacts of digitalization on the news industry and gender relations online as a whole will undoubtedly make the task of securing women's rights in and through digital news more complex.

Regional Context

The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) 2025 research on gender in the news was conducted on 6 May 2025 across 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The monitoring captured news content across print, radio, television, and internet-based platforms, providing a snapshot of the regional news agenda on the monitoring day.

Across all media platforms, the news agenda was dominated by "hard news" topics, primarily within three broad categories: Politics and Governance, Economy, and Social and Legal issues. This distribution was largely consistent across legacy media and digital platforms. However, internet-based news demonstrated an even stronger emphasis on Politics and Governance compared to print, radio, and television.

Of the nine news categories monitored, Politics and Governance accounted for the largest share of coverage, representing 36% of all news stories online. This concentration highlights the continued dominance of political content in the regional news agenda.

Fig 1. Overall distribution of issues in the news
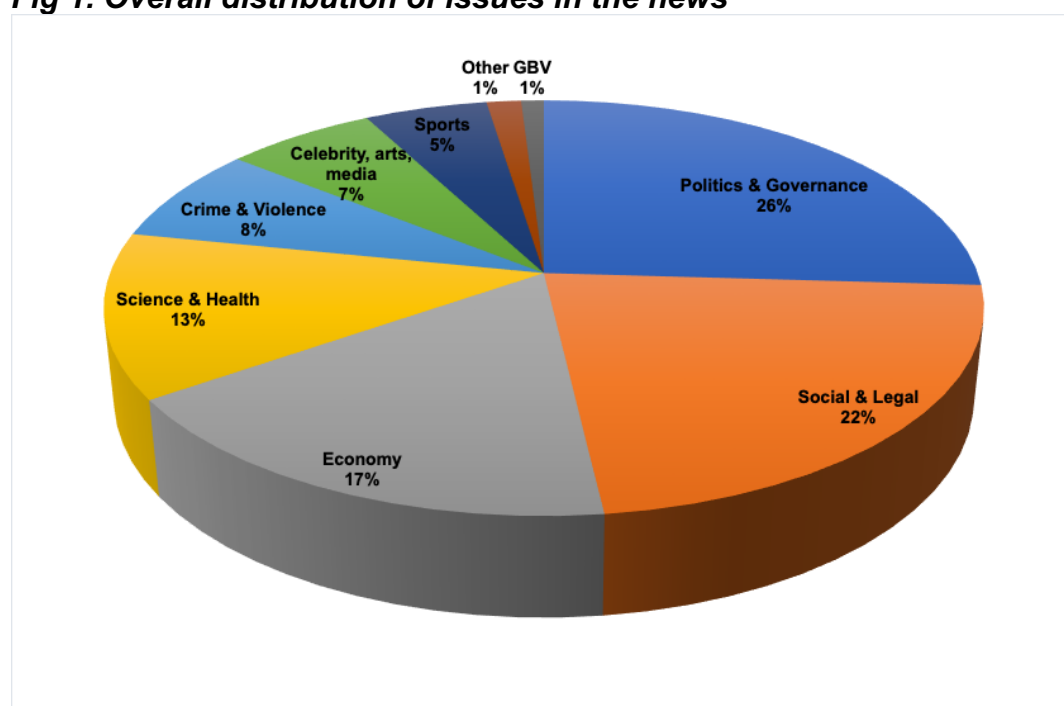
Gender Representation in the News

Women constitute 23% of all people who are seen, heard, or spoken about in the news in Africa, falling below the global average of 26% in 2025. This indicates a gender gap in news representation across the region.

The only news topic in which women outnumber men as news sources is gender-based violence (GBV), where women account for 53% of those featured. While this reflects women's centrality as subjects of GBV reporting, it also underscores a pattern in which women's visibility in the news is closely linked to experiences of victimisation rather than authority or expertise.

Women are also more visible in news stories categorised as "softer beats," particularly Science and Health, as well as Celebrity, Arts, and Media. In contrast, women remain significantly underrepresented in hard news areas such as politics, economics, and security, where news agendas are more closely associated with power, decision-making, and influence.

Fig 2. Source distribution by topic
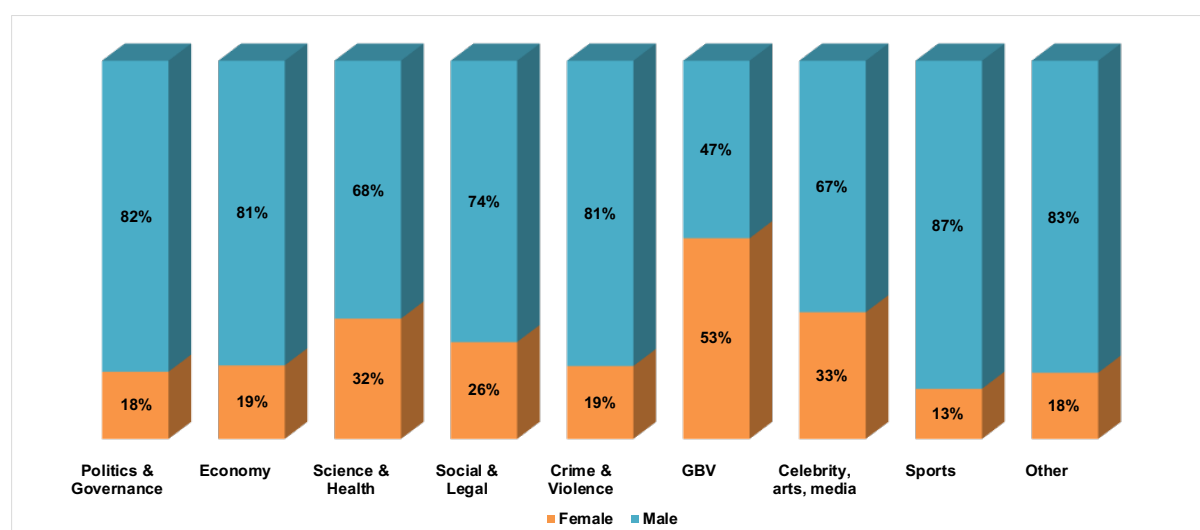
Occupation of people represented in the news

The occupational distribution of news subjects reflects whose voices and perspectives dominate the news agenda. In 2025, the most visible occupational groups in the news are politicians or members of Parliament (25%) and government employees, public servants, and spokespersons (20%). These are positions associated with decision-making and institutional power. Within these highly visible categories, women are underrepresented, constituting only 17% of politicians and 23% of government employees appearing in the news.

Women's visibility in the news is concentrated in occupational categories that are either marginal to the news agenda or reinforce traditional gender roles. Women account for 61% of news subjects identified as homemakers or parents, compared to 39% of men, despite this category representing only 1% of all people featured in the news. Women also make up a higher proportion of news subjects among students, pupils, and schoolchildren (54%), a group that receives limited overall coverage. Near parity is observed in categories such as celebrities, artists, actors, writers, singers, health workers, and villagers or residents, although these groups are not among the most frequently featured in news content.

In contrast, women are least visible in occupational groups linked to authority, security, and moral leadership. Only 5% of news subjects identified as police or military personnel are women, and women similarly account for just 5% of religious figures appearing in the news. Women's representation in science and technology professions also remains low, reflecting persistent gender gaps in the visibility of women in sectors central to innovation and development.

Fig 3. Highlights of occupations featured in the news

Most visible people in the news	%	Most visible women in the news	%	Least visible women in the news	%
Politician/ member of parliament,	25	Homemaker/parent	61	Police/ military etc	5
Government employee, public servant, spokesperson	20	Student/pupil/schoolchild	54	Religious figure	5
		Celebrity, artist, actor, writer, singer, TV personality	50	Science and technology professional	11

Key Trends

- News content continues to be dominated by men, who are more likely to appear as authoritative sources and thus shape the news agenda.
- Women's presence in the news is most pronounced in caregiving and domestic roles, reinforcing gender stereotypes, despite these roles accounting for a very small share of overall news subjects.
- Women are least visible in security-related occupations and as religious leaders, underscoring structural barriers to women's participation and recognition in positions of power and influence.

