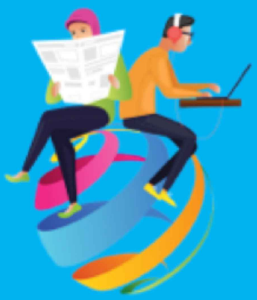
Beijing +30

WHO MAKES THE NEWS?



GMMP+30

Global Media Monitoring Project

2025

ZIMBABWE

NATIONAL REPORT



GMMP+30

Global Media Monitoring Project

2025

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PREFACE

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 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 CONTEXT

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.

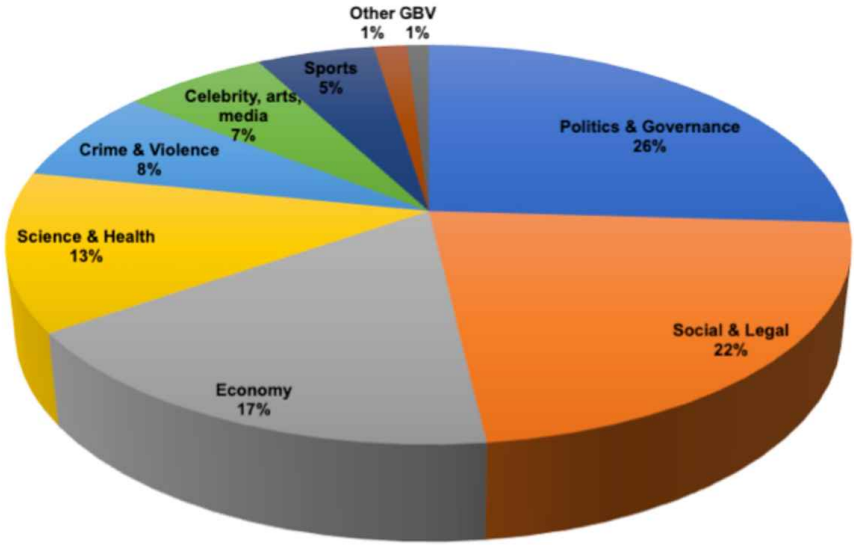
REGIONAL CONTEXT

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



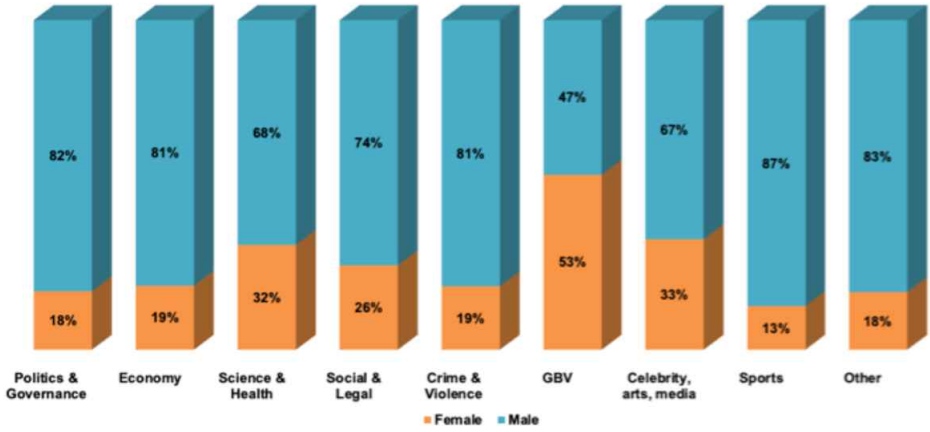
Gender Representation in the News

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.

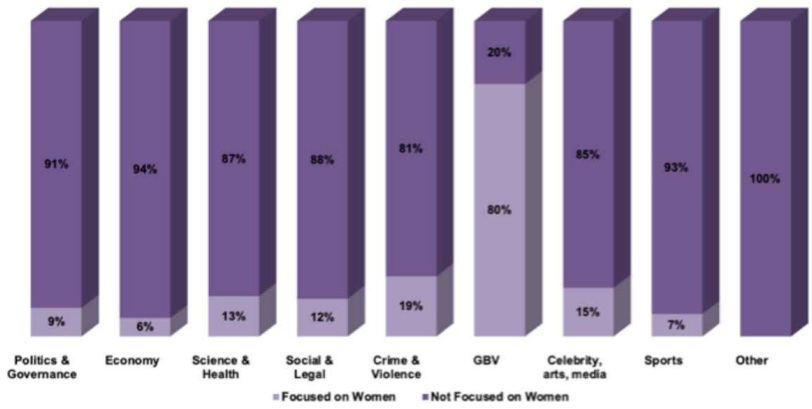
Despite this difference, men continue to dominate as news subjects regardless of the sex of the reporter. Even when women report on Politics and Governance, men still account for the majority of news subjects (68%). This suggests that the presence of women journalists alone does not substantially change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

Zimbabwe, a relatively young democracy since Independence in 1980, marked 45 years of sovereignty in 2025. Despite enduring three decades of economic hardship, the nation aspires to achieve upper-middle-income status by 2030. Situated in Southern Africa on 390,757 km?, Zimbabwe borders Zambia, Mozambique, South Africa, and Botswana. Its natural and cultural heritage - including Victoria Falls, Great Zimbabwe ruins, and Mt. Nyangani - earned it recognition by Forbes as the best country to visit in 2025. The latest census recorded a population of 15.1 million, with women comprising 52%.

Legislative and Policy Framework

Zimbabwe's 2013 Constitution enshrines gender equality as a founding value, mandating gender balance across institutions. Section 17 calls for gender parity in all spheres, while Section 52(2) guarantees equal rights and opportunities. Section 61 of the Constitution enshrines freedom of expression and media freedom. Complementary laws reinforce these principles:

- Legal Age of Majority Act (1982) and Domestic Violence Act (2006) protect women's rights.

