



Overview

The mass media are major socialising agents in modern society. They can deliver messages and symbols directly into almost every home. Yet they can perpetuate negative gender stereotypes, and gender differences are linked to power and influence in the mainstream media. This raises such questions as: Who has access to the media? Who gets employment? How is the world portrayed, including the treatment of violence? How are media policy and content developed? Who is involved in technical and decision-making areas? Who has access to media networks and organisations?

The GMS *Information and Communications* manual offers a gender framework for the information sector in terms of gender roles, ways of communicating gender (targeting the crucial areas of language, stereotyping and story selection), and the role of the media in advancing gender equality.

It identifies specific strategies and recommendation for action that can be adapted for particular national circumstances and priorities. These relate to the policy environment, image and portrayal of women, employment, production and programming, outreach and democratisation, training, research and gender-sensitive action tools.

The manual also includes a questionnaire for carrying out a gender impact analysis, tools for gender analysis, guidelines for practice and examples of good practice.

Points of entry

- The governmental information service should serve as the GMS's state-level media on gender equality.
- The gender-awareness of writer, reporters and editors needs to be raised in the critical areas of:
 - *Language*: examine current conventions, use non-sexist language to avoid perpetuating questionable attitudes and assumptions, and substitute more precise usages.
 - *Stereotyping*: avoid stereotypical labels for women in positions of influence, or describing them in terms of their physical appearance, while male colleagues are described in terms of achievements.
 - *Story selection*: questions to ask: Who gets coverage? From what angle? Through what lens? Are stories helping to advance women's place in society or are they angled in ways that uphold traditional inequalities? Are women's concerns being separated from those of society in general?

Barriers

- Stereotyping de-legitimises the achievements of women. Many stories about women are never told because they are not given importance, or because there is no effort to find out what women are doing or what their views are.
- There are entrenched patterns of employment, access, policy and decision-making.

What's in this module?

The first three activities deal with awareness and using tools to collect information and analyse (F1 'Who has access?' F2 'Employment in the media' and F3 'Using gender-sensitive and inclusive language'). There is then a closer look at the specific issue of violence (F4 'The media and violence against women'). The final activities examine the wider environment for information and communications, considering changes needed in law and regulation (F5 'Assessing the policy environment') and ways of implementing global mandates (F6 'Implementing mandates').

Checklist

- ❑ Make sure you are familiar with the contents of the GMS *Information and Communications* manual before you start to deliver the training activities in this module.
- ❑ The Toolkit Action Guide Unit 4 'Using the GMS sector manuals' will give you an overview and help you find out what is in the manual and where, and which sections will be most useful.
- ❑ Look through the 'To help you choose' table in the Introduction to this Trainer's Guide for activities, topics, methods and handouts from other modules and sectors that you can adapt to fit your purposes.
- ❑ Always start planning your training with an analysis of your learners and their needs.
- ❑ Use the 'How to' briefings in the Introduction to this Trainer's Guide to help you design your training.

Background

Besides *Information and Communications*, relevant manuals are *Education, Legal and Constitutional Affairs*, and *Science and Technology* for discussion of new information and communications technologies (ICTs).



ACTIVITY F1

Who has access?

Aim To highlight the gender differences in who writes the news and whom it is about

Outcomes

- Analyse a daily newspaper in terms of gender differences
- Consider implications of gender stereotyping

Time 1 1/4 hours

Materials Copies of several different daily newspapers, flipchart, markers, paper, pens

Steps

- 1 Ask participants if they know approximately what percentage of news stories feature women as compared to men. Let a number of participants make an estimate.
- 2 Tell them that in January 1995, as part of a global media monitoring project (GMMP), teams around the world collected data on how, and how often, women were reported in the media. This showed that women made up 17 per cent of news subjects, as compared to 83 per cent for men. Despite much activity around the issue of gender equality, a repeat of the survey in February 2000 found women still made up only 18 per cent of news subjects.
- 3 Explain to participants that in this activity they will be looking at the current situation in their daily newspapers.
- 4 Divide the participants into small groups and give each group a copy of a daily newspaper, a sheet of flipchart paper and a marker. Ask them to go through the newspaper and make a note of:
 - the number of female compared to male by-lines (as far as possible)
 - the types of article with female by-lines (i.e. are they 'hard' stories such as crime, the economy, international crises, labour, politics or government or 'soft' stories such as arts, entertainment, health, environment, social issues)
 - the types of stories in which women appear (see previous point)
 - any differences in the way that women are presented as opposed to men (e.g. reference to appearance, occupation)

Participants should summarise their findings in each of the four areas on a sheet of flipchart paper. Each group selects a member to report back to the plenary. (40 mins)

- 5 After the groups have shared their findings, lead a discussion of how the media's reinforcement of stereotypical images of women and men perpetuates gender inequalities. (E.g. there are relatively few women journalists and there are few articles on women's diverse life experiences, e.g. as entrepreneurs, professionals or farmers. This means a lack of role models for other women.) (20 mins)

Notes

- Before the session, write the factors that participants are looking for on a flipchart and post it up.
- In many countries there is only one daily newspaper. You can use different dates of the same paper to ensure variety among the groups.

ACTIVITY F2

Employment in the media

Aim To raise awareness of the obstacles faced by women working in the media.

Outcomes

- Identify obstacles faced by women working in the media
- Suggest and evaluate strategies to overcome them

Time 1 hour

Materials Flipchart and markers, Handout F.2 'Regional charts'

Steps

- 1 Give out copies of the handout and point out the disparities between men and women in the two tables.
- 2 Ask the participants to brainstorm ideas on what obstacles women face working in the media that men do not. Write them on the flipchart. The aim is to generate as many ideas as possible. (20 mins)
- 3 When all the ideas are written up, clarify their meaning. Cluster similar ideas and cut out any that overlap, with the agreement of the group. Try to limit them to a maximum of 10. (10 mins)
- 4 Write these up on the left-hand side of a new sheet of flipchart headed 'Obstacles'. On the right-hand side, write the heading 'Strategies'.
- 5 Brainstorm practical strategies to deal with the obstacles and write them up. (20 mins)
- 6 Ask participants to vote for the strategy they think most likely to bring about changes.