Gender lens of stories by sex of reporter

Women journalists in African news are fewer than men regardless of the platform. Online media however has the most worrying trend as women reporters make up the lowest numbers at just 20% of reporters.

Across the categories monitored however, women reporters in African news are more likely than male reporters to feature women as news subjects. For example, in Politics and Governance, stories reported by women feature women as news subjects in 32% of cases, compared to 25% when the reporter is male. A similar pattern is evident in Sports, where women reporters include women as news subjects in 41% of stories, compared to 20% in stories reported by men.

Despite this difference, men continue to dominate as news subjects regardless of the sex of the reporter. Even when women report on Politics and Governance, men still account for the majority of news subjects (68%). This suggests that the presence of women journalists alone does not substantially change sourcing patterns which are predominantly male.

An exception to this pattern is observed in coverage of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). In this category, women constitute the majority of news subjects irrespective of the reporter's sex: 56% when the reporter is female and 55% when the reporter is male. While this reflects women's centrality in GBV reporting, it also reinforces women's presence in the news in contexts of victimisation rather than leadership, expertise, or decision-making.

Gender stereotypes in news reporting

Stories that focus specifically on women remain limited, accounting for just 11% of all news coverage. Where women-focused stories do appear, they are most prevalent in reporting on Gender-Based Violence (GBV), where women are central as subjects.

Fig 4. Distribution of stories that focused on women within specific issues
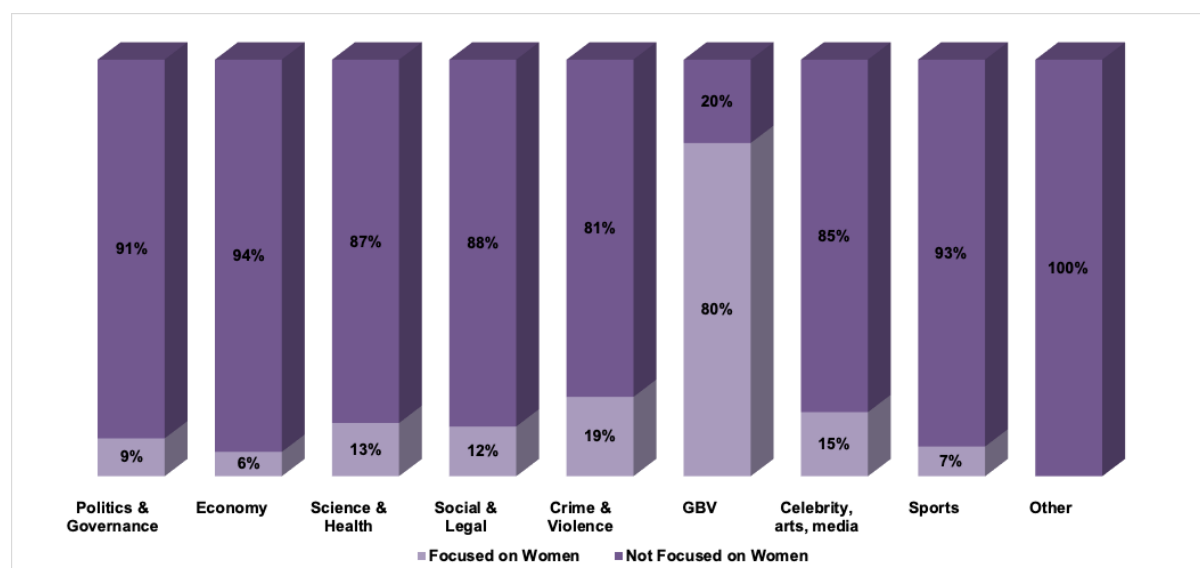
GBV stories are also the least likely to contain gender stereotypes, with only 1% reinforcing stereotypical portrayals. Notably, these stories challenge gender stereotypes in 46% of cases.

This contrasts sharply with other news categories, where stereotypical representations are more common. Gender stereotypes are present in 27% of Politics and Government stories, 24% of Social and Legal stories, and 17% of Economy-related coverage.

Despite these variations across topics, African news content continues to reproduce gendered assumptions, particularly through references to women's family roles. Women's family status is mentioned in 8% of news stories, compared to just 2% for men, reinforcing traditional gender norms and expectations.

Reporting on Gender-Based Violence

In coverage of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), forms of violence occurring in intimate or private spaces are more likely to be framed through gender stereotypes. Stories reported in legacy media show gender stereotypes in 67% of cases, while 50% of online GBV stories reflect stereotypical portrayals. This contrasts sharply with reporting on intimate partner violence against men and gender-diverse persons, where all monitored stories (100%) contain gender stereotypes.

Conversely, GBV that occurs in more visible public or digital spaces is less likely to be reported through a stereotypical lens. No gender stereotypes were identified in stories on sexual harassment or technology-facilitated GBV. These patterns suggest that newsroom narratives continue to rely on traditional gender norms when reporting on violence in private spaces, while emerging and publicly visible forms of GBV are more likely to be framed in ways that avoid stereotypical assumptions.

Conclusion

Monitoring of the news in Africa on the monitoring day shows a persistence of gender gaps in news representation particularly in hard news. Women's voices, experiences and expertise continues to play a limited role in shaping public discourse. Women's visibility remains concentrated in stereotypical roles and narratives of victimisation, rather than in positions of authority. Transforming these patterns requires deliberate and sustained action by news organisations, media regulators, journalism training institutions, and policy actors. Deliberate news room policies and investment in gender-sensitive journalism is necessary to translate commitments to practice.

National Context

Rwanda is a landlocked country in the Great Lakes region of East Africa, with an estimated population of 13.2 million people in 2025 (NISR, 2023) and 51.5% are women. The country has undergone a remarkable socio-economic transformation over the past three decades, emerging as one of Africa's fastest-growing economies, with strong governance reforms, progressive social policies, and a national commitment to gender equality embedded in its development agenda (World Bank, 2024).

Since the aftermath of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, Rwanda has prioritized national unity, reconciliation, and institutional rebuilding. The country operates under a decentralized governance framework, which strengthens local participation and ensures community involvement in decision-making (RGB, 2023). Rwanda is often cited as a global model for post-conflict reconstruction and governance stability, maintaining consistently high rankings in transparency, rule of law, and anti-corruption indicators (Transparency International, 2024).

Media Landscape and Regulatory Environment

Rwanda's media sector has undergone significant reforms aimed at strengthening professionalism, accountability, and independence. The Media Law revisions of 2013 and subsequent regulatory frameworks promote self-regulation, media pluralism, and ethical journalism (RURA, 2023). The sector includes print, broadcast, and a rapidly expanding digital media ecosystem driven by increased internet penetration, reaching 64.3% by early 2025 (MINICT, 2025).

While progress continues, challenges persist, including limited financial sustainability of media houses, restricted investigative reporting capacity, and the need for continuous professional development for journalists. These constraints influence the types of stories covered, the diversity of voices represented, and the degree to which gender-sensitive reporting is mainstreamed (Fojo Media Institute, 2024).

Gender Equality Context

Rwanda is globally recognized for its strong achievements in gender equality. Women hold 61% of parliamentary seats, the highest proportion in the world (IPU, 2024). Gender equality is constitutionally protected, and national policies, including the National Gender Policy and the Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) frameworks reinforce women's rights, gender-responsive governance, and equal participation in leadership (GMO, 2024).

However, despite these gains, gender inequalities persist in media representation, economic empowerment, and access to decision-making roles within the media industry.

Studies reveal that women remain underrepresented in senior editorial positions and are often portrayed through stereotypical lenses in news content (RMP Baseline Study, 2023). This makes Rwanda's participation in the GMMP 2025 crucial for monitoring progress, identifying gaps, and informing evidence-based interventions.

Digital Transformation and Media Consumption Trends

Rapid digitalization continues to reshape Rwanda's media consumption patterns. Social media platforms, particularly WhatsApp, YouTube, X (formerly Twitter), and TikTok dominate information flow, especially among young people. With the expansion of 4G and the introduction of 5G pilot zones, digital journalism and online newsrooms are increasingly central to Rwanda's information ecosystem (MINICT, 2025).

