Mainstreaming Media and Information Literacy for the Promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

A MANUAL ON RESPONSIBLE REPORTING OF SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND WOMEN IN ELECTIONS FOR LEGACY AND NEW MEDIA

UNESCO
United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

IPDC THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION

iMdev
Initiatives for Media Development

PREFACE

Sierra Leone continues to demonstrate resilience with the significant progress made in strengthening state institutions and maintaining stability to sustain its post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction agenda. The peace enjoyed by the country for over 20 years can be threatened with the eruption of any major conflict if government and development partners fail to address certain challenges, especially with the oncoming 2023 elections.

One of such challenges is the disproportionate representation of women in government and in key positions of the electoral processes. Additionally, during electoral cycles, women experience numerous challenges that restrict them from active participation in the civic and political processes, such as hostile attitudes towards women's candidacy, difficulty in raising funds, low literacy levels and lack of confidence, which can impact negatively on their active involvement and participation in the electoral processes.

The COVID-19 pandemic also underscored society's reliance on women in the front lines and at home, while simultaneously exposing structural inequalities across sectors, from health to the economy, security and social protection. During such crisis, resources are strained, and institutional capacity is limited. This has lopsided far-reaching consequences on women and girls.

Meanwhile, like other African countries, ownership and editorial control of the media in Sierra Leone is male dominated. This imbalance has led to weak public awareness, perception and resistance to shift in behavior, attitude and belief on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) issues and women's rights.

In 2018, a UN Women funded study titled: "Sierra Leone Elections 2018: Who Makes the News?" revealed that women are not consulted as expert sources on issues related to Violence Against Women in Elections (VAWE). Similar evidence in a study by IMdev and UN Women indicated that poor media coverage of women in elections contribute to violence. Such reports on VAWE are often inaccurate or biased, with episodic coverage and representation of disparate cases without reference to the wider social context. Journalists also lack requisite skills to report issues like harassment of female candidates, while news reports threaten women and in several cases, journalists avoid such reports while blaming women who are the victims.

Yet, the media are influential sources of shaping public opinion and lifestyles. Thus, the media's potential as a major source of information, education, and entertainment needs to mainstream gender sensitivity into its contents. However, the situation is the complete opposite, as women are objectified, harassed, and discriminated in diverse media content. The situation is worse on social media because there are no frameworks for protecting women from various forms of online SGBV, including during electioneering.

This handbook would empower journalists, media organizations and other stakeholders in Sierra Leone to address some of the 21st Century challenges in the media and information ecosystem such as mis-/dis-information and VAWE. It covers aspects of training, analysis, research, presentation, marketing and ethics of news coverage. The handbook uniquely comprises results of communication studies as well as political and social sciences, and was developed by a cross-cultural group of media researchers, media educators and media practitioners.

The Handbook adopts a multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural approach with a balance between informed public debate and contextual application. It provides a wealth of freely accessible resources which respond to the needs of Media and Information Literacy (MIL)

education while exploring incredible international collaboration with its adaptation of apt case studies.

According to UNESCO, Media and Information Literacy (MIL) includes a set of competencies to search, critically evaluate, use and contribute information and media content wisely; knowledge of one's rights online; understanding how to combat online hate speech and cyberbullying; understanding of the ethical issues surrounding the access and use of information; and engage with media and ICTs to promote equality, free expression, intercultural/interreligious dialogue, peace, etc.

One part of the story is insufficient to understand a phenomenon. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the media to provide both sides of a story since journalism plays a key role in balancing the relationship between rights holders and duty-bearers. The handbook also shows us how to unpack the story at both individual and group levels, and with sensitivity to key factors like gender and age, diverse motivations and associated trauma of victims.

Journalists will learn that gender issues in election are human rights issues and therefore, require knowledge and awareness of accurate facts, reliable sources, ethical reporting and good practices. Experienced journalists will benefit from using this resource as a self-learning tool, and media development organizations may adapt the curriculum to their training plans.

Objectives:
The handbook seeks to:

1. provide journalists with a comprehensive set of information to better understand the complex factual dimensions of sensitive reportage, which should translate into the adoption of ethical, sensitive and critical reporting techniques; and

2. equip users with information on how socially constructed gender norms affect the daily lives of women and men and address the harmful impact of gender norms on fueling SGBV, SRHRs and Harmful Practices (HPs), particularly during election.

FOREWORD

There is no doubt that Sierra Leone has made some progress on gender equality; putting in place legal frameworks, a Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Law 2022 and gender focused initiatives but cultural attitudes and practices in a deeply patriarchal nation remains a critical issue.

Women in Sierra Leone continue to struggle in overcoming the stereotypes which excludes them from fully participating in political processes. As we approach the 2023 elections, Sierra Leoneans are reminded once more that elections are periods of unease and heightens concerns about incidences of violence against women in elections (VAWE). The negative use and effect of the media was indicated by women as one of the barriers during the Karene consultations on the 2018 elections.

We have heard multiple stories that the future of Sierra Leone is female but there is still a long road ahead to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" (Sustainable Development Goal 5).

At the Initiatives for Media Development, as part of its five-year strategy to support Goal 5, we have identified strengths, weaknesses, successes and failures in the ways women and girls appear in the news media as part of a larger, collective endeavour to transform information and communication systems.

The failure to extend the opportunity for more women to tell their own stories in their own words, to tell the stories which are important to them and, also, to a broad range of people, compromises the value of the news to its multiple and diverse publics. The failure to represent the diversity of people and opinion present in society not only has implications for public discourse and decision-making, but it also plays a role in eroding trust in news journalists." ("GMMP 2020: 6th Global Media Monitoring Project show …")

In 2022, with funds from the UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), IMdev rolled out the "*Sierra Leone 2023 Elections: Enhancing the Capacity of Female Journalists in Community Radio to Address Policy Issues on SGBV*" project.

This manual is part of the concerted efforts of UNESCO-IPDC and IMdev to engage communities through a constructive collaboration of stakeholders in community action processes to enhance the capacity of community actors to take ownership in decision making and in building cohesive fronts to tackle sexual and gender-based violence challenges during the 2023 elections and beyond.

A prominent characteristic of a national development is the unconditional inclusion and active participation of women in all levels of management and governance; Sierra Leone must not be left behind. It is my hope, therefore, that Sierra Leone media professionals and new media influencers will use this manual to advance complementarity responsible reporting towards ending sexual and gender-based violence.

Yeama Sarah Thompson
Executive Director and Founder
Initiatives for Media Development (IMdev)

ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

ADHD	Attention Deficit Disorder
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASRH	Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health
AU	African Union
AUC-WGDD	African Union Commission, Women, Gender and Development Directorate
BPfA	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
CAEPOCOM AFRICA	Center for Applied Ethics and Political Communication in Africa
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease 2019
CSA	Child Sexual Abuse
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSW	(UN) Commission on the Status of Women
ECOWAS	Economic Commission for West African States
EFA	Education for All
EU	European Union
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
FP	Family Planning
FSWs	Female Sex Workers
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GEWE	[Sierra Leone] Gender Equality and Women Empowerment [Bill]
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPs	Harmful Practices
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IMdev	Initiatives for Media Development
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
ITNs	Insecticide Treated Nets
LGs	Local Governments
MASVAW	Men's Actions for Stopping Violence Against Women
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MIL	Media and Information Literacy
MNCH	Maternal Newborn Child Health
MoH	Ministry of Health
NEET	Not in Education, Employment and Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
RH	Reproductive Health
SASA	Start, Awareness, Support, and Action
SDGEA	Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SI	Spotlight Initiative
SR	Sexual Rights
SRHRs	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
UN	United Nations
UNDAW	United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAW	Violence against Women
VHTs	Village Health Teams
VVF	Vesicovaginal Fistula
WACOL	Women's Aid Collective
WORDOC	Women's Research and Documentation Center

TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

In most parts of Africa, inequity grows deeper at the intersection of gender; patriarchy still persist, as most communities and relationships are built on patriarchal values and a model of male power maintained through force, direct pressure, socialization, ritual, tradition, law, language, customs, education and the gender division of labour.