Notes

- The obstacles might include:
 - lack of educational opportunities
 - denial of equal pay for equal work
 - denial of access to assignments and being relegated to 'soft' topics or women's page (both of which also affect opportunities for promotion)
 - lack of role models
 - balancing family/work
 - an insensitive work environment
 - sexual harassment
 - social disapproval (a 'man's' job)
 - lack of access to the 'old boys' network'
- Examples of strategies: legal and educational changes, development of women's media associations, more involvement in decision-making.

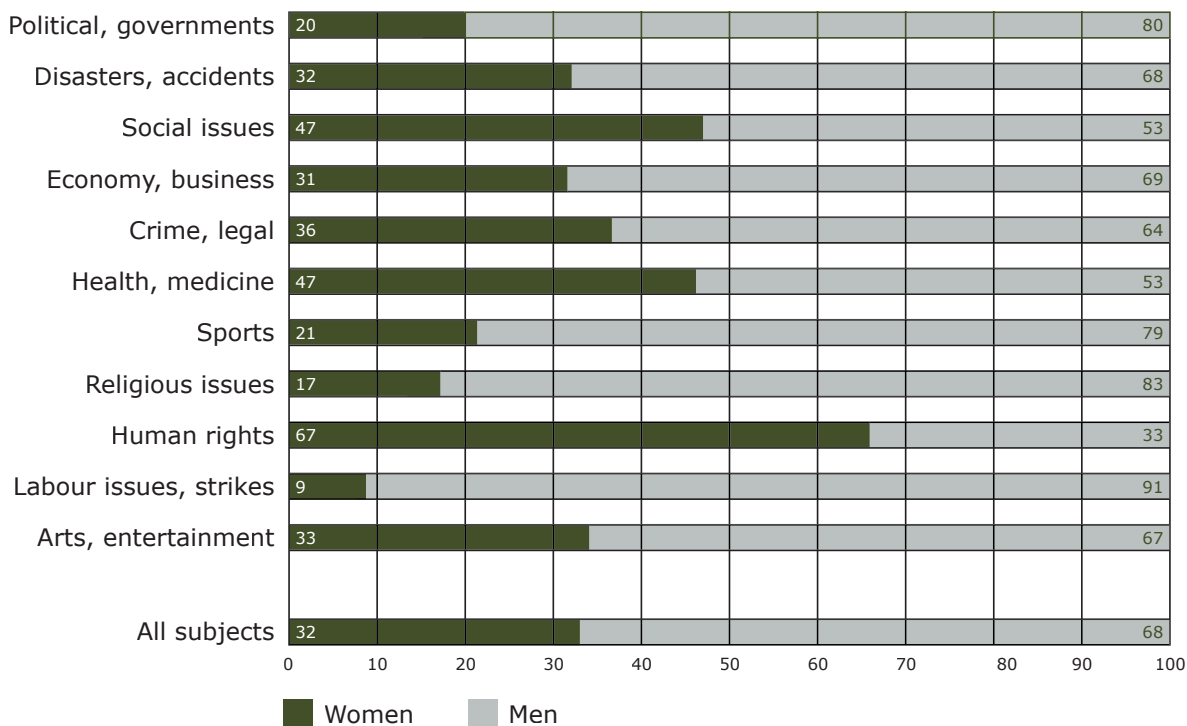


Proportion of Female/Male Journalists Against Female/Male Actors in Main Subject Areas by Region