- Amendments to laws such as the Public Entities Corporate Governance Act, Marriages Act (2022), Guardianship of Minor Act, and Education Act embed gender equality in governance, family law, and education.

- The Data Protection Act addresses online gender-based violence, while the Labour Amendment Act tackles workplace harassment.

Operationalizing these frameworks, Zimbabwe has adopted successive National Gender Policies (2004, 2013, 2025). The latest policy aligns with Vision 2030 and the SDGs, targeting a "Gender Just Society" through ten pillars, including equitable economic empowerment, gender-responsive health, and GBV prevention. Complementary initiatives include the Public Service Commission's Sexual Harassment Policy (2022) and the Zimbabwe Media Commission's Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy (2024). Oversight is provided by the Ministry of Women Affairs and the Zimbabwe Gender Commission, with commitments reinforced by ratification of CEDAW and the Beijing Declaration. While inequalities persist, women's participation in traditionally male-dominated fields is growing.

Media and Information Landscape

Zimbabwe's media sector has become increasingly pluralistic. Since 2020, 21 community and campus radio stations have been licensed, bringing the total number of licensed radio stations to 37. Television has expanded to seven active stations, though resource constraints hindered others. Alongside licensed outlets, alternative platforms - community radio initiatives under the Zimbabwe Association of Community Radio Stations (ZACRAS), digital media, and online creators - offer diverse perspectives. Internet penetration rose sharply to 76% in 2025, up from 50% in 2020.

Despite this growth, sustainability challenges threaten media viability. Advertising revenues collapsed during the COVID-19 pandemic, forcing many seasoned journalists into online ventures or international roles, leaving local outlets reliant on inexperienced staff. Generative AI is increasingly used in news production, though its integration remains experimental.

Press freedom has improved, with Zimbabwe rising from 126th in 2020 to 106th in the 2025 *Reporters Without Borders Index.* Reforms - including amendments to the Broadcasting Services Amendment Act (2025), Zimbabwe Media Commission Bill, and Media Practitioners Bill - signal progress. The government's first-ever National Media Policy (2025), though met with mixed reviews, proposes stronger accountability and mandatory anti-harassment policies in media houses.

Persistent Challenges

Zimbabwe's media remains polarized, with state and ruling-party-affiliated entities dominating major outlets. Technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) is a growing concern: 63% of women journalists report experiencing online abuse, undermining their safety and freedom of expression. Arrests and detention of journalists remain an issue, with a concerning trend of arrests based on internet based offences. Blessed Mhlanga, a journalist with Heart and Soul TV for example was arrested and detained on the 24th of February under Section 136 of the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act. Charges pertain to the transmission of data messages that incite violence or damage to property.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2025 Zimbabwe joined other countries globally to participate in the Global Media Monitoring Project, this being the seventh edition. On 6 May 2025, a team of volunteer monitors coordinated by Gender and Media Connect monitored 10 news platforms to understand trends in their representation and portrayal of women.

The findings from the monitoring show that Zimbabwe mirrors global trends and the country has a long way to go to attaining gender balance and equality in its coverage. Women comprised just 25% of the sources featured in the news, a marginal 2% increase from 2020 where representation stood at 23%. This underrepresentation is evident across all platforms, but notable differences were noted across platforms. TV had the highest number of women voices at 46% and online platforms had the least at 11%.

A deeper analysis reveals that women are rarely sought for their expert opinions and are often limited to sharing popular views in informal roles. Their voices are largely overshadowed by men in formal and technical occupations, creating a misleading portrayal of women's roles in society.

The trends in news production is heavily skewed towards a male-centric perspective, as women accounted for only 28% of reporters.

Additionally, the qualitative aspects of gender inclusivity are lacking. Only 4% of the monitored stories addressed issues of gender beyond Gender-Based Violence (GBV). This situation contradicts the ethical requirements of fairness and balance in journalism.

The study observed some gender stereotypes which include often linking women sources to their family status, even when irrelevant, as well as presenting women as vulnerable whilst portraying men as resilient. Most stereotypes emanated from the photographs that media outlets chose to use in their stories.

In conclusion, there is an urgent need for collaborative efforts among key media and gender stakeholders to empower the media for more inclusive coverage. Media organizations must adopt effective strategies to increase women's representation. Balance and fairness are essential principles of journalism that must be prioritized and supported by consistent refresher training to enhance journalists' gender awareness and analysis.

A DAY IN THE NEWS IN ZIMBABWE

On the 6th of May 2025, Zimbabwe had just joined the rest of the World in commemorating World Press Freedom Day with government representatives calling for fact-based reporting. On this day, Heart and Soul TV journalist Blessed Mhlanga had been detained for 72-days on allegations of inciting violence after allegedly broadcasting a video statement of war veteran Blessed Geza demanding President Mnangagwa's resignation.

Other stories that dominated the news included President Emmerson Mnangagwa commissioning of AI powered grain silos at Kwekwe Grain Marketing Board. The 56,000-tonne smart grain storage silos are expected to help the country save millions in handling related losses.

Some regions in the country were experiencing heavy electricity load shedding after the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) recorded a technical fault at five units at Hwange power Station. The power utility also reported that a fire incident had damaged equipment at a substation in Harare.

In news that focused on women subjects, the two men accused of raping socialite Ashley Masendeke better known as Mai Jeremaya were denied bail. A visiting UN women delegation led by Nicola Clase met President Emmerson Mnangagwa at State House to discuss the UN's women empowerment programmes in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe's First Lady, Dr, Auxilia Mnangagwa launched the AgroTourism4She programme in Buhera, Manicaland to promote agricultural programmes that support tourism, including botanical gardens and value addition of agricultural produce. A Chinese Chef, Dan Zao, won the First lady's traditional cookout competition held in Midlands.