Patriarchy is a system that celebrates male dominance and gives absolute power to men. The society has been shaped by the thoughts and ideologies of one half of the population while the other half, the women, have been subjugated for centuries and made to be of no value. Patriarchal practices exist all over the world (Omotoso 2018, 2020).

This subscribes to the ideological concept of Sexism, based on the belief that one sex is superior to another. This is highly prevalent with the girl child and her access to education is adversely affected despite Constitutional provisions[1] which ensure that girls' right to education is not violated. Therefore, concerted efforts are required to engage communities through a synergy of stakeholders in community action processes to enhance the capacity of community actors to take ownership in decision making and in building cohesive fronts to tackle the challenges. This is possible through capacity building which aims to create a synergy between media and community structures to advance complementarity towards ending SGBV and the 'new normal' and, promote MIL for women and girls.

Of the many influences on how men and women are viewed, media is the most pervasive and one of the most powerful tools. In general, the media continue to present both women and men in stereotyped ways that limit our perceptions of human possibilities. Typically, men are portrayed as active, adventurous, powerful, sexually aggressive and largely uninvolved in human relationships.

'The world is composed of almost equal number of women and men. However, women are heard about or read about only in approximately 23% of the world news. In other worlds, *"76% of the people heard or read about in the world's news are male. The world seen in news media remains largely a male one".* This does not reflect the actual composition of society; or show the various human experiences in societies. It also makes the large (mainly female) part of our societies relatively invisible.

Furthermore, when women do make it to the news, they are rarely presented and involved as experts or spokespersons. In 2010, only 19% of spokespersons and 20% of experts were women across the world's media. In contrast, 81% of spokespersons and 80% of experts in the news were male. This again portraits the world of experts/professional mainly as a 'men's world', while women were more often depicted in the ordinary people categories. This is limiting possibilities for the women's angles and expert's opinion to be heard and to shape our world.

Furthermore, there is a lack of coverage of stories linked to gender or women's rights, such as sexual and gender based violence SGBV issues in Sierra Leone are acute as highlighted in February 2019 when President Julius Maada Bio declared a state of emergency in relation to SGBV, with a specific focus on sexual offences (BBC News 2019).[2] Lack of coverage of stories on SGBV issues make such stories almost invisible. Therefore, it is essential to work towards fair coverage of real issues, which are important to women, and which fairly present their experiences.'[3]

---

[1] [1] See African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990; UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, 1960. *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women: Text of the Convention*, UN Division of the Advancement of Women: Department of Social and Economic Affairs. http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm

[2] BBC News. 2019. "Sierra Leone declares emergency over rape and sexual assault" February 8. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-47169729
This was revoked in June 2019, after the passage of the 2012 Sexual Offences Act.

[3] Data source: Global Media Monitoring Projects, 2010.

Media and Information Literacy can play a leadership role in changing the mindset of the society for making it more pro-active rather than reactive. It also has the responsibility to make the message more valuable and credible for the general public. Sensational and hyped news can give birth to another crisis in the form of chaos and fear causing more losses. In recent years, there has been a flux of electronic media channels. The electronic media has an outreach to the masses being present in every nook and corner and it is playing comprehensive role in opinion making.

One major contribution of the electronic media is the establishment of early warning systems in far-flung and disaster-prone areas. Radio channels can play a primary role as they have an outreach to most remote areas. Therefore, the media contribution can lead towards the development of a more robust community which is more aware and educated about disaster preparedness and mitigation. The media can mobilize a country to stand united against destruction of life and property on regular basis through continuous awareness programs, trainings and drills going on which are produced and telecasted by the media across a country.

Globally, the media continues to evolve, and the COVID-19 pandemic has been a major contributor. Several private and community radio and TV stations have become operational. Aside from newspapers, several general and special audience magazines are now published, including on social media (e.g. *Telegram, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook*) and blogs. Additionally, citizen journalism has taken center stage to make everybody with a mobile phone be able to source and share information, without reverence to its implications.

These developments have led to free flow of information and increase in the number of male and female journalists working for media organizations. A downside to these developments, however, is the lack of training on gender-sensitive reporting. There are only a few courses and trainings on gender-sensitive reporting although it is a growing area of concern, especially as more and more young professionals and community members have become active practitioners. Therefore, the aim of this manual is to train both male and female journalists on gender-sensitive reporting with a bias towards Media and Information Literacy; to promote a more diverse and gender-sensitive media and build the general professional capacity of the journalists who are committed to fair representation and portrayal of women in the media.

This resource was developed collaboratively with inputs from several journalism training manuals designed by the authors as well as *Toolkits freely available on website and via the UNESCO website. Additionally, the recommended toolkits are designed for short courses, targeting both print and electronic media, community media personnel, citizen journalists, social media influencers and mainstream journalists on the following:
1. Community Media
2. Media Law, Ethics and Values
3. Key issues in Gender and Media Portrayals
4. Violent Extremism
5. Hate Speech
6. Newsroom Leadership and Management
7. Human Rights

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH:

The overall coherence of this Manual and the provision of content, tools and methodologies guarantee the acquisition of knowledge, skills and aptitudes to enhance the performance of learners or prepare the aspiring leader for a leadership position with adequate gender literacy knowledge.

The techniques are not new, but the methods have been validated severally. They are extraordinarily creative and innovative and create the necessary conditions for learning.

Plenary and group sessions are used alongside discussions, case studies, learning-by-doing, group work, buzz groups, gallery work, debates, role plays and other interactive methods described below. The facilitator constantly upgrades, critically analyzes and enhances the sensitivity, skills, confidence and knowledgebase of the participants by using these techniques and makes modifications as required:

Brainstorming is used when the facilitator wants to get a lot of information or ideas about a topic in a short time. Participants are encouraged to contribute ideas rapidly and each idea is written down on the flip chart or chalk board. During list formation, no idea is questioned or criticized. Spontaneity and inventiveness are encouraged. Analytical or critical discussion of the ideas are only permitted when the group has exhausted all possible ideas or after a set period of time (e.g.: 10 minutes).

Buzz groups is a cooperative learning technique using small discussion groups to develop a specific task, e.g.: generating ideas and lists, problem solving, evaluating an activity, etc., to reach a consensus on ideas about a topic within a specific period. Buzz groups allow discussions to cover different aspects with reference to the same study themes to maximize the possibilities of partitioning the members of the group. This requires small groups of 2 to 6 people generally; each buzz group records its output and reports to the larger group. The role of the facilitator is to instruct participants to form buzz groups; set the topic for discussion; specify and allow time for discussion (between 5-10 minutes); get feedback from groups and capture key points on flip charts; and used for further discussions.

Case studies are a great way to improve learning experience; they get the participants involved and encourage immediate use of newly acquired skills. They require participation and deliberate application of a broad range of skills. They provide learners with an opportunity to solve a problem by applying what they know. There are no unpleasant consequences for getting it "wrong," and cases give learners a much better understanding of what they really know and what they need to practice.