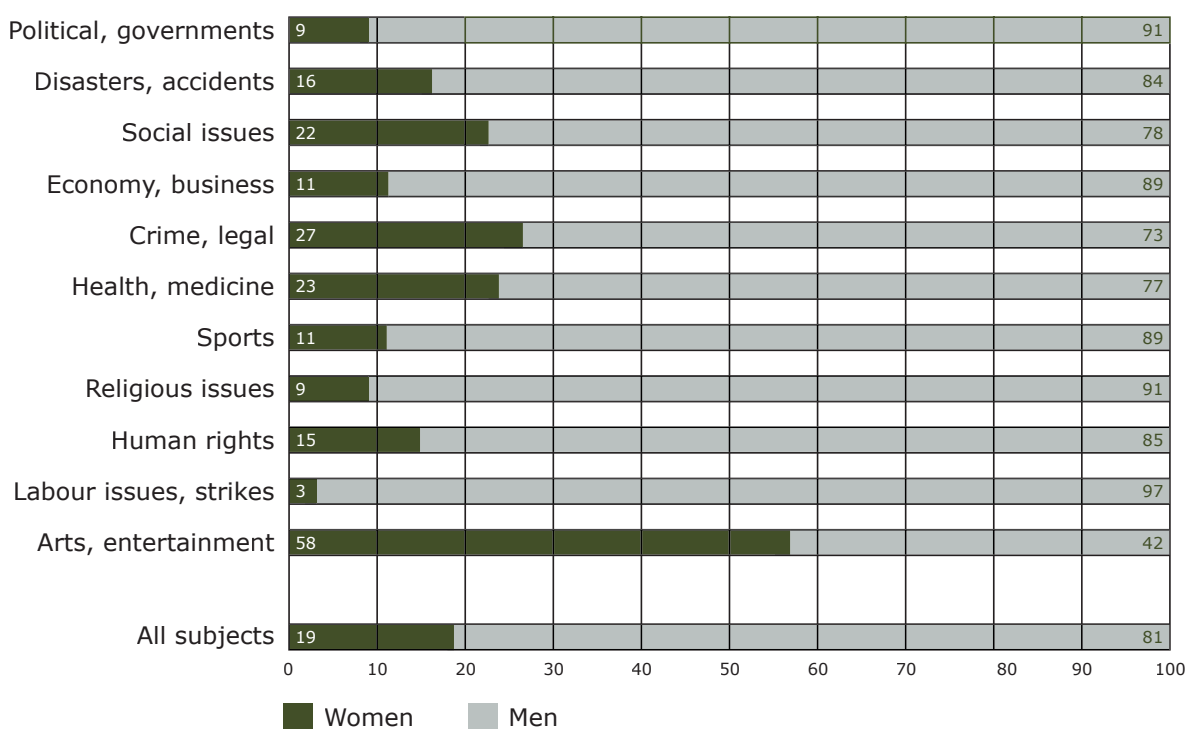
HANDOUT
F.2

Africa

Proportion of female and male journalists in main subject areas



Proportion of female and male news actors in main subject areas

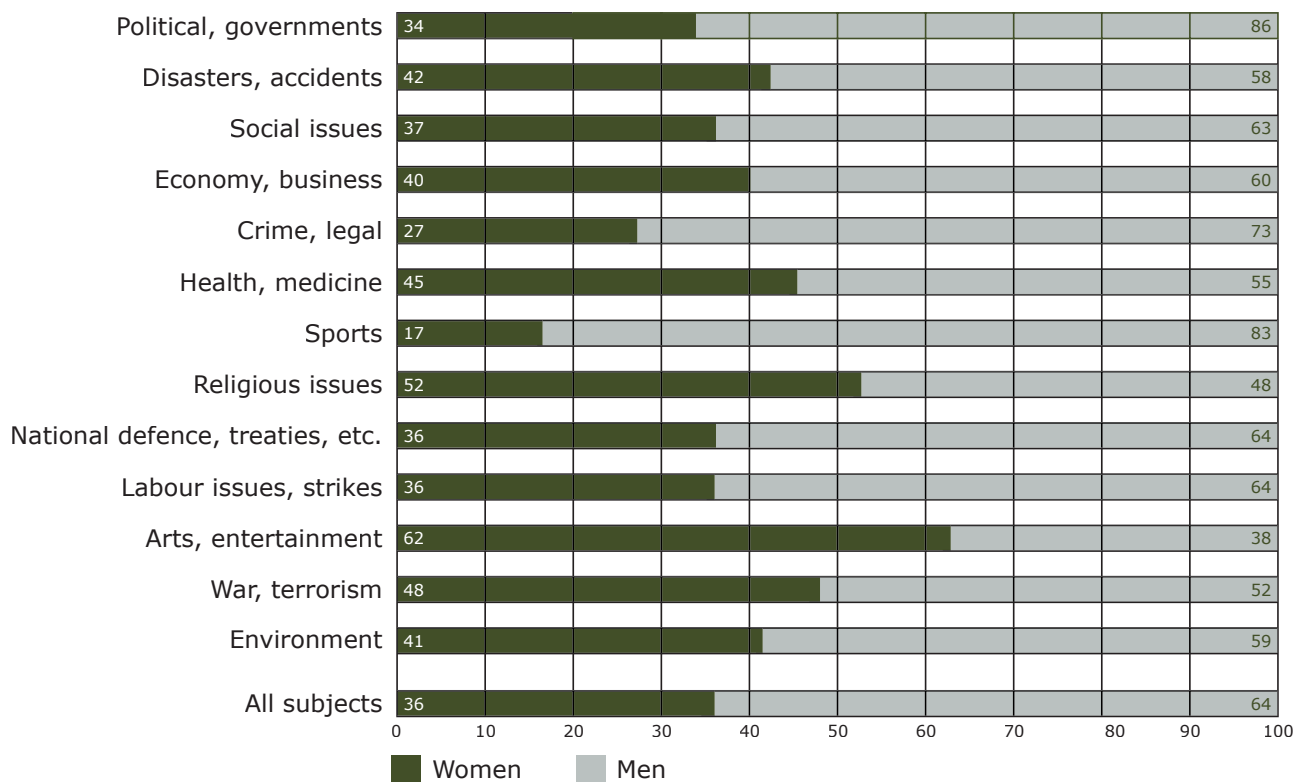


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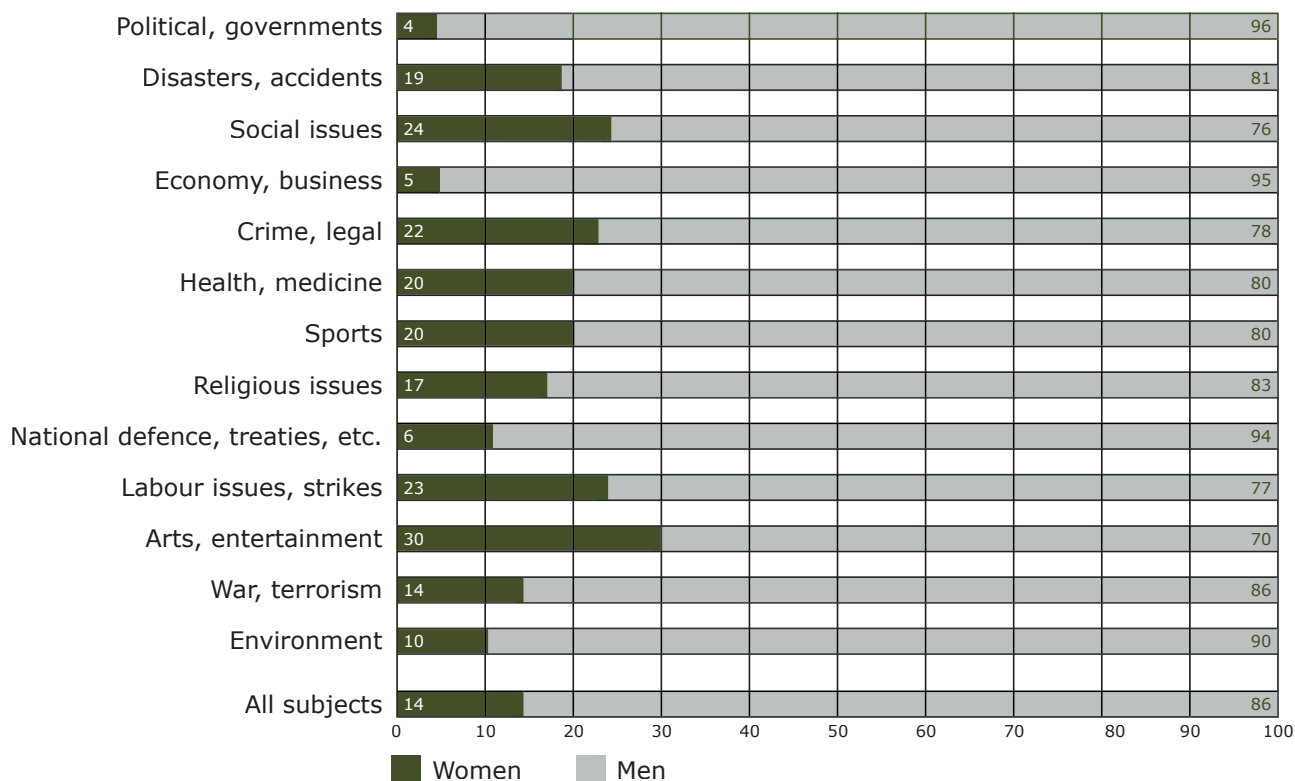
Proportion of Female/Male Journalists Against Female/Male Actors in Main Subject Areas by Region