THE MEDIA MONITORED

The GMC Team in consultation with the GMMP team selected the media set monitored for this project. The media outlets were chosen based on their extensive reach and applicability to the requirements of the project i.e. only daily newspapers were to be selected which excluded weekly newspapers from the process. Below are news outlets that were selected for the GMMP 2025 process:

1. **The Herald** - The main government-controlled newspaper
2. **Chronicle** - The biggest daily newspaper catering to the southern region of Zimbabwe
3. **NewsDay** - Alpha Media Holdings' privately-owned flagship daily
4. **Daily News** - Privately owned daily newspaper
5. **H-Metro** - A tabloid that covers the capital city
6. **B-Metro** - A tabloid that covers the Southern parts of the country
7. **ZIFM** - A privately-owned national commercial radio station
8. **ZTV** - The public broadcaster's main television station
9. **NewZimbabwe.com** - A news website catering to Zimbabwe as a whole
10. **NewsHawks** - A news website that focuses on investigative reporting

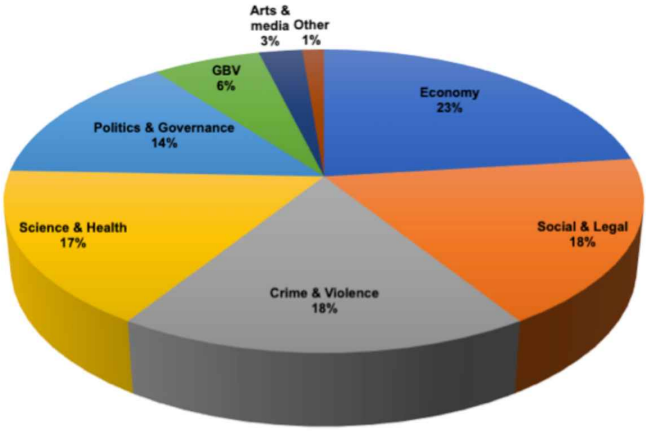
This report analyses trends in the media's representation of men and women in Zimbabwe at a particular point in time as part of a global exercise sponsored by the Global Media Monitoring Project. Gender Media Connect was tasked with analyzing trends in Zimbabwe on the 6th of May 2025.

Monitors coded main news items in newspapers, all stories in newscasts for radio, news programs on television and 12-14 stories on homepages of online media. In newspapers, coding was limited to 12-14 stories on the main news pages and excluded editorials, commentaries and letters to the editor. For radio, all stories in the newscast were selected. Sports reports and weather forecasts were only coded when they were part of the newscast.

TOPICS IN THE NEWS

On the date of monitoring, the media was dominated by news on the economy that made up 23% of news stories. The most topical story in this category was the commissioning of smart silos at Kwekwe Grain Marketing Board. Stories on politics and governance madeup 14% of stories, the 5th highest number of stories out of the 8 categories. This was a different trend from the rest of the continent were this category had the highest number of stories at 26%. There were however noticeable differences among the different platforms. Internet based platforms contained 67% of stories on politics and governance, while radio stations carried none. Gender Based Violence was featured in 6% of the stories.

Fig.1 Overall distribution of issues in the news



Issues covered by monitored platforms were varied with all platforms showing a different focus. The print media was the most diverse, giving prominence to all but one of the categories. Sports news did not make it in the first pages of the newspapers monitored as this news is mostly reserved for the back pages. Internet based platforms were the least diverse. All main news stories on the platforms monitored fell in two categories – Politics & Governance and Economy. News stories on politics and governance on internet based platforms made up 67% of stories. News on radio overwhelmingly focused on crime and violence with 50% of news stories falling in this category.

Gender based violence stories were only covered by the print media. Besides gender based violence, other gender related sub-issues which included women empowerment, women in politics and economic processes and inequality between men and women were only featured in 4% of the monitored reports.

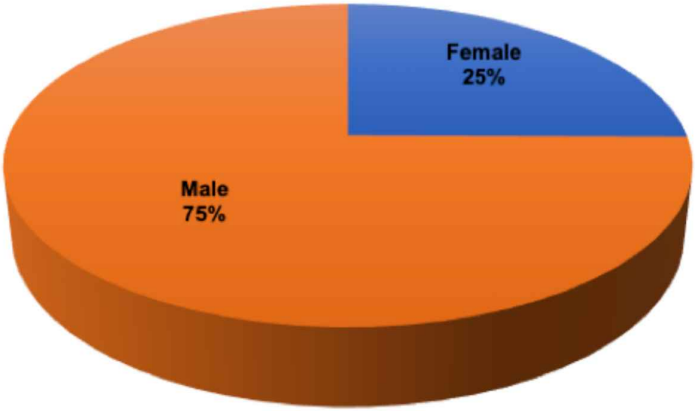
Table 1: Distribution of issues by platform

TOPIC	PRINT	RADIO	TELEVISION	INTERNET
Politics and Government	10%	0%	23%	67%
Economy	24%	25%	23%	0%
Science and Health	16%	0%	31%	0%
Social and Legal	17%	25%	15%	33%
Crime and Violence	19%	50%	8%	0%
Gender-based violence	9%	0%	0%	0%
Celebrity, arts, media	3%	0%	0%	0%
Sports	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	2%	0%	0%	0%

NEWS SUBJECTS AND SOURCES

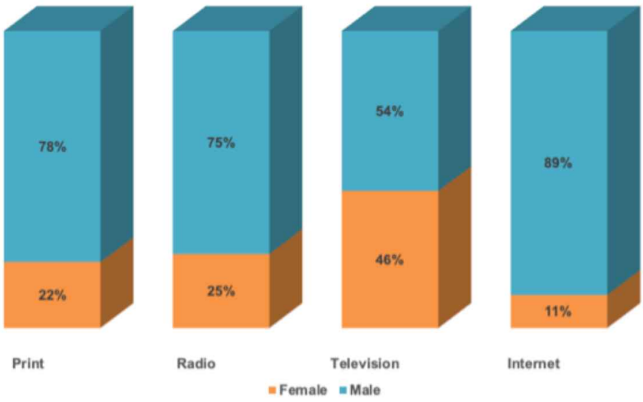
The underrepresentation of women continues to be a major issue in the media. On this day, women made up just 25% of the sources featured in the news as opposed to men's 75%. This represents just a 2% increase in women's voices from the last monitoring period in 2020.