Discussions are one of the most powerful ways of supporting learning. The participants' enthusiasm, involvement, and willingness to participate affect the quality of the discussion as an opportunity for learning. The role of the facilitator is to engage all participants, keep them talking to each other and help them develop insights into the topic of discussion. The facilitator kick starts the discussion by asking questions based on common experiences. The participants often feel more comfortable talking about an experience they have in common. A shared experience can stimulate good discussion because, as they exchange their observations, participants frequently discover that they have different perceptions and reactions to the same concept, theme or event. The discussion can then focus on how and why perceptions vary.

Experience sharing refers to a method of learning where participants engage in *shared* activities and conversations on what they know and have *experienced*. They maximize it in trying to unbundle an issue.

Fishbowl method is used to engage large groups in a fully participatory conversation. It is a questioning and listening exercise followed by a process of discussion and summarizing of the fishbowl report conversation. It allows anyone to speak up and summarize what they have heard and what they find most important or compelling. While the process is structured around some initial questions relevant to the group and the training content, the conversation is allowed to evolve in the directions that are most relevant and important to participants. Notes taken during the questioning/listening and summarizing steps are captured and shared as a part of the training documentation. To conduct the fishbowl, the whole group comes back together for a single conversation in an inner and an outer circle. Place five chairs in the center of the room. Four participants are invited to come to the center to discuss a particular theme. One of the five chairs always remains empty as a space for the participant. As a fifth person joins the group, one of the other four leave voluntarily, opening up a spare chair once again. The fishbowl conversation can begin with one of the four groups/questions and slowly move through the other groups, or it can be an open forum for conversation informed by the preceding process. **The intention of the fishbowl is that the group leaves the room in animated reflective mood**.

Gallery walk connects learners to each other and to the training topic in a number of interesting and interactive ways. It is a versatile learner-centered activity which engages the participant in intense scrutiny and debate and is a rich source of information from the participants. The activity lasts between 10-30 minutes or a little bit more depending on the size of the group. For maximum effect, the facilitator should set up the room before the session. Participants should also be given clear instructions on what to do.

Working group is an effective way of inclusion for people who feel reluctant to participate in a larger group due to shyness or other reasons. They may feel more comfortable and therefore more ready to contribute in a small group. Conclusions that are made by the groups are owned by the people in the groups. This means that they are more likely to abide by them. Participants in the group learn to create their own solutions. Group work can be used for most discussions where the facilitator is drawing on the skills of the learners. Groups can range from 2, to 6 or 8 people to explore concepts or to gain a particular outcome. The facilitator should always give clear instructions (verbally or in writing) on what the group is to do *before* the group is formed. The process of group work is always the most important element. However, the **outcome of the group work must be shared with the larger group participants**. The feedback sessions can (and should) be varied. Whatever methods are used for a feedback session, there must be space for questions to stimulate discussion from the large group and for explanations and clarifications.

Guest facilitators: Guest facilitators provide a diverse background and expose learners to a variety of positions. Always inform the guest facilitator beforehand and tell him/her what is expected of them. The facilitator should give the guest a background about the participants so that they know something about them and do not speak above them or below them. Tell the guest speaker the time that is allocated for the session; introduce the guest speaker to the learners; allow time for questions and answers; and arrange for one of the learners to say thank you after the visit.

Ice breakers are an important training tool which is used to enable participants get to know each other and build a team, create a positive group atmosphere, break down social barriers, energizes, motivates, relaxes and help participants to "think outside the box."

Infographics are an effective means of capturing interest of the participants during training. Infographics help facilitate learning by introducing information quickly, as they are adept at outlining broad concepts in succinct and interesting ways. When using

infographics, it is not necessary to spend minutes outlining key concepts to prepare participants for a discussion. Instead, simply show an infographic illustrating your point. Then lead your participants into a discussion or activity relating to the concept outlined. This method has grown to be a preferred training tool for trainers. They are easy to create and can easily be found online. Backing the content of the manual with infographics will reduce word count and increase the likelihood that the material is read.

Presentations are meant to educate, inform, inspire and persuade. ***Persuasive*** presentations are an effort to change/influence the opinions, beliefs, or behaviors of the participants. As this gender and leadership manual is intended to bring transformative changes in society, the facilitator should be convincing during the presentations. *Inspirational* presentations appeal to the feelings, emotions, values, and thoughts; thus, the facilitators should be provided with inspirational quotes, case studies and other stories that inspire the participants and motivate them to change. The presentation should be as clear, precise, and as detailed as possible to clear up any misconceptions that the participants may have with regard to the gender roles and provide the strongest pieces of information needed to get them to change their mind set.

Question and answer: A question and answer session is actually another presentation and is an excellent way of reinforcing messages and continuous sale of ideas contained in the presentation. In addition, because participants can ask for clarification, they are less likely to have misconceptions about the concepts delivered in the presentation. It is important that the facilitator should prepare well for the 'question and answer' session by asking him/herself the following questions?

How will the 'question and answer' session reinforce the message in the presentation? How does question and answer session clarify concepts?

The facilitator should not evaluate the questions and should avoid saying things like "that is a very good question as this can put off the next questioner if the same praise is not extended to their question. All participants should be made to feel equally good about asking questions by thanking them for their questions and giving the appropriate responses. When a question is asked that the facilitator does not have an answer to s/he should be able to say, 'I don't know' or 'I do not have an answer to that one.' The 'question and answer' session should end with a prepared and planned conclusion by the facilitator.

Role-plays are a good method to illustrate a point or concept. Discussion on the role-plays should be restricted to the concept the facilitator wants to illustrate and **NOT** on the quality of the acting. Some role-plays require the participants to take on certain characters, which you have prepared. Ensure that the participants really understand exactly what you require from them if you use scripted role-plays. Discuss with each player separately to ensure that the roles are interpreted as you have scripted them. At the conclusion of the role-play, ask the participants to stay in role during the discussion on motives, etc. of the characters. There should always be open discussion about the issues raised in the role-plays. Make sure that you have some questions for each character to stimulate discussion.

Quiz: Quiz is an effective training methodology to transfer learning in the shortest possible time in an atmosphere of excitement, fun and challenge. By quizzing participants on issues related to a work practices and problems besides covering topics from the course material, a more comprehensive transfer of knowledge can be brought about. Even the least participative participant learns by answering questions posed in the process of the quiz.

Self-reflection: Self-reflection is a valuable training strategy which has a range of beneficial outcomes. It can be used as a means of continuing personal and professional and to maximize and strengthen commitment of participants; to assess impact of beliefs and past experiences on leadership and explore the sources of personal reward and rejuvenation and signs of stress and fatigue. These impacts involve one's growth and understanding in areas such as leadership development, career exploration, professional development and political consciousness.

Story board: The story board as the name implies tells a story. The facilitator uses their technique to get participants to tell a story. The first step is to give instructions on what the story script should look like.   Participants then create the storyboard starting with drawing or pictures on a series of squares on a piece of paper.   In each square a different scene will take place and lines from the script beneath each picture explaining what is happening in the scene. People should be able to read through the storyboard like a comic book which should form the basis for the discussions.

Internet utility: The internet is a powerful and quick, personal vehicle for checking many examples of subjects introduced in this Manual. Effort should be made to encourage the use of search engines like Google etc., to enable a broader and richer perspective where possible. This introduces them to being better information and literate individuals.