Asia

Proportion of female and male journalists in main subject areas



Proportion of female and male news actors in main subject areas



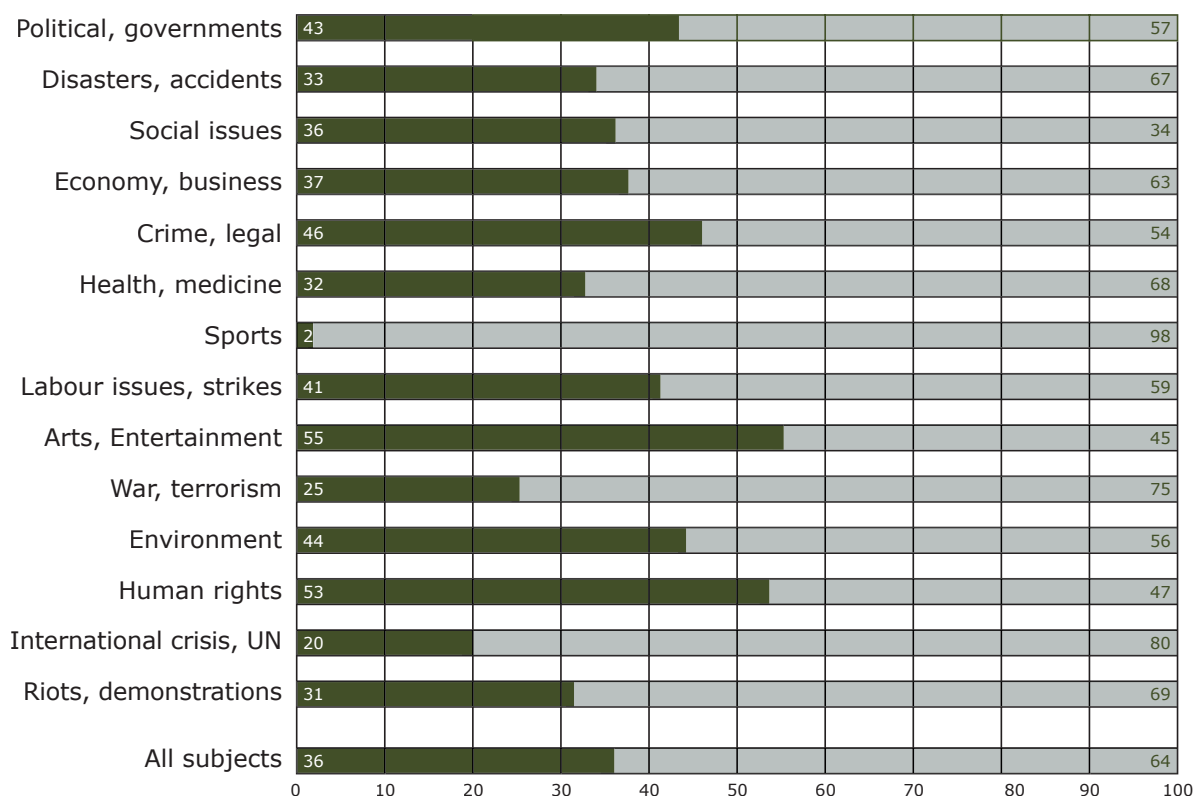


Proportion of Female/Male Journalists Against Female/Male Actors in Main Subject Areas by Region