Fig 2: Overall gender representation in the monitored media



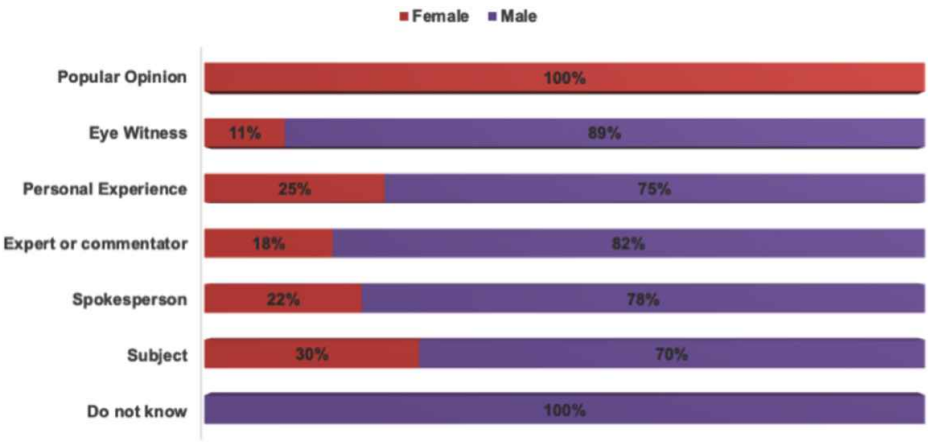
Although women's voices were underrepresented on all the monitored platforms, there were notable differences across platforms. On TV women accounted for 46% of the voices and Online platforms carried only 11% of women's voices.

Fig 3: Source distribution across media platforms



A close look at gendered functions in the monitored stories shows that women were mostly targeted to share their popular opinion on issues and are rarely targeted by the media for their expert opinion. News media seem to almost exclusively seek out women for popular opinions. 100% of all people whose opinion was sought are women. Conversely only 18% of women are experts and 22 % are spokespeople. As subjects of the news, women make up just 30% across platforms.

Fig 4: Function in the story



Occupations of sources featured in the stories

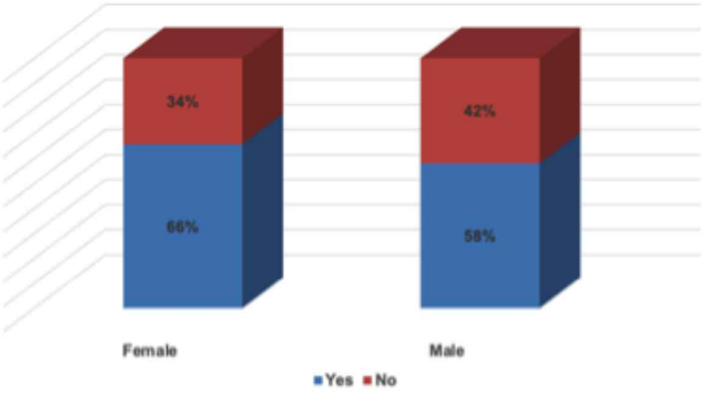
Of the 26 occupations featured, women were contributors in just nine. Women make up 100% of news sources in one category which includes celebrities, artists or media personalities. By contract, men are 100% of all sources in nine categories that include in roles as academics, health workers, doctors, business persons, traditional and religious leaders, scientists, activists and criminals. Women's voices were overshadowed by men in formal and technical occupations which gives a misleading picture of women's role in society. The only other role in which women are a majority are as homemakers or parents. It is critical for journalists to beef up their source directories to accommodate more women in their reports.

Table 2: Overall distribution of occupation by gender

OCCUPATION	OVERALL %	% WOMEN	% MEN
Government employee, public servant, spokesperson	20%	29%	71%
Politician/ member of parliament	17%	13%	87%
Not stated	10%	50%	50%
Homemaker, parent	8%	86%	14%
Lawyer, judge, magistrate, legal advocate	7%	25%	75%
Academic expert, lecturer, teacher	6%	0%	100%
Police, military, para-military, militia, fire officer	5%	25%	75%
Health worker, social worker, childcare worker	4%	0%	100%
Business person, exec, manager, stock broker	4%	0%	100%
Criminal, suspect	4%	0%	100%
Tradesperson, artisan, labourer, truck driver	3%	20%	80%
Villager or resident	3%	20%	80%
Royalty, traditional leaders	2%	0%	100%
Doctor, dentist, health specialist	2%	0%	100%
Science/ technology professional, engineer	1%	0%	100%
Agriculture, mining, fishing, forestry	1%	50%	50%
Religious figure, priest,	1%	0%	100%
Activist or worker in CSO, NGO, trade union	1%	0%	100%
Celebrity, artist, actor, writer, singer, TV personality	1%	100%	0%
Other	1%	0%	100%

Women were however directly quoted more than male subjects. Women were directly quoted 66% of the times they were featured compared to men's 58%. This helps eliminate allegations of misrepresentation and misinterpretation of perspectives.