Yet, digital access disparities still exist, especially for rural women who face affordability constraints, limited digital skills, and unequal access to smartphones and internet-enabled devices (UN Women, 2024). These disparities influence who becomes visible in the media and whose perspectives shape public discourse, an issue directly aligned with GMMP's mandate.

Why GMMP 2025 Matters for Rwanda

Rwanda's participation in the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) 2025 was led by FOJO Media Institute through the Rwanda Media Programme, a five-year project to build the capacity of the Rwandan Media. This participation is a vital opportunity to:

- Assess progress in gender-responsive journalism
- Identify persistent gender stereotypes in news coverage
- Understand representation gaps in content, sources, and journalistic leadership
- Generate evidence to guide national advocacy and media reforms
- Support ongoing national initiatives including gender mainstreaming in media houses, anti-harassment policies, and professional capacity building

As the country continues investing in a more inclusive media landscape, the GMMP 2025 results offer a necessary lens for measuring whether Rwanda's media output reflects its broader commitments to equality, diversity, and social justice.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) 2025 marks thirty years of systematic monitoring of gender equality in the news media worldwide. Conducted every five years since 1995, the GMMP provides the largest and longest-running evidence base on women's presence, roles, and portrayal in news content and journalistic practice. Thirty years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the GMMP 2025 findings confirm that progress toward gender equality in the news has slowed significantly, reaching a critical crossroads globally.

- Globally, women remain significantly underrepresented in the news, and progress has largely stagnated over the past 15 years. In 2025, women constituted only 26% of news subjects in legacy media and 29% in online news, with no media type reaching parity. While gains were recorded in earlier decades, particularly between 1995 and 2010, recent progress has plateaued, indicating that existing strategies are insufficient to disrupt entrenched gender hierarchies in news production and representation.

- The structure of news continues to privilege "hard news" topics dominated by men, both in traditional and digital media. Political and economic news remains male-dominated globally, and digitalisation has not transformed editorial priorities as once anticipated. Instead, digital news largely reproduces the same gendered hierarchies found in legacy media, amplifying men's dominance in spheres of power while limiting women's visibility as central actors in public decision-making.

- Rwanda's GMMP 2025 findings reflect many of these global patterns, despite the country's strong national commitment to gender equality. Monitoring conducted on 6 May 2025 across radio, television, and online media showed that women accounted for 37% of news subjects in traditional media but only 20% in online news. While women appeared more frequently in community-oriented and social stories, they remained underrepresented in political, economic, and authoritative roles, highlighting a disconnect between Rwanda's gender-equal governance framework and media representation.

- Gender equality and human rights perspectives are not systematically integrated into daily news reporting in Rwanda. Only 21% of monitored stories referenced issues related to gender equality, inequality, legislation, or human rights. Such references were concentrated mainly in economic reporting and a small number of social/legal and health-related stories, while politics, sports, crime (excluding GBV), and cultural reporting largely excluded a gender lens.

- News content rarely challenges gender stereotypes, reinforcing traditional narratives across most topics. In Rwanda, the vast majority of stories across politics, economy,

social/legal, crime, and GBV did not challenge gender stereotypes. Sports coverage showed limited potential, with only a minority of stories actively challenging stereotypes. Overall, stereotype-challenging journalism remains the exception rather than the norm, echoing global GMMP findings of long-standing narrative inertia.

- Women's voices are more likely to appear in non-authoritative roles than as experts or spokespersons. In Rwanda, women were more visible as ordinary citizens, eye witnesses, and contributors of popular opinion, but remained underrepresented as experts, commentators, and institutional spokespersons. This mirrors global GMMP trends, where women's knowledge and authority are less frequently legitimized in news narratives, shaping whose perspectives are considered credible.

- Patterns of victim and survivor portrayal reveal persistent gendered framing. Women in Rwanda's news were more frequently portrayed as victims, particularly of crime, discrimination, and sexual violence, while men were more often framed as survivors of accidents, disasters, or hardship. Women were less likely to be portrayed as resilient or recovering from adversity, reinforcing narratives of vulnerability rather than agency—an enduring concern across GMMP cycles.

- Gender inequality in journalism is also a production issue, not only a content issue. In Rwanda, women accounted for 39% of reporters and presenters in radio, but only 17% in television, and just 10% of online reporters. While women were highly visible as television presenters, they were largely absent from reporting roles in television and digital media, limiting their influence over news agendas and framing. This reflects a global pattern in which women's visibility does not necessarily translate into editorial power.

- The sex of the journalist continues to influence the gender lens applied to news stories. Consistent with global findings, stories produced by women journalists in Rwanda were more likely to include women as sources, highlight gender (in)equality issues, and adopt human rights perspectives, particularly in sensitive topics such as gender-based violence. However, the overall proportion of such stories remains low, underscoring the need for systemic change rather than reliance on individual journalists.

- The GMMP 2025 findings for Rwanda confirm that gender inequality in the news persists despite favourable national gender policies and global awareness. The results highlight the need for deliberate, coordinated action by media houses, civil society, researchers, and public institutions to move beyond incremental change. Without a fundamental shift in editorial priorities, newsroom cultures, and accountability mechanisms, progress toward gender equality in and through the news is likely to remain stalled, both in Rwanda and globally.

A DAY IN THE NEWS IN RWANDA

THE CONTEXT

On 6th of May 2025, we monitored news programs and stories from 7 media houses including 3 TV stations, 3 Radio stations and 1 online newspaper, namely RTV, BTN, TV1, Radio Rwanda, KT Radio, Radio 10 and Igihe. At the time of the GMMP 2025, there was no print media house still functioning in Rwanda. We coded a total of 85 stories, 182 sources and 83 media professionals. The media outlets were chosen on the basis of distribution, popularity and reach, as set out in the global GMMP methodology. The National Coordinator was assisted by a team of 15 media monitors and a list of their names is contained in Appendix.

Globally, GMMP findings have consistently shown that women remain underrepresented as news subjects, sources, and reporters, with only 25% of news subjects being women in the previous edition (GMMP, 2020). Regional analyses similarly highlight persistent gender gaps across political and economic news, where men dominate news presence. Rwanda's 2025 monitoring results continue to reflect these long-standing patterns, although some domains such as health, education, community development, and gender-focused initiatives registered comparatively higher female visibility. This aligns with Rwanda's national gender equality commitments, including constitutional quotas and sectoral gender mainstreaming policies, which have increased women's representation in governance and public life. The sections that follow present detailed findings from Rwanda's coded news items for 6 May 2025, organized according to the GMMP's global categories.

TOPICS IN THE NEWS

Overall analysis

The distribution of news topics monitored in Rwanda on the 6 May 2025 monitoring day reveals clear differences across media platforms, reflecting varying editorial priorities and audience orientations. Radio and television dominated the production of news content. Across radio, politics and government accounted for 33% of all stories making it the leading topic, followed by economy at 20% and social and legal issues at 27%. Crime and violence excluding GBV made up 7% while gender-based violence appeared minimally at only 3%. Sports stories also held a presence at 10%, while other topics such as celebrity, arts, and media were absent.

Television output showed a similar emphasis on social affairs but with greater prominence. Social and legal issues represented the largest share of television news at 40%, followed by economy at 33% (10 items) and politics and government at 17%. Science and health

constituted 3%, and sports and celebrity/arts/media each accounted for another 3% . Notably, television did not feature any stories on crime and violence excluding GBV, nor did it include gender-based violence stories, indicating specific editorial trends within this platform.

Internet news demonstrated a more diversified spread of topics, with sports emerging as the most prominent category at 27%, followed by economy and social/legal issues each at 20%. Politics and government accounted for 7%, the same proportion as science and health and "other" topics. Crime and violence excluding GBV appeared more frequently online than in other media at 13%, while gender-based violence once again registered no stories.

Overall, the findings show that Rwanda's news agenda in 2025 was heavily centered on politics, economy, and social/legal issues, particularly within radio and television. Gender-based violence remained significantly underrepresented across all media platforms, continuing a long-standing pattern in GMMP findings. Meanwhile, online news displayed broader thematic variety, especially in sports and crime reporting, indicating a distinct editorial orientation shaped by digital media consumption trends.