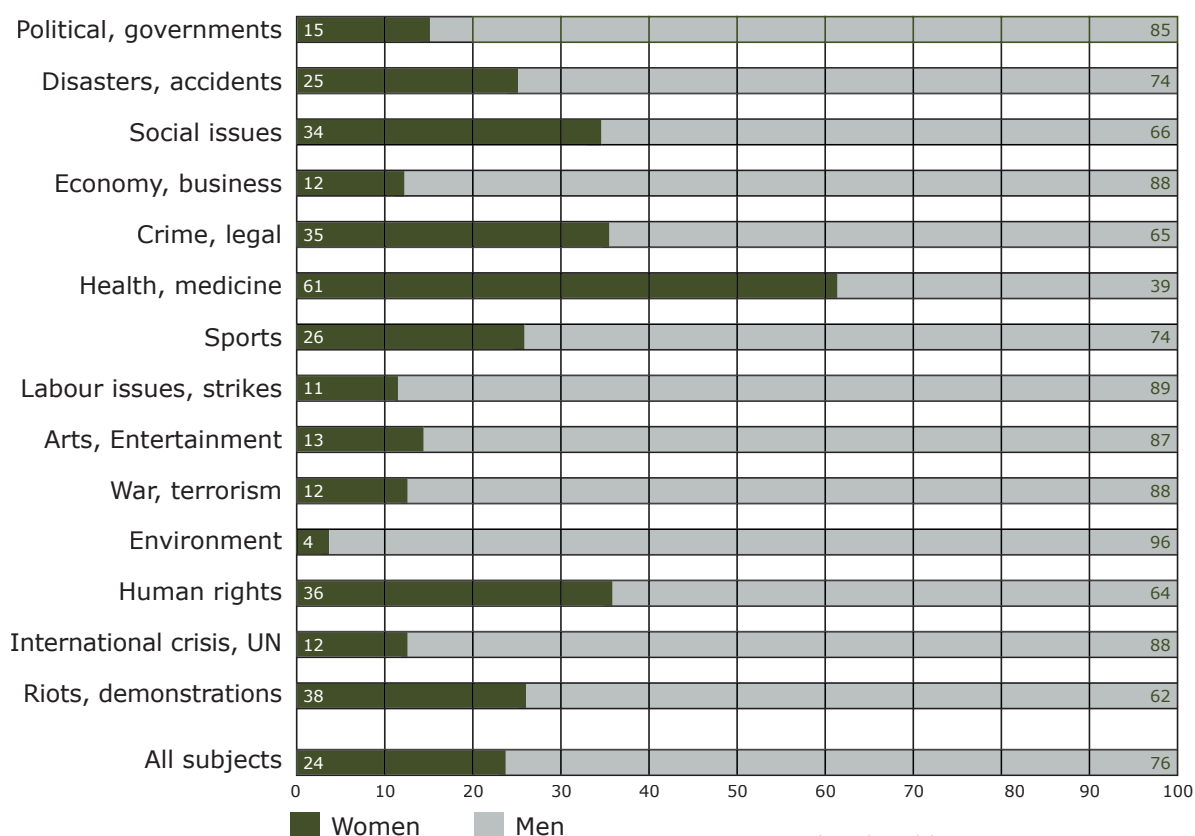
HANDOUT
F.2

The Caribbean and Central America

Proportion of female and male journalists in main subject areas



Proportion of female and male news actors in main subject areas



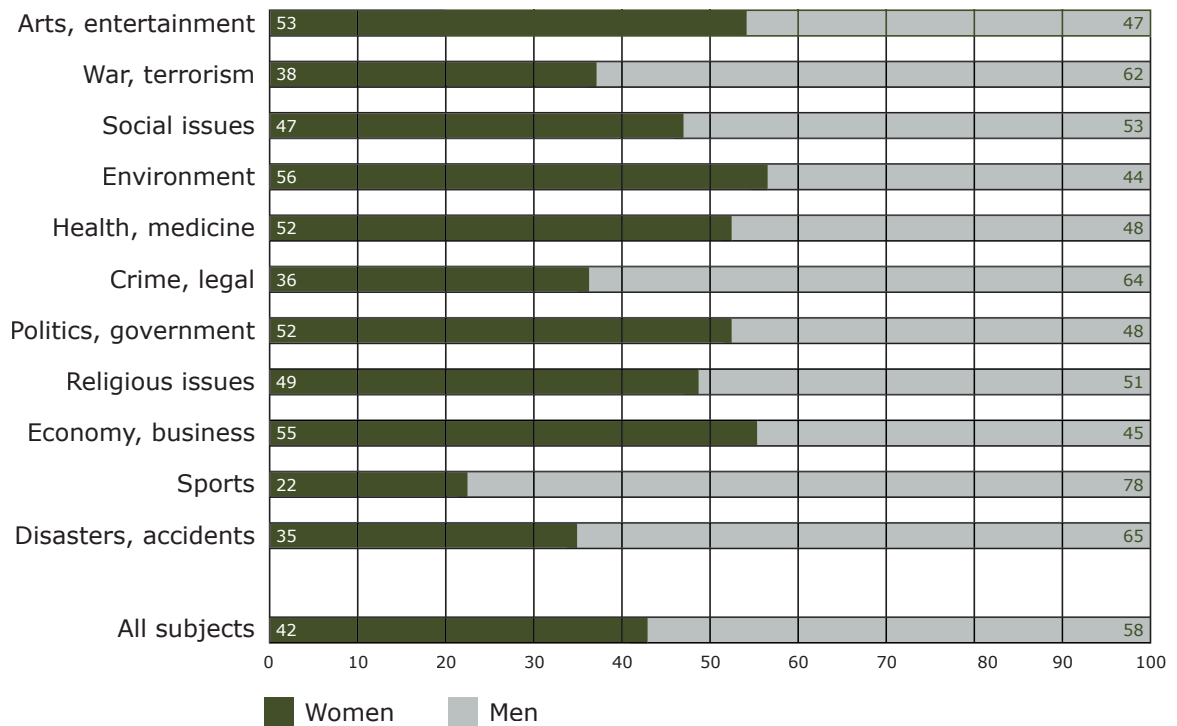
■ Women ■ Men

HANDOUT
F.2

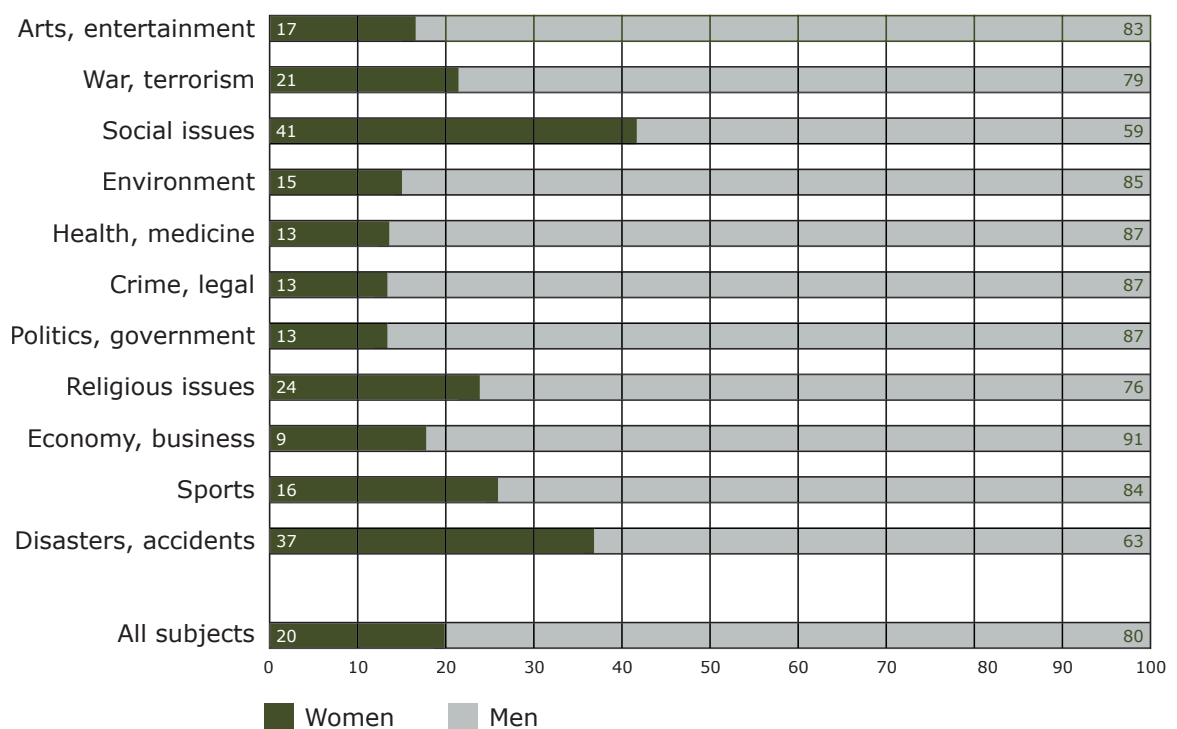
Proportion of Female/Male Journalists Against Female/Male Actors in Main Subject Areas by Region