Fig 5: % of subjects directly quoted in news reports by gender



JOURNALISTS AND REPORTERS

Overall male media personnel were responsible for most of the stories that were featured in the media on 6 May 2025. Women made up 33% of the announcers and presenters and just 28% of the reporters. On radio however, women presenters and announcers were prominent on radio where they accounted for 100%.

Fig 6: Announcers and Presenters

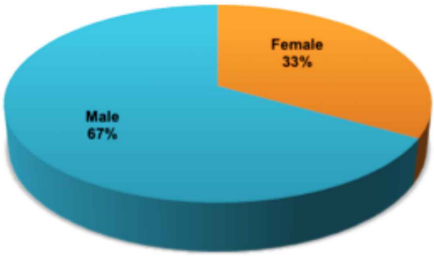
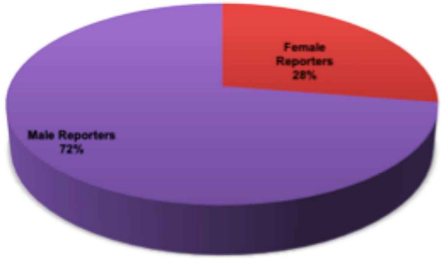
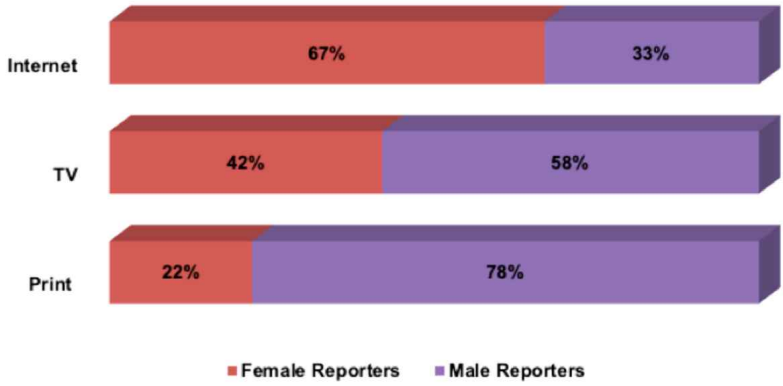


Fig:7 Reporters



In terms of reporters, online news platforms featured the highest percentage of women reporters at 67% ahead of TV which followed with 48%. The press continues to lag behind with women journalists compiling 22% of the stories. It appears online platforms are more willing to empower women journalists to compile their stories than traditional news platforms.

Fig 9: Distribution of reporters per platform



An analysis of the male and female journalists' source selection shows that male journalists were less likely to access women sources or subjects in most of the issues covered save for social and legal issues. Women journalists featured more female sources in their reports on politics and governance, science and health and crime and violence. Interestingly in GBV stories neither female or male journalists featured women.

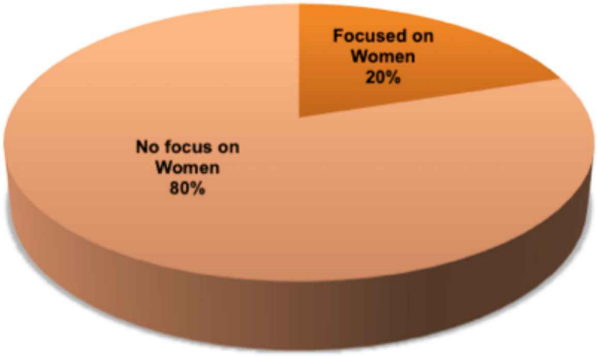
Table 3: Distribution of news subjects by sex of reporters

TOPIC	SEX OF REPORTER	FEMALE	MALE
Politics and Government	Female	100%	0%
	Male	33%	67%
Economy	Female	25%	75%
	Male	25%	75%
Science and Health	Female	25%	75%
	Male	11%	89%
Social and Legal	Female	14%	86%
	Male	21%	79%
	Do not know	50%	50%
Crime and Violence (excluding gender-based violence)	Female	100%	0%
	Male	36%	64%
Gender-based violence	Female	0%	100%
	Male	0%	100%
Celebrity, arts, media	Female	0%	0%
	Male	0%	100%

JOURNALISTIC PRACTICE: ON WOMEN'S CENTRALITY, GENDER STEREOTYPES AND RIGHTS-BASED REPORTING

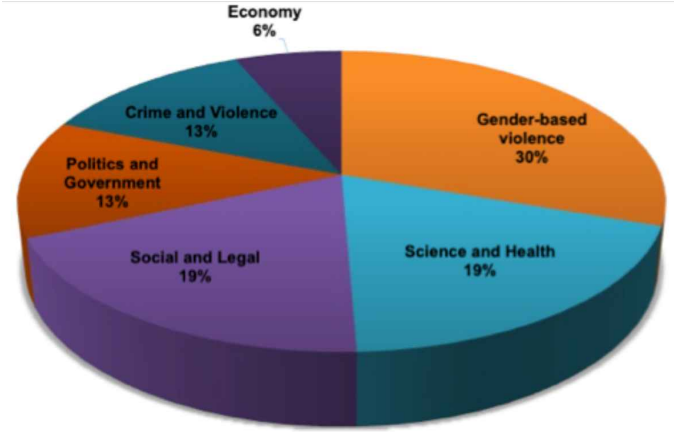
Overall, only 20% of the reports monitored focus specifically on women or particular groups of women as subjects and sources, a 2% increase from 2020's 18%. However, only 4% of the monitored stories discussed issues of gender outside of GBV, a slight increase from the 2% recorded in 2020. This represents a stagnation in mainstreaming women's issues which goes against the journalism profession's ethical requirements of fairness and balance.

Fig 10: Overall story focus



Of the stories that were central to women, 30% focused on GBV followed by social and legal issues as well as science and health which contributed 19% each. It is critical for the media to incorporate the views of women in all the topics covered to present a balanced reflection of their contribution in society.