Video shows: Video is a powerful way of showing a message. It can be used for both advocacy and awareness creation.   The facilitator should always view the video beforehand to make sure that the picture quality and sound are okay and that the messages being portrayed are the same as the ones you want to convey. If you are using a different system, it is always better to check the equipment for technology and compatibility with your system and ensure that the CD or DVD component works. Technology has a way of failing when you need it most. Make sure it does not happen to you.

SWOT Analysis: This is a useful technique for understanding one's strengths and weaknesses, and for identifying both the opportunities open to one and the threats she/he faces. What makes SWOT particularly powerful tool is that, with a little brainstorming, it can help one uncover opportunities to exploit. Also, by understanding your weaknesses, you can manage and eliminate threats that would otherwise catch you unawares towards achieving your goals. By looking at yourself and culture, you can craft a strategy that helps you emerge as a transformative leader. Strengths and weaknesses are often internal to you, while opportunities and threats generally relate to external factors such as culture and societal norms and values.

Multimedia presentation: Multimedia refers to content that uses a combination of various contents. A *multimedia Presentation* is one which contains more than one media. Media can be voice, graphics, animations, music, audio, video, still images, or interactive content forms. It is usually recorded and played, displayed using information and communication technologies.

Materials

The training methodologies show that the participants are the most important 'resource' for this training. They would share their life stories and experiences of subjugation and empowerment; as well as challenges and achievements in dealing with social and power structures. This is built into the training material to make them intensely personal while building bonds with others in the group.

The training materials suggested including flip charts, markers, PowerPoint, laptops, screens, videos, and a variety of tools that enhance the training.

*Tools***:**

Visualization in Participatory Program (VIPP) cards is a participatory process that uses cards of different sizes, colors and shapes to show linkages between ideas and areas of consensus and disagreements. VIPP cards can be used in plenary or in small groups. This method provides all participants with the opportunity to express themselves so that quiet members in a group also contribute. The facilitator makes a statement to the group, and participants can Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree or Neither Agree or Disagree. They use the colour coded cards to show their reactions to the statement. **If there is a consensus, then there is no need for discussion**. If there are divergent views, then participant(s) with different opinions should explain their stance, fleshing out the many facets of the issue. The other participants MUST listen carefully and can change positions if they change perspectives. This activity helps everyone learn to disagree without being disagreeable but must be carefully facilitated. Questions are intentionally stated to allow for personal interpretation and to limit responses to one of the five categories. Some of the participants will want to take some sort of an intermediate stance but should be encouraged to choose the stance about which they feel the strongest, or which is their instinctive response. Part of processing this activity can then be discussions on how it felt to be so limited or to be categorized. Card paper may not be readily available in some cases. Instead, sheets of paper can be cut in different sizes and shapes needed for the VIPP exercise. The VIPP cards should have some rules at the beginning, including:
1. a thought per card;
2. visible writing;
3. color schemes; and
4. clustering.

Diaries/Journals are a common element of training. They are a written form of reflection in which participants enter the issues raised in the session and consider their service experience in light of specific issues. Participants can examine their thoughts and experiences through the diaries/journals, and further the learning they have done in relation to their work. Unfortunately, these diaries/journals are sometimes misused as simple logs of events, thereby missing the reflective component inherent in thinking critically about experiences. Before instructing participants to complete diaries/journals, one must consider the learning objective that the diary/journal is intended to meet. Diaries/journals can focus on self-understanding and can consist of information that will be used in another reflective activity such as a research paper, or material on which a dialogue with others is based. Among the types of journals that can be used outside of the classroom are personal journals ("stream of consciousness" writing about the experience), critical incident journals (analysis of a specified even according to prompts such as "What conflicts did you face during the event? What are possible root causes for the societal issues you observed?"), and three-part journals (one section is a description of the event, one is an interpretation, and one is an application to future events). These journal entries can later be reviewed privately and/or shared during a group reflection circle.

PowerPoint: is a powerful tool which can be used in creating clear, well-structured presentations that have a strong visual impact. An effective facilitator uses PowerPoint to illustrate and emphasize points that are made in the presentation and give out handouts as back up to the presentation. It is important that you direct the participant's attention to the slides when they contain information that is key to getting your message across. Give them time to assimilate material on the slides while you are explaining its relevance.

Handouts: Detailed handouts are provided in each of the modules. These handouts are provided to the participants on a slide. They give the participants something to take away from the presentation and review later. The additional reading sections in the handouts enable the participant to acquire further information. The handout is a very powerful training tool because, it reinforces the information transmitted during training sessions and the participants can use it for reference purposes and extend the information provided during the sessions.

MODULE 1: UNDERSTANDING GENDER

Methods: Brainstorming, Discussions, Gallery walk, Group work, Plenary presentations, and Role play.

Materials: Flip charts, Markers, Multi-media projector, Projector screen, Masking tape, Handouts (1 & 2).

Learning Objectives:
1. To introduce basic gender concepts to participants
2. To assist participants to situate the concept and issues discussed within their local contexts
3. To ensure that participants gain an overview of salient international and regional instruments pertaining to girl child education and women's rights.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the module:
1. Participants' understanding of basic concepts including gender, sex, GBV etc. will be enriched
2. Participants will be familiar with key challenges facing women and girls in their communities by situating the concepts and issues discussed within their local contexts.
3. Participants will have a good grasp of international and regional measures for addressing challenges facing women and girls.

FACILITATOR'S NOTE:

The concept 'Gender' has been erroneously attributed to women and majority cannot distinguish it from 'sex'. Some communities frown at arguments around repression, exploitation and marginalization of women and girls, therefore care must be taken in the presentation particularly in communities prone to cultural and religious leanings that downplay women and girls. Also, emphasis must be placed on Gender based Violence (GBV), Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG), Sexual violence (SV), Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) as similar concepts/terms often used interchangeably to describe physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse. How social, biological, cultural, religious factors play out within the concepts must also be emphasized. Implications of the 'sex'- 'gender' intersections and dichotomy to communities must be clearly presented.

The session on human rights should provide participants with the knowledge and skills needed to apply a human rights framework to analyzing and implementing policies and programs of education of girls and women. This includes an understanding of the concept of human rights and the national and international protocols protecting the rights of women and girls.

Use this session to assess participant's perceptions and understanding of the concept of human rights. In the same vein, the human rights aspect and relevant instruments for the protection of rights must also be discussed to show that the rights are inalienable. The impact of its implementation or non-implementation of the instruments must equally be shown as an indicator of possible achievement of SDG 5 (gender equality) at national level.

Facilitators should show how gender sensitivity can catalyze, mobilize and influence the much-needed advocacy and action to promote the attainment of the rights of women, men, girls and boys to live full and healthy lives without fear or want.

It is advisable for sessions to begin with an icebreaker. The sessions must be interactive to allow for experience sharing, questions and answers.

SESSION 1.1: Gender, Sex and Gender-Based Violence
Life and Work: A Reflection on Values[4]

1. Aim: To encourage participants to examine their personal beliefs regarding the division of labor between men and women and equality of access to work.

2. Objective: Participants will express their own conceptions of the roles of men and women in the world of work.

3. Sequence: For the **first** activity, inform participants that this activity is **a** drawing game. Distribute written instructions (prepared ahead of time) that they are to read silently about the required illustration. Tell them that they are not allowed to *ask* questions.

Suggested written instructions: The instructions must refer to the person to be drawn only as "the farmer." NEVER should the farmer be referred to as **he** or **she** or by other pronouns/words that imply a sexual orientation.