Pacific

Proportion of female and male journalists in main subject areas



Proportion of female and male news actors in main subject areas

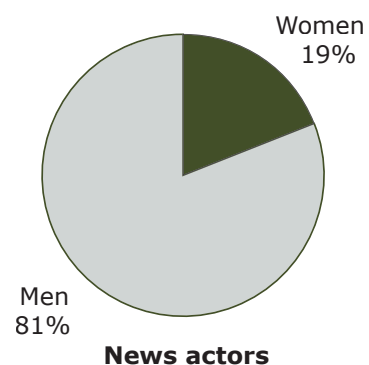
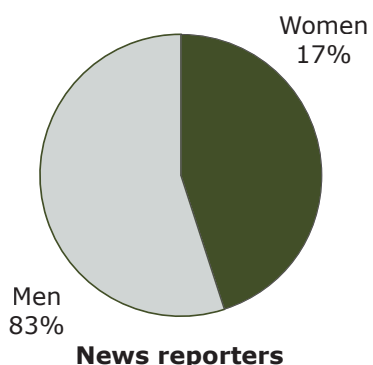
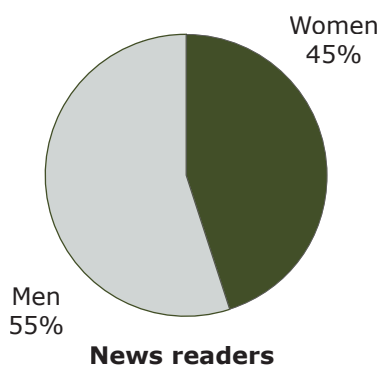




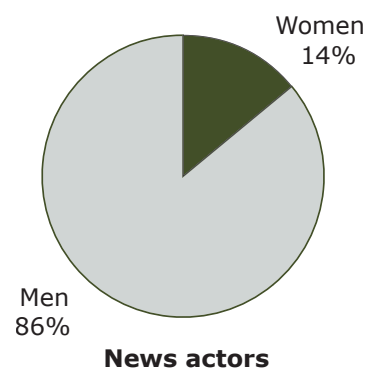
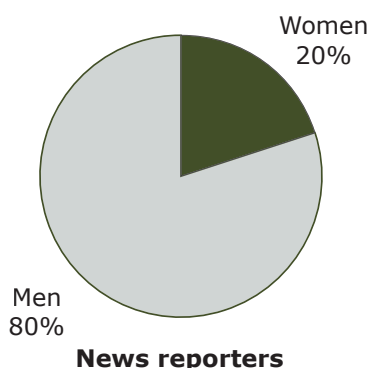
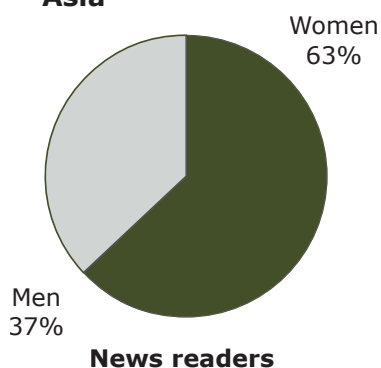
Presence of Women and Men in Newspapers, Radio & Television by Region

HANDOUT
F.2

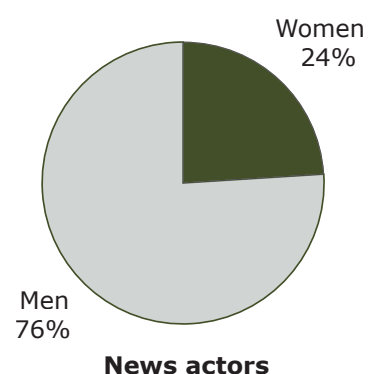
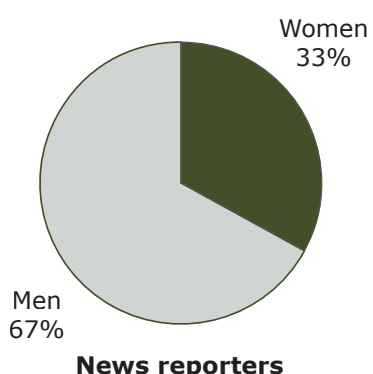
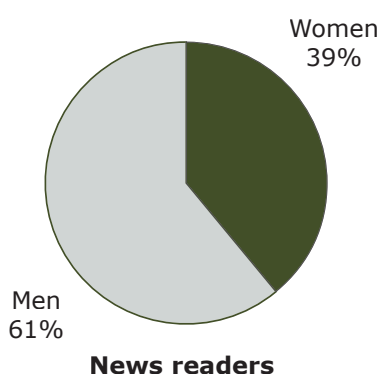
Africa



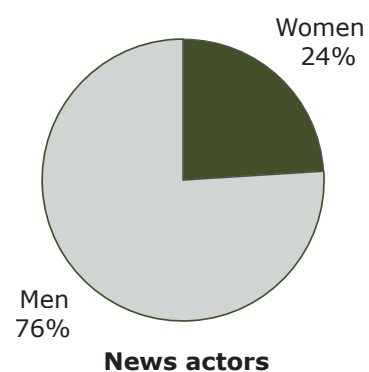
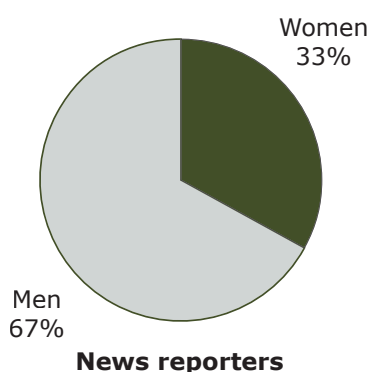
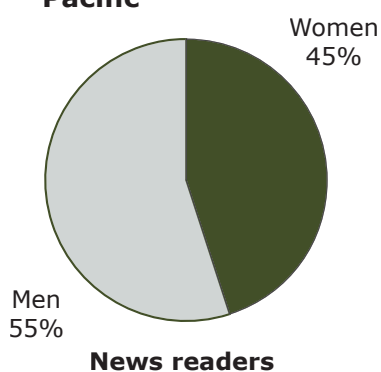
Asia