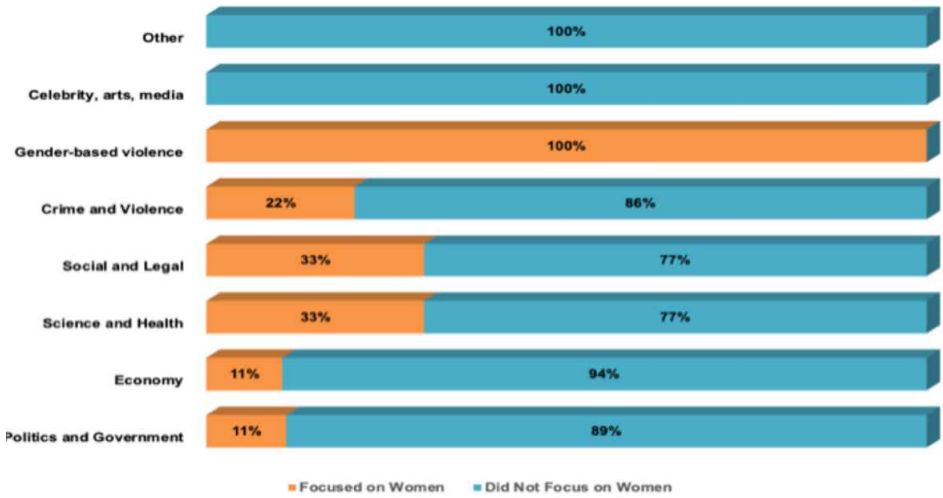
Fig 11: % breakdown of stories central to women



A comparative analysis of the issues covered shows that all GBV stories focused on women while only 11% of stories on the economy as well as politics and governance focused on women. These stories mostly focused on prominent politicians and socialites who include; the First Lady Auxilia Mnangagwa, Tourism and Hospitality Minister Barbra Rwodzi and socialite Mai Jeremaya who were the most featured women. There were however some stories which focused on groups of women in general, these include;

- TM Pick n Pay in initiative to offer free cancer screening - *The Herald and Chronicle*
- Gwanda Women hail their four-legged workmates on World Donkey Day - *B-Metro*

Fig 12: Distribution of stories that focused on women within specific issues



The prevailing trends show that all the local platforms struggle to mainstream issues affecting women. However, the print media had a more diverse distribution of stories that focused on women compared to radio, TV and online platforms.

Table 4: % Distribution of stories that focus on women by media platforms

TOPIC	PRINT		RADIO		TELEVISION		INTERNET	
FOCUS ON WOMEN	**YES**	**NO**	**YES**	**NO**	**YES**	**NO**	**YES**	**NO**
Politics and Governance	17%	83%	0%	0%	0%	100%	50%	50%
Economy	0%	100%	0%	100%	33%	67%	0%	0%
Science and Health	22%	78%	0%	0%	25%	75%	0%	0%
Social and Legal	30%	70%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%
Crime and Violence	9%	91%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Gender-based violence	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Celebrity, arts, media	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Gender equality and inequality was raised in 14% of the stories monitored. This was mostly in stories on gender-based violence, and politics and governance. The meeting between President Emmerson Mnangagwa and UN Women representatives to discuss

women empowerment programmes that the UN is carrying out in Zimbabwe was prominently featured. Another key story on ZTV was on the launch of the *Agrotourism4She* programme by First Lady, Auxilia Mnangagwa to empower women in Manicaland to conduct agriculture projects that promote tourism.

The level of gender awareness and sensitivity in news reports is often reflected in their analysis. One indicator is reference to gender policy when interpreting or analysing stories involving women. In the stories that were central to women, GMC noticed that although the monitored print media and television station made notable efforts to make reference to gender related policies in their analysis, more still needs to be done to ensure this is done consistently across all issues covered.

Table 5: Reference to gender policy

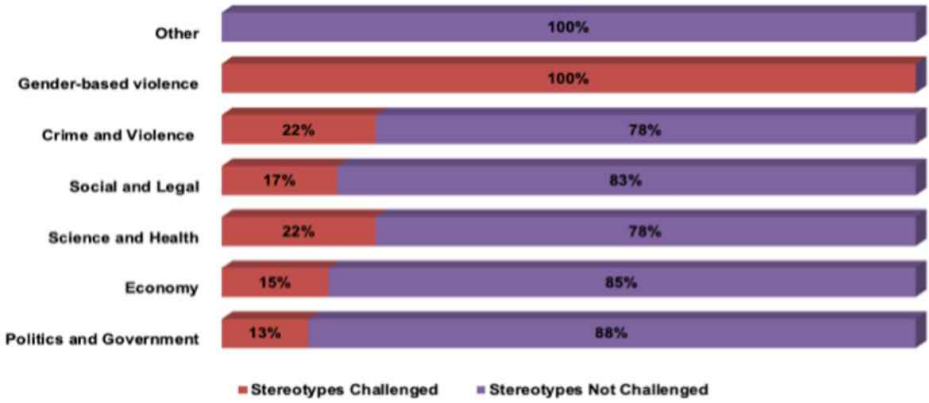
Topics	Print	Radio	Television	Online
Politics and Governance	33%	-	67%	-
Economy	13%	-	33%	-
Science and Health	-	-	25%	-
Social and Legal	-	-	-	-
Crime and Violence	-	-	100%	-
Gender-based violence	60%	-	-	-
Celebrity, arts, media	-	-	-	-
Sports	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-
Overall	-	-	38%	-

Gender stereotypes in the news

The use of gender stereotypes in the news media has been toned down. There has been a transition from blatant stereotypes to subtle stereotypes mostly visible in photographs and missed opportunities to ensure diversity in coverage.