Fig 1 – stories by major category x Medium
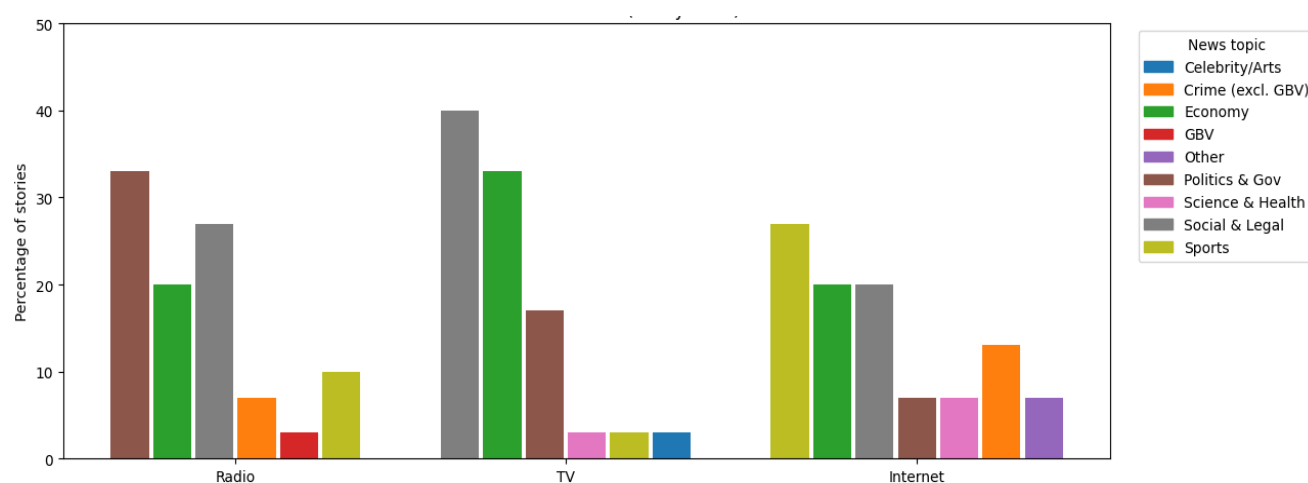
Gender Equality related stories

2025 monitoring results show that very few news stories across all media in Rwanda referenced issues related to gender equality, inequality, legislation, human rights, or policy. In radio, only 13% of stories overall contained gender-equality or human-rights policy references, and these were concentrated exclusively in two areas: Economy, where *all* three stories monitored (100%) made explicit reference to gender equality or related policy issues, and Gender-based violence, where the single story coded also included such a reference. All other radio news topics such as politics, social and legal issues, crime, celebrity news, sports, and others showed 0% inclusion of gender-equality considerations.

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Television demonstrated the highest engagement among the three media categories, with 33% of all TV stories making reference to gender-equality or human-rights–related policy issues. The strongest presence was recorded within the Economy category, where 56% of the monitored TV stories incorporated references to gender equality or policy frameworks. Science and Health also showed full engagement, with its single story containing gender-related references. In the Social and Legal category, 36% of stories included such references, indicating moderate but notable attention to gender issues. Other categories, including Politics and Government, Crime and Violence, Gender-based violence, Celebrity/Arts, Sports, and Other, registered 0% representation, showing no engagement with gender-equality or policy considerations during the monitoring day.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that economic reporting and, to a lesser extent, social/legal and health-related reporting on television, were the primary entry points for discussions relating to gender equality and policy. However, the general absence of such content across most topics and media platforms highlights a persistent gap in integrating gender perspectives into mainstream news coverage, particularly in political, crime-related, sports, cultural, and general reporting.

Stories challenging gender stereotypes

The analysis of stories assessing whether gender stereotypes are challenged or supported reveals a very limited presence of stereotype-challenging content across most news topics in Rwanda. In 2025, the data show that in several major topic areas including Politics and Government, Economy, and Celebrity, arts and media, no stories were recorded that explicitly addressed gender stereotypes, either by challenging or reinforcing them. This absence suggests that gender stereotyping is largely not an explicit consideration in reporting within these topics.

Where stories did engage with stereotypes, the overwhelming pattern was one of non-challenge. In Science and Health, Social and Legal, Crime and Violence (excluding gender-based violence), Gender-based violence, and Other topics, 100% of the recorded stories were categorized as disagree, indicating that they did not challenge gender stereotypes. This suggests that even when gender-related issues arise in these thematic areas, reporting tends to reproduce conventional narratives rather than question or transform them.

The Sports category stands out as the only topic where some degree of stereotype-challenging content was observed. In this area, 25% of the stories were assessed as agree, meaning they challenged gender stereotypes, while 75% did not. Although this represents a modest positive deviation from other topics, the majority of sports coverage still failed to actively counter stereotypical representations.

Generally, the findings indicate that only a very small proportion of news stories in Rwanda in 2025 actively challenged gender stereotypes, with an overall pattern of reinforcement or neutrality prevailing across topics. This highlights a significant opportunity for media actors to adopt more gender-responsive reporting practices that question entrenched stereotypes and contribute to more equitable and inclusive narratives in the news.

NEWS SOURCES AND SUBJECTS

Overall visibility

The 2025 GMMP findings for Rwanda reveal notable gender disparities in the representation of women and men as both news subjects and news sources across media platforms. In traditional media, especifically radio and television combined, women accounted for 37% of all news subjects, compared to 20% on Internet-based news platforms.

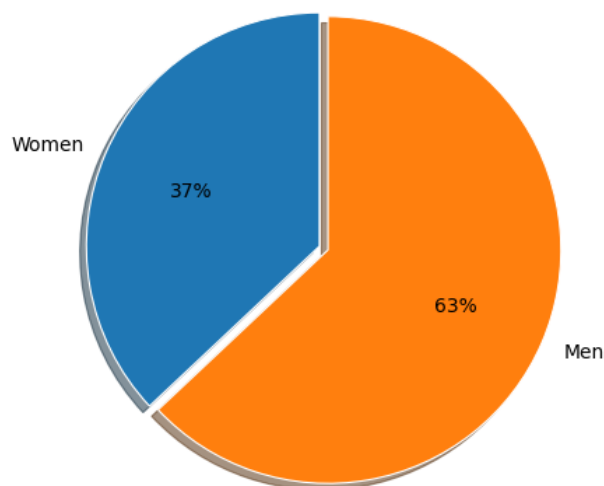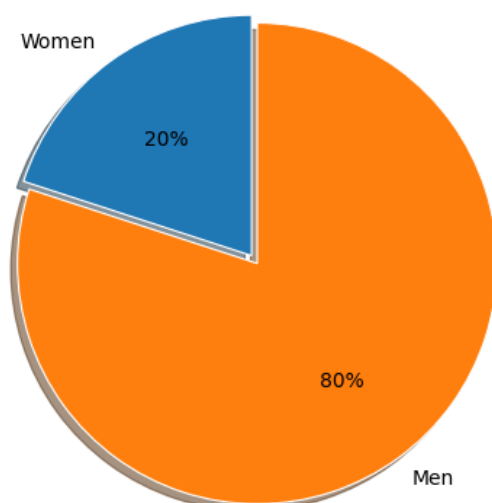**Fig 2- News subjects in Broadcast media by sex**

Fig 3- News subjects in Online media by sex

Representation varied significantly by topic. In politics and government, women constituted only 20% of subjects in traditional media, although the single online story in this category featured a woman (100% female representation). In economy-related news, women made up 42% of subjects in traditional media, but 0% online, where all economic stories featured men. Science and health coverage presented a contrasting pattern: in traditional media, all subjects were women (100% female, across two stories), while online stories in this category featured exclusively men.

Social and legal stories were dominated by male subjects, with women representing 32% in traditional media and 0% online. Crime and violence stories excluding gender-based violence involved 40% women in traditional media and 25% online. Gender-based violence stories featured women as 33% of subjects in traditional media, with no online stories recorded in this category. In celebrity, arts and media stories, women were more visible in traditional media (60% female representation, across five stories), but again 0% online. Sports coverage maintained a relatively balanced representation in traditional media (50% women, across six stories), while online sports stories featured 33% women, marking one of the few categories where women appeared in online reporting. In the "Other" category, women did not appear at all in traditional media (0%), though they accounted for 20% of online subjects.