Caribbean and Central America



Pacific



ACTIVITY F3

Using gender-sensitive and gender-inclusive language

Aim To develop awareness of sexist language and stereotyping

Outcomes

- Distinguish between gender-sensitive and -insensitive words and phrases
- Start planning language guidelines for colleagues

Time 45 mins

Materials Handout F.3 'Finding gender-sensitive alternatives', slips of paper with one term from the handout written on each, rubbish bin

Steps

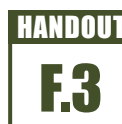
- 1 Ask the group to arrange their chairs in a circle. Place a rubbish bin in the middle. Give out the slips of paper.
- 2 Ask the person on your left to read out what is on one of the papers and say whether it is gender-sensitive or not. Then ask who has its pair - if the word is insensitive, who has the gender-sensitive version and vice versa. (e.g. if the first person reads out 'Miss, Mrs', the second person is the one with 'Ms'). S/he should read it out. Ask the group why one is more gender-sensitive than the other. Ask the person with the insensitive version to throw it in the bin.
- 3 Continue with the next person to the left, and so on around the circle until all the words have been read out and paired. (30 mins)
- 4 Give out the handout for reference. Ask for ideas as to what else might be included in guidelines. (Examples: using the pronoun 'their' rather than 'his', and 'spouse' rather than 'wife' where the reference is non-specific). (5 mins)
- 5 End by emphasising that sexist language reinforces assumptions about people and sex roles, while there is little extra work in being language-conscious. Suggest that participants create guidelines based on the handout to circulate among their colleagues. Ask them to think about how they might do this. (5-10 mins)

Notes

- Before the session, write all the words from the handout on separate slips of paper.



Finding gender-sensitive alternatives



Traditional	Alternative(s)
Mr and Mrs John Smith.....	Jane and John Smith, Mr and Mrs Smith, Mr and Ms Smith
Miss, Mrs.....	Ms
Chairman	Chair, Chairperson
girl	woman, young woman, girl-child
men and girls.....	girls and boys/boys and girls, women and men/men and women
man and wife.....	husband and wife, wife and husband
housewife.....	homemaker
lady.....	woman (unless the parallel is to gentleman)
emasculated	weakened, enfeebled, diminished, toothless, tame, watered down
effeminate.....	delicate, feeble, fussy, soft, languid, affected, gentle
founding fathers.....	forebears, ancestors
authoress, poetess, actress.....	author, poet, actor
women's lib	women's movement, feminist movement
women's libber.....	feminist, supporter of the women's movement
businessman.....	business manager, executive, agent, representative (plural: business people, business community)
cameraman	photographer, camera operator (plural: camera crew)
foreman	supervisor
policeman/men	police officer (plural: police)
craftsman.....	artisan, craft worker
statesman	political leader
statesmanship	statescraft
spokesman.....	spokesperson (spokesman or spokeswoman for specific person)
man-made.....	artificial, synthetic, manufactured, industrial
manpower.....	staff, labour, workforce, personnel, workers, human resources
salesman/girl.....	assistant, attendant (plural: salespersons)
steward/stewardess.....	flight attendant, staff, crew
man, mankind.....	people, humanity, human beings, the human race, men and women, homo sapiens, the public, society
brotherhood of man.....	human fellowship, solidarity
man a project	staff a project, hire personnel, employ staff
mother tongue.....	first language
committee of wise men	committee of counsellors, eminent persons, advisory panel

ACTIVITY F4

The media and violence against women

Aim To consider the connection between violence in the media, and violence against women and other forms of gender-based violence in society

Outcomes

- Give examples of violence in the media and analyse them
- Suggest ways in which media violence is linked to violence against women and other forms of gender-based violence in society

Time 1 hour

Materials Handout F.4 'Media and violence in society'

Steps

- 1 Explain to the group that this session is going to look at violence in the media and the effect this has on society as a whole.
- 2 Give out Handout F.4 'Media and violence in society' and read it through with the participants.
- 3 Ask participants for some examples from their own experience of violent movies, TV shows, video games, etc. Who is the primary audience for the programmes? What messages are these acts of violence sending out about violent behaviour? Why are violent programmes popular, especially among young viewers and men? (20 mins)
- 4 Ask how violence is reported in the news (TV/radio/newspapers). Is it sensationalised? Trivialised?
- 5 Remind participants that the media is also often criticised for perpetuating images that reduce women to sex objects, particularly in advertising. Ask for some examples.
- 6 What links can participants see between the portrayal of women and violence and other forms of gender-based violence in the media? How does this impact on the wider society? What can be done about this situation? (20 mins)
- 7 Summarise the discussion, picking out the highlights and filling the gaps. (10 mins)



ACTIVITY F4

Notes

- If possible, it would be useful to show a clip from a film or TV show that illustrates some of the points being made. You could also provide images from magazines, newspaper articles, etc. that sensationalise or trivialise violence against women.
- Examples of problems with the portrayal of violence and other forms of gender-based violence in the media:
 - glamorised and linked to power – a violent person is shown as becoming successful, winning a reward, etc.
 - shown as a quick way to resolve conflicts
 - shown as the 'just response' of the hero, often to some previous violence – (which the movie audience sees in detail) that has been inflicted on his family
 - heroes are 'cool' and detached whereas non-violent attitudes are 'girlish'
 - shown as entertainment
 - negative effects (e.g. the suffering by the victim) are rarely explored
 - victim sometimes portrayed in a negative light that suggest that s/he deserved the violence
 - sexual element to violence, with the victim being shown half-naked or vulnerable in other ways.
 - force, coercion and violence shown as part of a sexual encounter
 - women shown as initially rejecting aggressive sex but eventually 'consenting'
 - sensational reporting trivialises incidents of abuse against women (rape, domestic abuse and incest) and minimises the seriousness of the crimes
 - players in video games marketed directly to young people (focused on boys aged 9-11) use violence to win
 - gay men portrayed as 'effeminate'
 - homophobic language, jokes
 - boys encouraged to be primarily interested in violent super heroes whose behaviour would be illegal in real life

(These notes are adapted from the exercises in Women's Media Watch, 1998)

HANDOUT**F.4**

Media and violence in society

Gender stereotyping by the media leads women, men and children to develop false and stultifying views and expectations of themselves and others, and masks reality. When women and men fail to match up to the fantasy ideal created by the media, serious problems may arise. Both women and men may develop low self-esteem. Women are more likely to become depressed and accepting of abuse, while men are more likely to become frustrated and angry, leading to violent and abusive behaviour.