Overall, only 25% of the stories that contained gender stereotypes actively challenged them whilst the remaining 75% were silent about the stereotypes.

Fig 13: Media response in stories that contained gender stereotypes



Stories on Gender based violence contributed the most to challenging gender stereotypes as stories questioned the societal expectation that women should suffer in silence. In one story by the *H-Metro* headlined: *French connection…Mai Jeremiah draws comparisons with Gisele Pelicot,* socialite Mai Jeremaya (who was the plaintiff in a rape trial) decided to waive her right to anonymity as is usually the case in rape trials, she openly discussed on social media how she was allegedly raped by two men. The *H-Metro* likens Mai Jeremiah to French activist, Gisele Pelicot who was raped by more than 50 men. Pelicot said her reason for waiving anonymity was to make "shame switch sides"

In another report which challenged gender stereotypes; Chronicle featured a report headlined: *Chinese national wins First Lady's traditional cook-out competition.* The story showed that while cooking in the Zimbabwean context is usually associated with women, men can also participate. In this report Dan Zhao, A Chinese man won the competition. The photograph used shows both ministers, Barbra Rwodzi and Owen Ncube wearing aprons and bonnets which helps challenge the stereotype that the kitchen is a domain for women.



Source: Chronicle 6 May 2025

However, it should be noted that in the same story, The First lady, Auxilia Mnangagwa is referred to as "Amai" to accentuate her role as the mother of the nation. While this is an honorable role, this subtle stereotype may be limiting. Apart from the Cook Out, she was featured in a report on the launch of the AgroTourism4She programme in Manicaland. In this project she is seen working with women in their small scale projects that boost tourism.

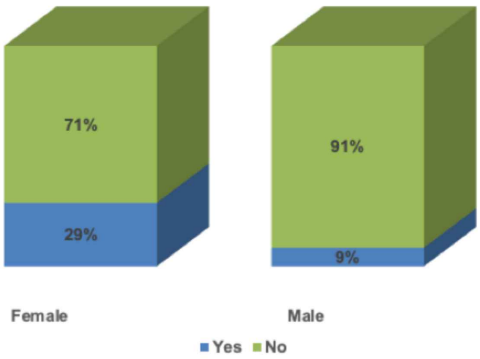
Some of the gender stereotypes observed in the monitored stories include the portrayal of women as vulnerable and defenseless while men are portrayed as resilient. For example, B-Metro carried the following stories:

- *My breasts bleed and almost touch the ground!*
- *Gwanda women hail their four legged workmates on Word Donkey Day –'Donkeys do the heavy lifting'*
- *Sex insult turns fatal*
- *Too old to die?*
- *"I fought a crocodile to save my wife.*

Reference to family status

One of the most common ways in which the media have entrenched gender stereotypes has been through linking sources with their family status even when this is not relevant to the issue being reported on. The study observed that 29% of the times women were quoted in the media their family status was brought up as opposed to 9% for men. This practice perpetuates gender stereotypes and prevents women from being viewed in a professional light.

Fig 14: Percentage reference to family status by gender



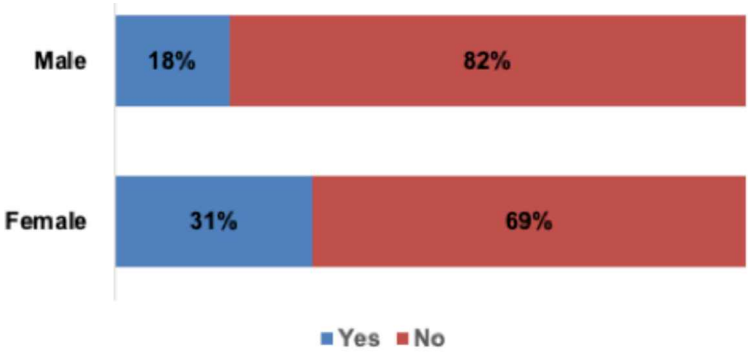
A juxtaposition of sex of journalists and instances where family status was brought up shows that this practice is common amongst male journalists. Women journalists only referred to the family status of 3% of their male subjects. It should be noted that they did not do this for women. On the other hand male journalists referred to family status for 23% of women subjects featured and 8% for male subjects.

Table 6: Analysis of % reference to family status by sex of journalists

INDICATOR	SEX OF REPORTER	FEMALE		MALE	
	Sex of news subject	Female	Male	Female	Male
Referenced Family status	Yes	0%	3%	23%	8%
No reference to family status	No	100%	97%	77%	92%

Although women were overwhelmingly outnumbered by men as news subject, they were relatively more visible in photographs than men.

Fig 15: Distribution of subjects visible in photographs



It should however be noted that whilst men were mostly visible in their formal capacities, women were mostly portrayed in their semi-formal to informal roles.



Women from Kuwadzana and surrounding areas showed up at Blue Waters Hospital in their numbers to take the important step of getting checked for breast and cervical cancer



President Mnangagwa, Defence Minister Cppah Muchinguri-Kashiri (left) and other senior officials observe as Grain Marketing Board chief executive officer Dr Edson Badzai (centre) shows a model of the 30-powered grain silos

President Mnangagwa, flanked by Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development Minister Dr Anxious Masuka (left) and Midlands Provincial Affairs and Devolution Minister Owen Ncube, cuts the ribbon to officially commission the silos

President Mnangagwa greets Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services Minister Dr Jonfan Mutsvere on arrival at the Kwekwe coan depot

Part of the colourful crowd that welcomed the President at the Kwekwe coan Depot where he commissioned the country's first 30-powered grain silos yesterday. — Pictures: Believe Nyakudjara

National Foods public relations manager, Ms Marjorie Mutemererwa (left), and the acting group head of sales Mr Rudzai Milton Murongarivombo showcase the firm's products on the sidelines of the event