Online media showed a more limited and uneven presence of women as sources. Women were the only sources in the single political story (100%), but did not appear in economic, science and health, social and legal, gender-based violence, or celebrity and arts categories. They represented 25% of sources in crime and violence, 33% in sports, and 20% in "Other." These results show that although women are present across various news categories in Rwanda, their visibility remains inconsistent across platforms and topics, with online media

showing the greatest gender imbalance and traditional media displaying moderate yet still unequal representation.

Occupation

The 2025 monitoring results show notable gender disparities in the occupational profiles of news sources in Rwanda. Women appeared across a limited range of occupations, with their presence concentrated in a few categories while completely absent in many influential or decision-making roles. Among political actors, women represented only 7% of politicians or members of parliament cited as news sources, highlighting a continued underrepresentation in political news coverage. Similarly, in government positions such as public servants or spokespeople, women made up 22% of sources (32 women), indicating partial visibility but far from parity.

Across highly specialized professions, women were largely absent. No women appeared as sources within the fields of policing, military, firefighting, science, technology, media production, law, medicine, or social work. Academic experts were also predominantly male, with only one woman source recorded in that category. This pattern underscores a consistent gender gap in expert opinion and technical authority featured in the news.

Conversely, women had a relatively stronger presence in business roles, where they constituted 86% of business executives, managers, or stockbrokers cited as sources, a rare instance where women dominated a professional category. Women were also significantly represented among agricultural workers (44%), athletes (50%), activists or NGO workers (50%), and celebrities or public personalities (33%). These areas seem to reflect sectors where women's visibility in public life is increasing, or where news selection practices more readily include women.

Women appeared minimally as students (14%), while homemakers were not recorded as female sources at all. A full 100% of unidentified children or young people cited as sources were female, though this category contained only one case. Women were highly represented among villagers or residents without any other specified occupation, making up 63% of that group. This suggests that women are more frequently included when stories focus on community-level or human-interest narratives, rather than institutional or expert-driven reporting.

No female sources were recorded as retirees, suspects in crime stories, or in several other occupational categories. Overall, the data illustrate a persistent structural imbalance: women are more likely to appear in stories related to everyday community life, agriculture, or personal experiences, but remain largely excluded from coverage involving political leadership, expert analysis, or high-status professional roles.
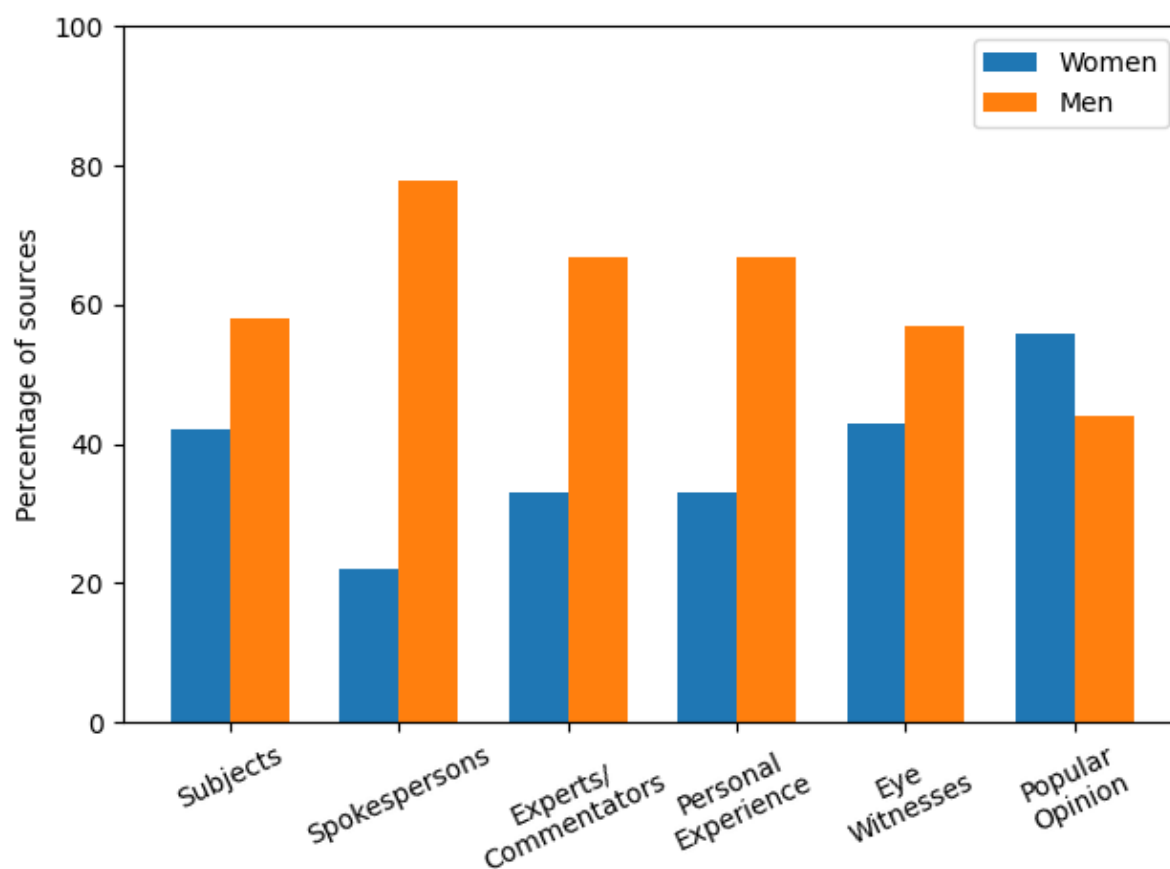
Function

The analysis of news subjects' functions in news stories reveals notable gender differences in how women and men are positioned within news narratives in Rwanda. Overall, men continue to dominate most functional roles, although women show relatively stronger representation in some specific categories.

As subjects of news stories, women accounted for 42% of appearances, while men represented 58%, indicating that men are still more frequently the focus of news coverage. This imbalance becomes more pronounced in authoritative roles. Among spokespersons, women constituted only 22% , compared to 78% for men , suggesting that men are overwhelmingly relied upon to speak on behalf of institutions, organizations, or official bodies.

Similarly, in the role of expert or commentator, women represented 33%, while men made up 67% . This pattern points to the continued underrepresentation of women as recognized experts or authoritative voices in the media. The marginalization of women is also evident in stories based on personal experience, where women accounted for 33%, compared to 67% for men, although the overall number of such stories was limited.

In contrast, women showed relatively stronger representation in roles associated with lived experience and public voice. As eye witnesses, women made up 43%, compared to 57% for men. The most notable gender balance was observed in the category of popular opinion, where women slightly outnumbered men, accounting for 56% versus 44% for men. This suggests that women are more frequently included when public opinion or everyday perspectives are sought, rather than when expert authority or institutional representation is required.

Fig 4 – Function of source by sex

Overall, the findings highlight a persistent gender gap in authoritative and decision-making roles within news content, while women remain more visible in functions linked to personal testimony and popular opinion. This reinforces broader GMMP trends showing that women are more often positioned as witnesses or citizens, rather than as experts or spokespersons, within media narratives.

Victims & survivors

The GMMP 2025 monitoring in Rwanda indicates that both women and men continue to be portrayed as victims in news coverage, though the nature of victimization differs notably by sex. Among female news subjects identified as victims, the most common portrayal relates to non-domestic crimes such as robbery or other criminal acts, which accounted for 63% of female victim portrayals. This suggests that women are frequently framed within narratives of general insecurity rather than conflict-related or disaster-driven contexts. Smaller proportions of women were portrayed as survivors without explicit victim labeling (13%), as victims of non-domestic sexual violence (13%), and as victims of discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, or ability (13%). Notably, no female subjects were portrayed as victims of accidents, natural disasters, poverty, domestic violence, war, or state violence during the monitoring period.