> **Activity 1.**
> *Think of a farming community you know, perhaps your favourite countryside, maybe your own village. Now, imagine a farmer working in a farm or a field. Draw that farmer with the background scenery as you like. Try to be as realistic as you can in illustrating clothing, hats, farming implements, activities, etc. After finishing the picture, please write down the farmer's name and your name.*

DURATION: 20 minutes
Materials: Written instructions, paper and pencils

> **Activity 2:**
> *Invite participants (through a gallery work) to tape their drawings on the walls, to view the drawings of others and to interact with one another.*

DURATION: 10 minutes
Materials: Masking tape

> **Activity 3:**
> *In the **third** activity, have the group select one or more winning illustrations and present the winner or winners with a token prize. Count and announce the number of drawings of female versus male farmers.*

DURATION: 5 minutes

MATERIALS: A small prize or prizes for the winner(s).

Conclude by saying that the drawings represent the participants' subconscious views about farm work and farmers. Calculate the percentage of drawings in which the farmer is depicted as a woman as opposed to the percentage that show the farmer as a man and share this information with the group. (Typically, there will be many more depictions of farmers as men than there are of women.) Drawings should be kept on the wall until the end of the Workshop.

DURATION: 15 minutes

---

[4] This activity must be kept as the first activity of the Section before any discussion of gender issues takes place

4. **Evaluation:** Observe the reaction of participants when faced with their own deep-rooted attitudes about farmers and their surprise or even shock when they find that they, themselves, have gender-biased views.

HANDOUT 1:
Gender versus sex: An analytical tool
Many people confuse the terms "sex" and "gender" or are not sure what exactly they mean. This tool is designed to help us reach a simple, common understanding of the two terms.

Without going into the truth or falseness of the statements below, indicate next to each one whether it is about sex or about gender. Place a tick in the appropriate box.

S/No.	Statement	Gender?	Sex?
1.	Women earn less money than men do		
2.	Men can't cook		
3.	Women have larger breasts than men		
4.	A husband cannot follow his wife on a diplomatic posting		
5.	Girls drop out of school more than boys do		
6.	In most African traditions, women do not own land		
7.	A man is the head of the household		
8.	It is not the job of the father to change nappies		
9.	Men do not cry		
10.	Girls dress in pink, boys dress in blue		
11	A wife cannot initiate sex with her husband		
12.	Women menstruate, men do not.		
13.	There are more male than female leaders		
14.	A girl cannot propose marriage to a boy		
15.	Women cannot be religious leaders		
16.	Women are natural childcare providers		
17.	There are more male miners than female miners		
18.	A man cannot get pregnant		
19.	The man is the breadwinner		
20.	Men make good doctors; women make good nurses.		

SOURCE: *Adapted from the material used by Everjoyce Win, South African Gender Commission, Pretoria.*

HANDOUT 2
Sex versus gender
Sex: identifies the biological differences between women and men;

Gender: is the culturally specific set of characteristics that explains the social behavior of women and men and the RELATIONSHIP between them. Gender therefore refers not simply to women or men, but to the relationship between them, and the way it is SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED. Gender is an analytical tool for understanding social processes:
- Gender refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female.
- Gender differs from sex in that it is social and cultural, rather than biological.
- Gender attributes differ from society to society and changes over time.
- Gender attributes are shaped by the economy, by religion, by culture and by traditional values.

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE
Gender Based Violence (GBV) is **a** violation of human rights that describes gender inequalities and the various factors that allows these inequalities to persist specifically in families and communities.

Violence Against Women (VAW) is any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life (UN General Assembly, 1993). It is sustained by a culture of silence and consequently serves – by intention or effect – to perpetuate male power and control.

1 in 3 women has experienced physical or sexual violence at some point in their lives, while psychological abuse has still not received sufficient attention. However, in most countries, **less than 40%** women who experience violence seek any kind of help, and less than 10% seek help from the police.
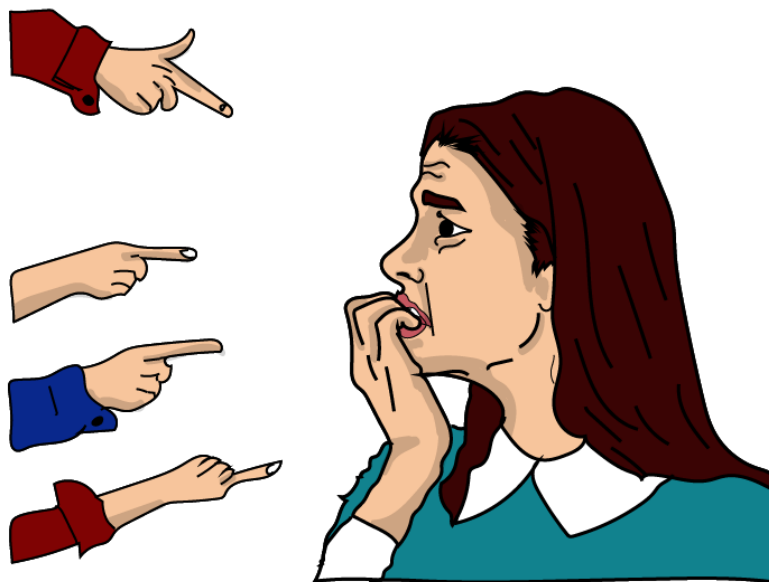
GBV includes:
- Domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape, sexual violence during conflict and harmful customary or traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, forced marriages and honor crimes;
- Trafficking of women, forced prostitution and violations of human rights in armed conflict (in particular murder, systematic rape, sexual slavery and forced pregnancy);and
- Forced sterilization, forced abortion, coercive use of contraceptives, female infanticide and prenatal sex selection.
- The table below provides examples of GBV faced by women within their life cycle.
- Gender discrimination throughout a woman's life

Phase	Type
Prenatal	Prenatal sex selection, battering during pregnancy, and coerced pregnancy (rape during war)
Infancy	Female infanticide, emotional and physical abuse, differential access to food and medical care
Childhood	Genital cutting incest and sexual abuse; differential access to food, medical care, and education; child prostitution
Adolescence	Dating and courtship violence, economically coerced sex, sexual abuse in the workplace, rape, sexual harassment, and forced prostitution
Reproductive	Abuse of women by intimate partners, marital rape, dowry abuse and murders, partner homicide, psychological abuse, sexual abuse in the workplace, sexual harassment, rape, and abuse of women with disabilities
Old age	Abuse of widows and elder abuse (mostly affects women)

SOURCE: *Heise, L. 1994. Violence Against Women: The Hidden Health Burden.*

Activities:

1(a) Identify evidence of GBV in communities across Sierra Leone.

 (b) Identify the consequences of all the GBV evidence in (1a) above.

SESSION 1.2. Girl Child Education
Educating Girls and Women: An Overview

1. **Aim:** To provide an overview of education for girls and women around the world.

2. **Objectives:** Participants will be able to:
- discuss the disadvantaged position of girls and women in education;
- identify relevant statistics on the education of women and girls;
- identify factors influencing the success of programs for women; and
- describe how existing programs perpetuate the subordination of women and girls or promote equality between male and female.

3. **Sequence**:
Activity 1: (a) Describe the status of education of women and girls in Sierra Leone (b) Provide statistics on world illiteracy rates, regional differences in the educational gender gap and girls' enrolment in school (c) Essential points to make and materials to *be* used are described below.

Materials:
- Gender-Sensitive Education for a Better World
- Transparencies and/or other material prepared in advance by a participant in collaboration with the facilitator. Explain why many girls fail in primary education.

Transparency No. 4
Describe curricula that impede **full** involvement of girls in education.