The high incidence of media violence worldwide – whether verbal, physical, psychological and/or sexual – is of great concern and has generated debate and research into just how media violence affects viewers, in particular children. Media violence is insidious since the viewer may perceive no visible long-term effects. It is appealing since it is so often linked with power, and it is shown as a quick way of resolving conflicts.

How much violence is there on television (for many the most hypnotic of all media)? The US company, TV Guide, conducted a study in 1995 based on 18 hours of viewing (6:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight) on 10 channels (ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX and PBS affiliates; plus cable channels WTBS, USA Network, MTV and HBO) in Washington DC. It concluded that “violence remains a pervasive, major feature of contemporary television programming, and it is coming from more sources and in greater volume than ever before.”

The study cited 1,846 individual acts of violence – ranging from violence that resulted in one or more fatalities, to threatening behaviour with a weapon. Cartoons had the most violent scenes (471), followed by promos for TV shows (265), movies (221), toy commercials (188), music videos (123), and commercials for movies (121). Numerous other North American research projects had already ascertained the link between media violence and violence in the society. Media watchdog groups in all continents have proved most effective in raising public awareness of these issues.



ACTIVITY F5

Assessing the policy environment

Aim To discuss the laws and regulations that govern the media and possible improvements.

Outcomes

- Share information about current laws and regulations
- Suggest improvements and ways of putting suggestions into practice

Time 50 mins

Materials Flipchart paper, markers, tape

Steps

- 1 Divide participants into two groups. One group will look at legislation specific to the media and the other at legislation that has an impact on the media. Give each group its discussion questions on a sheet of flipchart paper, plus more paper and markers.
- 2 Group 1 should discuss the following:
 - Is there legislation governing the operations of the mass media?
 - If so, do the regulations address the employment of women and men (equal opportunities) and the portrayal of women and men (gender stereotyping)?
 - Are these statements clear and effective, and to what extent are they implemented?
 - Are there codes/guidelines of conduct governing the portrayal of women in the media?
 - If so, how effective are they and to what extent are they being implemented?
- 3 Group 2 should discuss the following:
 - Are there national libel laws, labour laws on equal pay for equal work, equal opportunities and sexual harassment, and laws governing the import/distribution of pornography?
 - How clear and effective are these laws? To what extent are they being implemented?
- 4 Ask each group to answer the questions and write on flipchart paper their suggestions about how the current situation could be improved. (30 mins)
- 5 Bring the groups back together to share their findings and suggestions. (20 mins)
- 6 Discuss how these suggestions can be put into practice. Sum up.

Notes

- Prepare a flipchart page for each group with its discussion questions before the session.
- Familiarise yourself with the relevant laws and codes of conduct.
- Examples of ways of improving the situation include lobbying for legal reform; encouraging the creation or strengthening of professional codes of conduct.

ACTIVITY F6

Implementing mandates

Aim To find ways of meeting the objectives on the media agreed in the relevant mandates

Outcomes

- Suggest action to help meet mandates on the media
- Plan practical ideas to implement them

Materials Flipchart, markers, Handout F.6 'Global and Commonwealth mandates', index cards in four colours (one of each for each participant)

Time 1 1/2 hrs

Steps

- 1 Give participants copies of the handout and allow them a few minutes to read it (or have someone read it aloud). Tell them that 53 per cent of countries cited media as their top priority for achieving gender equality in their five-year review of the Beijing conference in 2000.
- 2 Explain that the people in the middle are goldfish in a bowl. Other participants can listen to their discussion but not take part at this stage.
- 3 Discuss the mandates with the 'goldfish'. Ask each of them what they think would be a possible strategy for action under each objective. (20 mins)
- 4 Give each participant four index cards in different colours (e.g. white, blue, yellow, green). Ask them to write: on the white card a possible action to help put the first objective into practice (e.g. setting up a data base on women working in the media); on the blue card a possible action to help put the second objective into practice; and so on. (20 mins)
- 5 Collect up the cards and sort by colour. Divide participants into four groups and give each group one pile of cards. Ask one 'goldfish' to join each group. Ask the groups to choose one or two ideas that they see as realistic and doable and to come up with a plan to put them into action. They should write this on flipchart paper. (20 mins)
- 6 Share the ideas in the plenary. Encourage participants' comments on how practical the various plans are. Ask the participants how they could put them into action in their work. (20 mins)

Notes

- Before the session, ask four participants to be the 'goldfish'. Give them copies of the handout and some time to think about actions to reach these objectives.
- Put five chairs for the 'goldfish' + facilitator in the centre of the room facing inward, with the other participants in a circle around them.



Global and Commonwealth mandates



1 Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new information and communications technologies

Actions to be taken are related to women's education and training and employment; women's participation in drawing up policy, developing non-stereotypical programmes and in the new information and communications technologies; and strengthening women's media networks.

2 Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media

Actions to be taken include encouraging gender-sensitive training for media professionals; and taking effective measures against pornography, and the projection of violence against women and children and other forms of gender-based violence.

3 Undertake an advocacy role in partnership with the media

Support gender training for journalists in order to ensure broad and non-discriminatory representation of women in the media and advertising, and encourage reporting on women's achievements, difficulties and multiple roles.

4 Use gender-sensitive and gender-inclusive language

Use gender-sensitive and gender-inclusive language in legislation, government documents and all educational materials, and promote its use in the media.

(The first two are strategic objectives from the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the final document signed by 187 governments at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women. Women and the media is a critical area of concern (section J). This outlines actions to be taken by governments, national and international media, NGOs and media professionals. The second two are among the 15 action points agreed to by Commonwealth governments in the 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development in order to advance gender equality and equity.)

See: www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/ and www.thecommonwealth.org/gender/



Use this space to make notes