For male news subjects, portrayals of victimhood were more evenly distributed across several categories. Nearly half of male victim portrayals related to non-domestic crimes such as robbery or other criminal acts (46%), followed by portrayals as survivors without explicit victim framing (23%) and victims of accidents, natural disasters, or poverty (23%). A smaller proportion of male victims were associated with domestic violence, rape, murder, or similar crimes (8%). No male subjects were portrayed as victims of non-domestic sexual violence, discrimination, war, terrorism, or state violence.

Overall, the findings reveal a gendered pattern in how victimhood is represented in the Rwandan news media. Women are more likely to be portrayed in connection with crime-related victimization and discrimination, including sexual violence, while men are more frequently associated with accidents, disasters, and broader survival narratives.

Furthermore, Analysis of survivor portrayals further highlights gender differences in Rwanda's news coverage. Among female news subjects, the majority were classified under "not applicable," meaning they were identified solely as victims rather than explicitly framed as survivors (75%). Only 13% of women were portrayed as survivors of accidents, natural disasters, or poverty, and an equal proportion (13%) as survivors of domestic violence, rape, or murder. No female subjects were portrayed as survivors of non-domestic sexual violence, other crimes, war, or discrimination.

In contrast, male news subjects were more frequently portrayed as survivors across multiple categories. While 38% were identified solely as victims, an equal proportion (38%) were portrayed as survivors of accidents, natural disasters, or poverty. Additionally, 23% of male subjects appeared as survivors of domestic violence, rape, or murder. Similar to female subjects, no male survivors were portrayed in relation to non-domestic sexual violence, war, terrorism, or discrimination.

Taken together, these findings indicate that men are more likely than women to be explicitly framed as survivors rather than only as victims. Women, by contrast, remain more often positioned within passive victim narratives, with limited emphasis on resilience or recovery. This pattern reflects a broader gendered framing in news storytelling, where male experiences are more frequently associated with survival and agency, while female experiences are more often depicted through vulnerability.

Some other little details

The 2025 GMMP Rwanda monitoring shows that family status is rarely highlighted when identifying news subjects, regardless of sex. Only 9% of female news subjects were identified by their family status, compared to an even lower proportion of 3% of male news subjects. The overwhelming majority of both women (91%) and men (97%) appeared in news stories without any reference to their family roles or status.

This pattern indicates that family status is not a dominant framing device in Rwandan news coverage overall. However, the fact that women are three times more likely than men to be identified through family status suggests a residual gendered tendency to associate women with familial roles more than men. Even though the absolute percentages are low, this difference reflects a subtle imbalance in how women and men are contextualized in the news, with women more frequently linked to personal or domestic identifiers.

The limited use of family status across both sexes may also point to a gradual shift toward professional or role-based identification of news subjects, which aligns with gender-sensitive reporting principles. Nonetheless, the continued disparity, however small, underscores the need for ongoing awareness among media professionals to avoid unnecessary gendered framing that reinforces traditional stereotypes.

JOURNALISTIC PRACTICE

Overall analysis

The analysis of reporters, announcers, and presenters in Rwandan media in 2025 reveals notable gender disparities across the broadcast media in Rwanda. In radio, women accounted for 39% (13 out of 33) of reporters and presenters, while men made up 61% (20 out of 33). Although men remain the majority, women's presence in radio is relatively substantial compared to other media, suggesting that radio offers more opportunities for female voices in on-air roles. Television shows a more pronounced gender imbalance. Women represented only 17% (5 out of 30) of reporters and presenters, while men dominated with 83% (25 out of 30). This indicates that television remains a strongly male-dominated space in terms of visibility and authority as news presenters and reporters.

In summary, the data shows that women reporters and presenters are more visible in radio than in television, while men dominate across all monitored broadcast media. The findings point to persistent gender gaps in who delivers the news in Rwanda, particularly in television, where women's representation remains very low.

Presenters

In 2025, the distribution of presenters by sex in Rwanda shows notable differences between radio and television. On radio, women accounted for 45% (10 presenters) while men represented 55% (12 presenters). This indicates a relatively balanced presence of women and men in radio presenting roles, although men still held a slight majority. The near parity suggests that radio remains a comparatively accessible platform for women's visibility as on-air presenters within Rwanda's media landscape.

In contrast, television presented a markedly different picture. Women constituted 80% (4 presenters) of television presenters, compared to 20% (1 presenter) for men. This strong female majority suggests that women are significantly more visible in television presenting roles than men. The prominence of women on television may be linked to editorial choices, audience engagement strategies, or perceptions around presentation styles, or even the gender roles but it also highlights television as a medium where women's on-screen representation is comparatively strong.

Fig 5 – Presenters by Medium (Radio & TV)
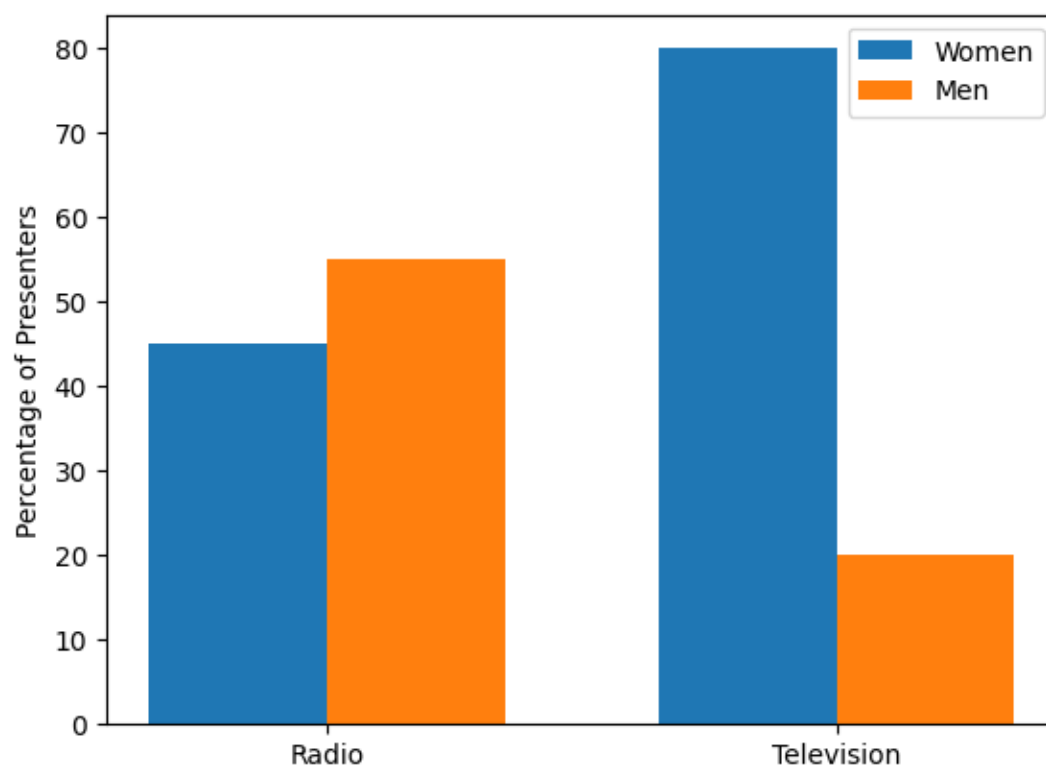
Overall, while radio shows a near-balanced gender distribution among presenters, television demonstrates a clear female dominance in presenting roles. These findings underline the importance of examining medium-specific dynamics when assessing gender representation, as patterns of visibility and participation can vary substantially across different forms of media.

Reporters by Medium and Sex

The GMMP 2025 monitoring data reveal clear gender disparities in the distribution of reporters across media platforms in Rwanda. In radio, women accounted for just over a quarter of reporters, representing 27% (3 reporters), while men dominated with 73% (8 reporters). Although radio shows a relatively higher presence of women compared to other

media platforms, men continue to hold the majority of reporting roles, indicating persistent gender imbalance in radio journalism.

Gender disparities were most pronounced in television, where women made up only 4% (1 reporter) of all reporters, compared to 96% (24 reporters) who were men. This stark imbalance suggests that television reporting remains overwhelmingly male-dominated in Rwanda, with very limited visibility and participation of women in on-screen reporting roles.