An aerial photograph of the country's technologically advanced grain silos

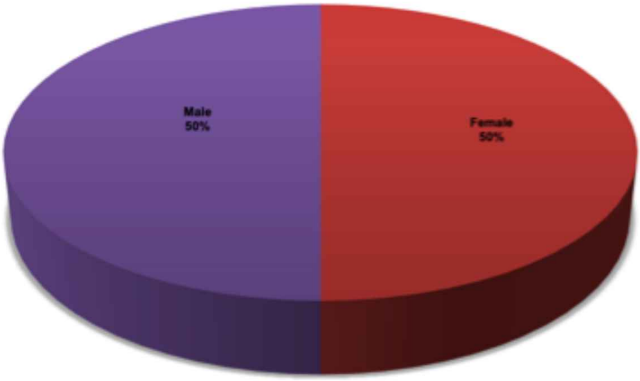
FOCUS ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Stories on gender-based violence made up 6% of the featured news articles. Of the news platforms that were monitored only the print media carried stories on gender-based violence. These stories included the following headlines:

- *Sex Insult turns fatal – B-Metro*
- *Rape, armed robbery spree' brothers trial kicks off – Chronicle*
- *Mai Jeremaya waives rights to anonymity -H-Metro*
- *Two men denied bail in socialite's rape case*

In terms of sourcing, there was a balance in the voices that were featured with both women and men accounting for 50%. The balance is however deceiving as there were more individual men featured than women. Mai Jeremaya's voice was the most recurrent accounting for 25% of women's voices recorded.

Fig 16: Distribution of voices by gender in GBV stories



Female homemakers were the most featured group in GBV stories followed by male visitors and suspected criminals. Legal experts featured in the monitored GBV stories were all men.

Table 7: Occupation of subjects in GBV stories

OCCUPATION OF GBV SOURCES	FREQUENCY	FEMALE	MALE
Homemaker	29%	100%	0%
Villager or resident	23%	0%	100%
Criminal, suspect	18%	0%	100%
Not stated	12%	100%	0%
Lawyer, judge, magistrate, legal advocate,	12%	0%	100%
Celebrity, artist, actor, writer, singer, TV personality	6%	100%	0%

Women's functions in GBV stories were quite problematic, while they were mostly featured as subjects recounting their personal experience or giving popular opinion in stories, their perspective was absent in expert views. Interestingly only men were featured as eyewitnesses in GBV cases which tilts the scale in favour of the men involved in the stories.

Table 8: Function in GBV Stories

FUNCTION IN GBV STORIES	FEMALE	MALE
Subject	67%	33%
Expert or commentator	0%	100%
Personal Experience	67%	33%
Eye Witness	0%	100%
Popular Opinion	100%	0%

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Zimbabwe still has a long way to ensure gender balance and equality in the media. There is a serious need for joint efforts amongst key media and gender stake holders to capacitate the media to be inclusive in their coverage. There are some low hanging fruits that media houses could adopt to ensure more equal gender representation in the news. Balance and fairness are some of the non-negotiable tenets of journalism that media houses should enforce on a daily basis.

Broadcast media needs to deviate from focusing on personalities and events at the expense of issue based reporting, this will help unlock their platforms' capacity to produce inclusive and diversified content.

Apart from fair quantitative representation and portrayal it is imperative for the media to ensure qualitative nuances of gender inclusivity are also adopted. Only 4% of the stories monitored discussed gender related topics such as women empowerment, women's participation in politics and economic processes as well as income inequality between men and women. There have to be deliberate efforts to pursue these storylines. In as much as there was significant coverage of stories on gender based violence, most of these emanate from court proceedings. There is need for investigations into the factors triggering GBV in the country as well as its prevalence. The media has a pivotal role to play in spotlighting issues so that policy makers can take corrective action.

Consistent refresher trainings for journalists could strengthen their gender awareness and sensitivity so that they avoid using stereotypical language in their reports. This will also help strengthen their analysis and interpretation of prevailing socio-political and economic trends through a gender lens.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To strengthen media inclusivity and diversity in Zimbabwe there needs to be a multi-stakeholder approach that targets media houses, individual journalists, policy makers and media support organisations. The following are recommended actions:

Gender Policy development and implementation - Gender policies that strengthen equal representation of women and men in media should be adopted.

Capacity building for journalists - Following the capacity gaps observed in the representation of gender related issues, training and mentorship for journalists should be conducted to ensure quantitative and qualitative improvements news coverage.

Media Literacy for students - Media literacy programmes for their media and journalism students could help them enhance their reporting on gender related issues in preparation for the newsroom.

Multi stakeholder collaborations - Collaboration in areas of training, mentorship and advocacy among stakeholders that include media support organisations, relevant ministries and commissions will ensure better coordination for gender reporting

Audience Analysis - Surveys and research to understand news audiences' perspectives on the media's portrayal of gender and other deeper nuances will influence the prevailing media trends and ensure that content is responsive to audience needs.

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 perspective -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

NAME	GMMP ROLE	INSTITUTION	POSITION
Patience Zirima	Country Coordinator	Gender and Media Connect	
Prisiel Samu	Lead Researcher	ZimFact	Programmes Coordinator
Green Kunyeda	Monitor	Media Monitors	Researcher
Bridget Mabanda	Monitor	ZimFact	Sit-in Correspondent
Takudzwa Chitsungo	Monitor	Media Monitors	Researcher
Nobert Kuvumudiki	Monitor	Zimbabwe Gender Commission	Public Relations Officer
Theresa Takafuma	Monitor	TellZim	News Editor
Mellisa Munyoro	Monitor		
Claudette Sunduza	Monitor	Media Monitors	Researcher





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