4. **Evaluation:**
The status of Education
Women face challenges in pursuing education at all ages due to lack of time to attend classes, family and domestic responsibilities, and socio-cultural practices that rate girls' education as less important than boys.' While the gender gap in primary and secondary school enrolment has begun to narrow in recent years, girls still represent 60 percent of the 100 million school age children in the developing world who grow up without access to basic education. Sub-Saharan Africa, southern Asia and the Arab States are home to 95 percent of these out-of-school children. In 35 countries around the world– 18 of them in sub-Saharan Africa, the rest in Asia and the Arab States – girls' net enrolment at secondary level is at least 6 percentage points lower than that of boys. In Central and Eastern Europe, there is less concern with girls' enrolment in primary and secondary school. Rather, the concern is with limited access to higher education due to prohibitive costs (Primo, 2003, p.41). In addition, the persistent urban/rural divide that exists in Sierra Leone means that the situation facing women in the provinces is often very different from that in Freetown and the Western Area, especially in terms of access to education, economic opportunities and the rule of law (Barnes, Albrecht, & Olson 2007, p.7). The above broad contexts still exist, and the findings are still largely relevant.

TRANSPARENCY No. 4
Factors hampering the education of girls in Sierra Leone
1. Socio-economic
- Parents and society feel negative about girls' education. Girls are "transient" members of society, and their value is considered less than that of boys.
- Poor recognition of the benefits of education.
- Girls are kept at home to do housework or earn income for the family. Parents believe that educated girls have less chance of marriage and are not adequate as wives and mothers in the traditional sense.

2. School-related
- Parents are reluctant to send girls to mixed schools.
- Parents do not entrust their girls to male teachers.
- Absence of schools within reasonable walking distance.
- Teachers favor boys in class.
- Access to teachers, facilities and equipment is poor.
- Curricula and materials reinforce the view of women as dependent and exclusively domestic, marginal and dispensable.

3. Cultural, political and social [5,6,7,8]
- Strong cultural stereotypes prevented women from taking active roles in formal politics
- 60-80% of the agricultural workload is undertaken by women, they still have little control over economic resources within their households and communities
- Social indicators such as the very high rates of maternal and child mortality, high illiteracy rates, and the number of girls in school, and toll of general poverty illustrate the costs of discrimination against women in Sierra Leone
- SGBV is a serious human rights issue grounded in entrenched hierarchical and unequal structural power relations, which are deeply rooted in sociocultural beliefs and culture-related gender norms, practices and attitudes
- Men hold dominant positions at all levels of society: household and as community, traditional/cultural/religious leaders.
- Men hold most decision-making positions in public and private sectors and wield overwhelming political power.
- Men make most decisions, from the size of their families to the policy and programmatic decisions of government.

4. Institutional constraints[9]
- Sierra Leone is a highly patriarchal society
- institutional structures discriminate against women
- institutionalized gender inequalities are exacerbated by discriminatory traditions and customs
- institutionalized gender inequalities are exacerbated by high levels of illiteracy and poverty amongst Sierra Leonean women
- institutionalized gender inequalities prevent women in Sierra Leone from upholding many of their internationally recognised rights.

Materials: Transparencies Nos. 5, 6 and **7**

TRANSPARENCY No. 5
Sex stereotypes in curricula and materials
School textbooks and other educational materials typically contain stereotyped characterizations of men and women, their roles, responsibility and worth.

Pupils, teachers, administrators and parents do not perceive some images as sexist.

---

[5] Truth and Reconciliation Commission. (2005). Witness to truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Volume 3b. Freetown: Government of Sierra Leone: 108 Vol. 3b.

[6] United Nations. (2005). Human Development Report 2005. http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=SLE

[7] Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs (February, 2020). National male involvement strategy for the prevention of sexual and gender based violence in Sierra Leone. Freetown: Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs.

[8] Denney, L. & Ibrahim, A. F. (2012, December). Violence against women in Sierra Leone: How women seek redress. *Politics & Governance*. London: UKAid.

[9] Extracted from: Barnes, K., Albrecht, P. & Olson, M. (2007). Addressing gender-based violence in Sierra Leone: Mapping challenges, responses and future entry points. London: International Alert.

Textbooks SHOULD reflect a balanced view of the real world where women succeed in non-traditional fields like farming, engineering etc. and men succeed in nursing and secretarial duties.

TRANSPARENCY No. 6
Women's contribution to the development of society and their greater potential contributions MUST be recognized and reflected in educational materials.

TRANSPARENCY No. 7
Stereotypes that affect girls' achievements
- Girls lack the opportunity to develop spatial skills in pre-schools and primary schools.
- This leads to low achievements in mathematics, sciences and other technical subjects.
- As the result, they end up with low-paying and unfulfilling jobs.

Activity 2: Present common features of programs typically designed for women. Primary focus is on educating women chiefly as wives and mothers, with disregard for their role as economic producers and over-emphasis on family planning. Curricular content subjugates women and discourages them from questioning their life conditions. There is also lack of attention to women's real needs.

DURATION (1st and 2nd activities)**:** 30 minutes

Materials: Transparencies Nos. 8 and 9

TRANSPARENCY No. 8
Studying sex stereotypes
- Compare how often men and women are represented in text and illustrations.
- Compare the educational value of the episodes.
- Compare the attributes of male and female characters, their professions, activities and behavior.
- Reveal cases where authors ignore women's contribution in areas of intellectual pursuit, or their current and future roles in society.
- Find how often women are represented on writers' panels and as editors and illustrators.

TRANSPARENCY No. 9
Conventional income-generating programs for women
1.   Emphasis on "feminine" skills:
   - tailoring embroidery
   - sewing – handicrafts

2.   Traditional female skills are of little help:
   - they do not meet the demands of the market:
   - skills imparted to women farmers are insufficient - they need to learn to use technology;
   - women need marketing, planning and managerial skills;
   - women's access to commerce and industry is inadequate.
   - "Feminine skills... have directed women away from non-traditional and remunerative occupations in the manufacturing sector. These skills are likely to be marginalized with industrial restructuring"(Jayaweera, 1990).

Activity 3: Select participants to present distinctive features of successful programs for women across Sierra Leone. Factors that contribute to success include emphasis on women as economic producers, e.g.: farmers, wage earners; inclusion of women in the planning process; striking a proper balance between technical and managerial skills (such

as accounting and decision-making); and confidence-building (i.e.: self-respect and self-esteem).

DURATION: 40 minutes

Materials: Brief reports by selected participants on their programs

Women and agricultural skills
Agricultural skills that women WANT to learn are:
- improved planting techniques;
- animal husbandry;
- improved knowledge and better skills in technology, e.g. machinery.
- The role of women as agricultural producers is often ignored. Modern farming technology is taught to men or through men.

TRANSPARENCY No. 10
Women as reflected in Sierra Leonean curricula and materials
Most basic educational programs:
- take women for granted;
- see women as passive consumers and beneficiaries;
- Planners and programme providers must appreciate;
- the role of women as economic producers;
- that women are individuals with abilities and potential;
- Curricula and materials designed for women must reflect these facts adequately.

NOTE: USE EXAMPLES OF WOMEN'S SUCCESS STORIES IN SIERRA LEONE AS CASE STUDIES.

FEMALE WANTED JOBS ON THE RISE[10]
By Cheong-Ja Lee

South Korea is not yet a model as far as sexual equality on the job is concerned. But various factors, such as the passage of the Equal Opportunity Act, are chipping away at the discrimination that has kept paid employment a male stronghold. For example, the first hurdle women face in employment – i.e.: being excluded outright in advertisements for job openings – is slowly lifting.