Similarly, in internet-based media, women constituted just 10% (2 reporters), while men represented 90% (18 reporters). Despite the growing importance of digital platforms and their potential to lower entry barriers, the data indicate that online journalism continues to reproduce traditional gender inequalities seen in legacy media.

Fig 6 – Reporters by sex per medium
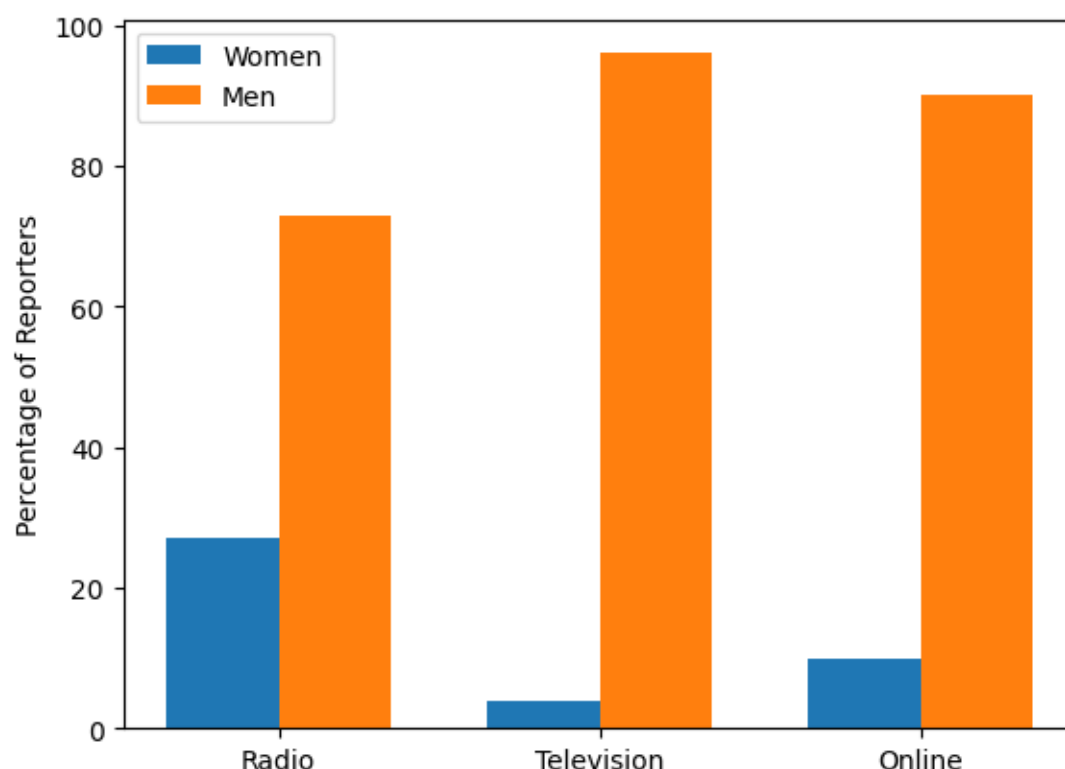
Overall, across all monitored media platforms, men overwhelmingly dominate reporting roles in Rwanda. Women's participation as reporters remains particularly limited in television and internet media, with radio offering the comparatively highest, yet still unequal representation. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions to promote gender balance in reporting roles, especially in high-visibility and rapidly expanding media sectors such as television and online journalism.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The GMMP 2025 monitoring for Rwanda, conducted on 6 May 2025, provides a snapshot of gender representation in the country's news content and journalistic practice in a context where print media was not monitored because there was no functioning print outlet at the time. The monitoring covered radio, television, and online news, coding 85 stories, 182 news sources, and 83 media professionals. Overall, Rwanda's results reflect global GMMP concerns about persistent gender gaps in who is visible in the news, who is treated as authoritative, and how gender issues are integrated into daily reporting, despite Rwanda's broader national commitments to gender equality.

In terms of the news agenda, Rwanda's monitoring day was dominated by the familiar "hard news" hierarchy observed globally. Radio concentrated on politics and government (33%), social/legal (27%), and the economy (20%), while television placed its heaviest emphasis on

social/legal (40%) and the economy (33%), with politics trailing behind. Online news showed a different editorial profile, giving the strongest prominence to sports (27%), followed by economy and social/legal issues. Across platforms, gender-based violence (GBV) was largely absent or minimal, reinforcing the wider GMMP finding that GBV remains a blind spot in news coverage even though it is a major social concern.

The monitoring also shows that gender equality framing is not consistently embedded in routine journalism. References to gender equality/inequality, human rights, or policy frameworks were generally rare and uneven across topics. Where such references appeared, they were most visible in economic reporting (especially on TV) and in a small number of stories categorized under social/legal issues and science/health. However, most stories across politics, sports, crime (excluding GBV), and cultural categories did not integrate an explicit gender equality lens. Similarly, the share of stories that actively challenged gender stereotypes was very limited: across most topics, the pattern was that stereotypes were not challenged, with only a modest exception in sports where a minority of stories challenged stereotypes but most still did not. This indicates that gender-responsive reporting remains more the exception than the norm in everyday news production.

Regarding news sources and subjects, women were present but not equally visible across platforms and topics. In traditional media combined (radio and television), women made up 37% of news subjects, while in online news women constituted 20%, suggesting that digital news in this dataset reproduced (and in some areas intensified) gender imbalance rather than correcting it. Women's visibility varied sharply by topic: they were least visible in politics and social/legal reporting in traditional media, and they were nearly absent as subjects and sources in several online categories (including economy, science/health, and social/legal). The occupational breakdown further underlines that women's presence was concentrated in a narrower set of roles: women appeared strongly in some categories such as business, and showed meaningful presence in community-linked categories such as agriculture, activism/NGO work, and villagers/residents, but were largely absent from many high-authority professions typically associated with expert voice in news (such as law, science/technology, policing/military, and health specialist roles within this monitoring day's sample). This reinforces a long-standing GMMP pattern: women tend to appear more often in community or lived-experience narratives and less often as institutional authorities or technical experts.

The analysis of function in news stories confirms that gender inequality is most visible in authoritative roles. While women were relatively present as ordinary citizens, particularly in popular opinion and, to some extent, as eye witnesses, they were less visible as spokespersons and underrepresented as experts/commentators, roles that shape legitimacy, agenda-setting, and interpretation of events. In other words, women's voices were more likely to be used to reflect public sentiment than to define "official" truth or

expertise. This imbalance matters because it influences not only who is seen, but also whose knowledge is treated as credible and whose authority is normalized.

Patterns of portrayal in the victim/survivor categories show gendered storytelling dynamics. Women and men were both portrayed as victims, but women's victim portrayals were concentrated mainly in non-domestic crime and included instances linked to sexual violence and discrimination, whereas men were more frequently associated with accidents/disasters/poverty alongside crime. When the survivor framing is examined, men were more often portrayed as survivors, while women were more frequently coded in ways that identify them only as victims, with less emphasis on recovery or agency. Even if based on small counts, this pattern aligns with broader GMMP concerns that women are too often framed through vulnerability rather than resilience, which can subtly reinforce unequal power narratives.

In journalistic practice, the distribution of reporters, presenters, and on-air roles shows mixed visibility depending on medium. Radio showed a more moderate gender gap among reporters and presenters overall, and presenter roles were close to parity. Television, however, remained sharply unequal in reporting roles, with women almost absent among reporters. Online reporting also showed a large imbalance, with men dominating reporter roles. These results suggest that women's visibility may be higher in some broadcast presentation roles, but this does not translate into equal participation in core journalistic functions such as reporting—especially in television and digital news, where visibility and influence are often greatest.

Overall, Rwanda's GMMP 2025 snapshot points to three central conclusions. First, the country's news agenda largely mirrors the global "hard news" hierarchy, and gender equality content remains peripheral rather than mainstreamed across topics. Second, women's visibility improves in certain categories and functions particularly community-level narratives and popular opinion, but women remain underrepresented in roles that signal authority (experts, spokespersons, and high-status professional categories). Third, the journalism workforce patterns show that gender inequality is not only a content issue but also a production issue, particularly in television and online reporting roles where men dominate. Moving forward, Rwanda's media sector would benefit from deliberate newsroom strategies that (1) increase women's presence and authority as sources and experts, (2) integrate gender equality and human-rights framing beyond "safe" topics and into politics, economy, and crime reporting, and (3) strengthen women's participation in reporting roles, especially in television and digital media, so that gender equality gains in the broader society are more consistently reflected in the news.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN 2026-2030

Recommendations to Media Houses

Media houses in Rwanda are encouraged to institutionalize gender-responsive journalism as a core editorial standard rather than treating it as a thematic or occasional concern. Editorial policies should explicitly require gender balance in sourcing, expert selection, and story framing across all beats, including politics, economy, crime, and sports. Newsrooms should strengthen internal monitoring mechanisms, such as routine gender audits of content and sources, to track progress and ensure accountability. Particular attention should be given to increasing women's visibility as experts, spokespersons, and reporters, especially in television and online media where gender gaps remain most pronounced.

In parallel, media houses should invest in sustained professional development for journalists and editors on gender-sensitive reporting, ethical coverage of gender-based violence, and stereotype-challenging storytelling. This includes mentoring and career advancement pathways for women journalists into senior editorial and decision-making roles. By addressing both content and production dynamics, media organizations can play a central role in aligning daily journalism with Rwanda's broader commitments to gender equality and social justice.

Recommendations to Civil Society Organizations

Civil society organizations (CSOs), including women's rights groups, media development organizations, and professional associations, should strengthen their role as watchdogs, partners, and knowledge brokers in advancing gender equality in the media. CSOs are encouraged to continue independent media monitoring, public reporting, and dialogue with newsrooms on GMMP findings, with a focus on persistent gaps such as the underrepresentation of women in authoritative roles and the limited integration of gender equality frameworks in news coverage.

Additionally, CSOs should expand capacity-building initiatives for journalists and editors, particularly on intersectionality, ethical reporting on GBV, and inclusive digital journalism. Strategic partnerships between CSOs and media houses can support co-creation of guidelines, toolkits, and learning spaces that translate GMMP evidence into practical newsroom change. Advocacy efforts should also amplify women's voices as experts and leaders across sectors, helping to diversify the pool of sources available to journalists.

Recommendations to Researchers and Academic Institutions

Researchers and academic institutions have a critical role to play in deepening evidence and sustaining momentum beyond GMMP monitoring cycles. Universities and research centers are encouraged to integrate GMMP findings into journalism, communication, and media studies curricula, ensuring that future journalists are equipped with a strong gender lens from the outset of their training. Further qualitative and longitudinal research is needed to explore newsroom cultures, editorial decision-making, and the structural barriers limiting women's participation and authority in the media.

Researchers should also collaborate with media houses, regulators, and civil society to produce applied research that informs policy and practice. This includes comparative studies across media platforms, analysis of digital journalism trends, and evaluations of interventions aimed at improving gender balance in content and staffing. By translating research into accessible formats, scholars can contribute directly to evidence-based media reform and public discourse.

Recommendations to Government and Public Institutions

The Government of Rwanda is encouraged to continue strengthening the enabling environment for gender-responsive and independent media through policy, regulation, and institutional support. Relevant public institutions, including media regulators and gender equality bodies, should integrate GMMP indicators into national media development strategies and gender accountability frameworks. This includes supporting gender mainstreaming within public broadcasters and encouraging media houses to adopt and implement gender and anti-sexual harassment policies.

Furthermore, government institutions can support long-term change by investing in media capacity-building programs, funding research and monitoring initiatives, and promoting women's leadership within public communication and media-related institutions. Aligning media reform efforts with national gender equality policies will help ensure that progress achieved in governance and public life is reflected more consistently in media representation and narratives.

Annex 1. Methodology

Over a full 24-hour cycle, thousands of volunteers from the Pacific to the Caribbean monitored their news media, adding their countries' voices to this important pulse-check on gender representation in the news media. The seventh edition of the GMMP was marked by many firsts, highlighting the enhancements introduced to this study over the years. Marking a first for the GMMP, 2025 relied entirely on electronic data capture, with no handwritten forms used; coding sheets were submitted to the technical team either directly through the platform or using the spreadsheet version of the familiar coding template. This was also the first time that the majority of the online data capture was done by in-country teams, who were responsible for over 12,000 entries. Another first was the prominence of internet news items, which surpassed radio entries at the global level and in six of the eight regions, reflecting the ongoing shift toward digital news sources.

Despite these evolutions, the fundamental GMMP methodology has remained consistent over the decades, preserving the comparability of findings across survey rounds.

How the monitoring took place

The GMMP monitoring day brought together a vast global network of volunteers, all committed to answering the question, *how is gender portrayed on an ordinary news day?* The GMMP country networks, ranging from university research teams to media advocacy groups, brought with them deep expertise in local media ecosystems, ensuring that the data captured was contextually grounded, accurately capturing the nuances of news coverage across the world. In some regions, collaboration crossed borders; teams in Latin America and Asia supported neighbouring countries with data entry, ensuring that knowledge and effort were shared wherever needed.

In the lead-up to the monitoring day, the WACC team and regional coordinators ran a series of training sessions on the GMMP methodology. Country teams received refresher training on the sampling methodology and monitoring procedures, along with an introduction to the updated topic breakdowns. Teams had a choice of two monitoring options: full monitoring, which provided a detailed view of gender representation across news media, or short monitoring, which captured only the key GMMP indicators.

The training sessions also covered the use of the GMMP's custom data capture platform, which has been used since 2015. Available in English, French, and Spanish, the platform serves as the central system for consolidating responses from country teams after the monitoring day. On the monitoring day itself, teams carry out the initial data capture offline, as discussion and reflection are a key part of the monitoring process. These collaborative sessions allow teams to review findings, compare interpretations and ensure consistency. To maintain accuracy, radio and television bulletins were recorded, and copies of digital and print media were collected for reference.

The GMMP questions capture quantitative data on four key dimensions of each news item: i) About the story: the topic, story placement and scope; ii) About the people in the story - subjects and sources; iii) About the news personnel - announcers, presenters and reporters - in the story; and, iv) The quality of the story from a gender perspectives -gender stereotypes, women's centrality, rights-

and gender equality angles. Country teams can also include up to three additional questions about the people in the story, to explore concerns of specific national interest. Additionally, teams provide qualitative context to aid interpretation, describing the news agenda on the monitoring day, their reasons for selecting particular media outlets, and key features of their national media system. Teams also conduct a structured qualitative analysis following the GMMP's standard framework, complementing the quantitative data with insights that help explain patterns and trends in gender representation in the media.

While teams were not limited in the number of outlets they could monitor, guidance was provided on the recommended minimum through the GMMP media bands chart. The media bands system, first introduced in 2005, was designed to promote a more balanced distribution of data and to provide each country with guidance on the minimum number of media outlets to monitor. The bands were determined by the overall number of each type of media in each country. Over the years, desktop research has formed the basis for compiling these numbers, which were then validated with country teams. For this edition, many of the media research databases previously relied upon were outdated, prompting us to turn inward and draw on historical GMMP databases as a reference for nationally relevant outlets. This list was reviewed and confirmed by country and regional coordinators.

In several countries, the number of media outlets relevant to this study has declined since 2020, reflecting shifts in the media landscape. Subsequently, the number of media bands was reduced; for instance, broadcast media bands were scaled down from five to three. For internet news, countries were ranked according to internet usage rates published by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and grouped into corresponding media bands.

Conclusion

From classrooms and offices to shared virtual spaces, the GMMP network turned a single ordinary news day into a globally representative snapshot of gender in the media. This achievement would not have been possible without the dedication of thousands of volunteers, whose careful and diligent monitoring of media outlets worldwide sustains this important tradition of media monitoring.

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Annex 2. List of Monitors

IRADUKUNDA Olga Cristella
Divine Mugeni
Epiphanie Iranzi
Kubwayo Jean de la Croix
Eduque Isingizwe
Musada Habineza
Rukundo Kennedy
Kagirimpundu Henriette
Umugwaneza Divine
Mugabo Anderson
Mukundwa Angelique
Uwera Patrick
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