A study by the Korean Women's Development Institute (KWDI) found not only a decrease in the number of ads specifying or expressing preference for male applicants but also an increase in the number of jobs addressed specifically to women. The KWDI analysed job advertisements in a major newspaper, *Dong-A-Ilbo*, over a two-month period in late 1989. The analysis noted the type of enterprise, category, educational background required of the applicant and method of recruitment. For Women 'Only' ads accounted for 18% of all jobs advertised, notes the KWDI. This stands in contrast to the 9.6% reported in a similar KWDI study in 1988 and the 1.4% registered by the Labor Ministry in 1985. By type, the jobs advertised were broken down as follows: secretarial/clerical jobs (63.5%); sales (20.7%); professional and technical jobs (5.9 %); and production related jobs (2.3%). Ads that made no distinction between male and female applicants increased significantly in every employment field. Ads for professional and technical jobs went up from 11.3% in 1985 to 40.3% in 1989; for administrative and managerial jobs went up from 11.1 % to 50.7 %; and for production-related jobs went up from 5% to 3 1.3%. During the same period, ads aimed exclusively at men decreased from 54.3% to 43.7%. Women are also being recruited for jobs in fields

---

[10] Adapted from *Depthnews*, Seoul

such as planning, design and research and development. This indicates that employment fields for women are expanding.

Nonetheless, For Men Only ads remained predominant, and women continued to be recruited mainly for traditionally "female" jobs. For example, professional and technical jobs for women are mostly in the fields of education, fashion design, garment making and translation. Clerical and related jobs are things like typing, accounting, secretarial and public relations. Service jobs for women are flight attendants, cooks, cleaners, guides and beauty consultants.

Also, ads addressed to women often require special, discriminatory qualifications, such as "good looks," or single marital status. The KWDI noted that private companies are recruiting women more than public enterprises, and that Women Only ads ask for high school graduates rather than college graduates. The South Korean's Equal Employment Opportunity Act explicitly prohibits sexual discrimination in job advertising with the provision that employers have an obligation to offer equal opportunities for both sexes in recruitment and employment. Another provision penalizes violators with fines up to a maximum of 2,600,000 Won.

Similarly, the South Korean Constitution says that women should be especially protected at work and should not be discriminated against in the area of employment, wage or working conditions. Employment is taken to include job opportunities. The general provisions of the Labor Standard Act further forbid employees from being discriminated against based on sex. KWDI president Kim Yun-Duk believes that public watchfulness about sexist job ads and similar instances of discrimination, as well as conscientious implementation of the law by concerned government officials is a must for achieving equality of job opportunity "The KWDI will continue to gather information and identify concrete cases related to sex discrimination in job advertising to help eradicate such practices once and for all," she says.

QUESTIONS
1. What do "Women Only" jobs mean in terms of the new law?
2. What types of jobs are advertised as "Women-Only?" Why?
3. Mention some of the jobs traditionally reserved for men.
4. What do you think of ads addressed to women that require special qualifications such as good looks and being unmarried? How should these ads be presented differently?
5. What can be done to raise public consciousness about discrimination against women in employment?

DETERMINATION IN DIFFICULT TIMES[11]
At the beginning of the new school year, the school Registrar informed Dinana Marldane that her school fees had not been paid and she would not be permitted to register. Dinana thought there might be a mistake, as her uncle had been taking care of her fees for years. To find out, she went immediately to Uncle Max's house.

When she raised the subject in front of her aunt, Uncle Max hushed her up. Later, when they were alone, he told Dinana that he had been providing for her for many years, and that it was time for her to begin showing some appreciation. He grabbed her and said he wanted her to sleep with him. Shocked, Dinana protested and ran away, leaving Uncle Max fuming and cursing behind her.

---

[11] Adapted from an excerpt of Body and Soul, published by Soul City, Johannesburg, 1977.

The next day, Dinana's friend Likeza came by to ask why she had not come to school. Dinana told her what had happened, and that she hoped she would be able to make some money by using her skill at fixing radios.

Dinana went to the neighborhood repair shop to apply for a job as a part-time assistant. Joe, the owner, thought Dinana was there to suggest a man for the job. When he understood that Dinana wanted the job for herself, he just laughed. Dinana was hurt, but on her way out, she salvaged her pride by giving Joe a few pointers on the radio he was trying to repair.

Dinana went all over town looking for work. No one would hire her, simply because she was a woman. By the end of the day, she was frustrated and discouraged.

Dinana wanted desperately to go back to school. Because it seemed like she had no other choice, she made a terrible decision. She would go back to Uncle Max's house and "show her appreciation" for his help. Crying and already feeling ashamed, she told Likeza, who tried without success to change Dinana's mind.

Dinana went ahead with her plan. But Uncle Max cheated. He refused to use condoms and told Dinana he expected her to have sex with him once a week in return to paying her fees. Likeza suggested going to the police, but Dinana refused. She knew the police would judge her and not him. But worried about the possible consequences of having unprotected sex, she went to the clinic right away. The doctor gave her some pills to take to prevent pregnancy and told her to come back in three months for a HIV/AIDS test.

Dinana refused to suffer in silence. Uncle Max, a local musician, was very popular among his listeners. Dinana decided to show his fans his true colors. She waited until the next time one of Uncle Max's concerts was being broadcast live over the radio to carry out her plan. Then, right in the middle of his performance, Uncle Max's microphone suddenly went dead. Seconds later, Dinana's voice came on telling people all that had occurred between her and Uncle Max. In an emotional triumph, Dinana used her knowledge about radio and electronics to vindicate herself. She felt gratified but not really relieved. She still did not have the money she needed to get back in school.

Determined to try everything, she went back to the school to ask if they would defer the fees to give her more time to look for work. To her surprise, the registrar informed her that the fees had been waived. She commended her for having the courage to tell the world about Uncle Max. Dinana was stunned. She could hardly believe her ears but certainly was not going to argue. All that mattered was that she was going back to school.

QUESTIONS
1. Why were Dinana's school fees not paid?
2. If Dinana were a boy, do you think her uncle would have continued to pay the school fees? Why or why not?
3. Should girls learn electronics? Why or why not?
4. Why did Joe refuse to hire Dinana? Was that fair?
5. What do you think of Dinana's decision to sleep with Uncle Max?
6. How did Dinana prepare herself for the fateful visit with Uncle Max? What would you have done in her shoes?
7. Is it true that the police will blame the raped woman rather than the man she accuses of the rape? Discuss.
8. What did Dinana do to protect herself from further damage?
9. How do you feel about Dinana's revenge? Would you do the same if you were her?
10. Do you think that Dinana's revenge actually damaged Uncle Max popularity?
11. Do people care about the ill treatment of women?
12. What do you think about the end of the story?
13. Would you consider Dinana a victim? Why or why not?
14. Does something like this happen to school-aged children in the community where you live in Sierra Leone ? Discuss.

4. **Evaluation:** Participants appreciate the importance of gender-sensitive programs based on needs.

SESSION 1.3: Human Rights Instruments on GBV and the Provisions for Women and Girls' Education: An overview:

Women's human rights is an inalienable, inseparable, and indivisible part of universal human rights. But it is a well-known fact that, throughout history, human rights of women have been violated solely due to the reason that they were women. Therefore, women's human rights require to be treated separately.

1. Aim: To provide an overview of human rights instruments and intersection of human rights and women's rights.

2. Objective: To examine the impact of women's human rights education on improving the gender perceptions.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the session participants will:
1. be familiar with the basic concepts of human rights, including reproductive and sexual rights;
2. understand how rights are defined in international human rights instruments and how they are used by various actors at the international, regional and national levels;
3. learn about institutions, which are promoting, monitoring, implementing and enforcing human rights norms relevant to women and girls
4. develop the capacity to use international human rights mechanisms for their activism and empowerment to become change makers who impact and redefine human rights standards.

3. **Sequence**:
The **first** activity is to identify and analyze various instruments that guaranty the protection of women and girls.
i.   Introduce the concepts of rights.
ii. Highlight the basic human rights.
iii. Introduce the principles and practice of promoting and protecting human rights.
iv. **Group work:** Divide participants into small groups of five. Ask participants to identify situations in which they feel rights of a girl or woman was violated. The discussions SHOULD revolve around several situations of SGBV in Sierra Leone.

The **second** activity Group work reflects on whether men and women enjoy the same rights to education. Participants SHOULD use **EXAMPLES FROM THEIR COMMUNITIES IN SIERRA LEONE** as references to measure whether the violation or respect for the right are the same for men and women or boys and girls e.g.: the right to equality in marriage and divorce. Each group should choose the right it wants to discuss and the different impacts on men and women. Participants should also give examples of how a government is successfully meeting its obligation to respect, protect or fulfill the rights of both men and women and boys and girls. Each group should report back to plenary.

The **third** activity concludes the exercise by highlighting the gaps to compliance with the instruments and protocols within local contexts, using the VAPP Act.

DURATION: 1 Hour

Materials: International, regional and local instruments

<u>**The CEDAW,**</u> adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly is a legally binding document that binds countries to put its provisions into practice. They are also committed to submit national reports, at least every four years, on measures they have taken to comply with their treaty obligations. The CEDAW specifically addresses aspects of women's rights to health. It requires the provision of equal access to educational information to help ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning. It prohibits discrimination in the field of health care; ensures equal access to health care services including family planning; ensures provision of appropriate services in connection with pregnancy; and that women in rural areas have access to adequate health care facilities, including information counselling and family planning services.

During its twice-yearly sessions, the CEDAW Committee applies its expertise to review the reporting of Government's self-assessment of progress and challenges in achieving gender equality, in light also of the alternate information ('shadow reports') about the country situation submitted by women's NGOs. Following this review, which includes a dialogue with the Government, the Committee issues concluding comments, identifying where the greatest shortcomings lie and what forms of action the government should consider taking.

Optional Protocol to the CEDAW: The Optional Protocol (2000) is on an equal footing with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the Convention against Torture and other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which all have communications procedures. The Communications Procedure gives individuals and groups of women the right to complain to the CEDAW Committee about violations of the Convention. This procedure is known as <u>"the communications procedure"</u>. United Nations communications procedures provide the right to petition or the right to complain about violations of rights. Under this procedure, the CSW can receive confidential and non-

confidential communications in writing about discrimination against women. This procedure is a source of information for policy making by the CSW but is not linked to the legal framework of CEDAW. It does not assist with individual cases or deal with urgent situations where individuals are suffering continued violations.

In 2006 the UN appointed a Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women mandated with the responsibility of: (a) Seeking and receiving information on violence against women, its causes and consequences from Governments, treaty bodies, specialized agencies, other special rapporteurs responsible for various human rights questions and other organizations to respond effectively to such information; (b) Recommend measures at the national, regional and international levels, to eliminate VAW and its causes, and to remedy its consequences; and (c) work closely with other special rapporteurs, special representatives, working groups and independent experts of the Commission on Human Rights and the CSW in the discharge of its functions.

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)
At the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo a 20-year Program of Action was adopted, which committed countries to:
1. eliminate the gender gap in primary and secondary education by 2005, and complete access to primary school or the equivalent by girls and boys before 2015;
2. reduce infant and Under-5 mortality rates by at least one third, to no more than 50 and 70 per 1,000 live births, respectively, by 2000, and to below 35 and 45, respectively, by 2015;
3. reduce maternal mortality to half the 1990 levels by 2000 and by a further one half by 2015 (specifically, in countries with the highest mortality, to below 60 per 100,000 live births); and
4. provide universal access to a full range of safe and reliable family-planning methods and to related reproductive and sexual health services by 2015.

Since the ICPD Conference in 1994 many countries have made significant progress in implementing the Plan of Action. For example, many countries have made efforts to increase the participation of women in governance and provide economic, education and training opportunities for women and girls. However, there is a need to ensure that laws and policies are being effectively implemented. GBV, gender mainstreaming, trafficking in women and girls, and national capacity-building remain major gaps to be addressed in many regions of the world. In its review of the ICPD and its follow-up beyond 2014, a new framework was proposed. This is built on five thematic pillars: dignity and human rights; health; place and mobility; governance and accountability; and sustainability. The new framework acknowledges that the motivations for development are generated by human aspirations for dignity and human rights, for good health, and for both security of place and mobility. Because the respect, protection, promotion and fulfillment of human rights are necessary preconditions for realizing all of the unfulfilled objectives of the Program of Action, the elaboration and fulfillment of rights are a critical metric for determining whether, for whom, and to what extent these aspirations have been achieved (UNFPA, 2014).

THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, in 1995. It provides the global agenda for women's rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Declaration calls for commitments at the highest political level for implementing the BPfA and urges governments to take the leading role in the coordination, monitoring and assessment of progress in the advancement of women in 12 critical areas of concern.
1. Women and Poverty
2. Education and Training for Women

3. Women and Health
4. Violence against Women
5. Women and Armed Conflict
6. Women and the Economy
7. Women in Power and Decision Making
8. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
9. Human Rights of Women
10. Women and the Media
11. Women and the Environment
12. The Girl Child

Every five years the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) provides the opportunity for review of progress and challenges faced in implementing the BPfA and the state of women's rights after the <u>Fourth World Conference on Women</u>. Successive five-year reports – (Beijing + 5 (2000), Beijing + 10 (2005) and Beijing + 15 (2010) were submitted to the <u>UN Commission on the Status of Women</u> (CSW). The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) coordinates the Africa Regional Review Process. The regional report which is an outcome of the review process involves all stakeholders - governments, CSOs and international and intergovernmental organizations. CSOs can submit shadow reports to address gaps and challenges not addressed in the country report and make recommendations to governments to translate the many commitments to the women of Africa into concrete actions.

The Beijing+15 Africa Regional Report submitted to the 54th Session (2010) of the CSW showed that Africa had made great progress in the implementation of various global and continental commitments on gender equality and women empowerment. This led to positive changes in the lives of African women. However, the report showed that there were still areas of concerns. These included the high and increasing number of women infected with HIV (61% of infected persons) as of December 2007 with the prevalence rates being higher among women than men; widespread VAW and girls exacerbated by inadequate access to justice systems and other protections and support services and the limited presence of women in peace processes although they are disproportionately affected by conflict.

The Beijing + 20 Review and appraisal of the BPfA was submitted to the 59th Session of the CSW in March 2015. The Africa Review Process was undertaken under UNECA's leadership. States submitted comprehensive national-level review reports based UNECA guidelines by the due deadline of June 30th 2014. The final review process took place in November 2014. The Beijing +25 in 2020 was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. But reviews were carried out by groups and organizations to assess level of progress after 25 years.

National Male Involvement Strategy for the Prevention of Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Sierra Leone

The National Male Involvement Strategy for the Prevention of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Sierra Leone (2020) demonstrates the Government's commitment to eradicating SGBV, promoting gender equality and upholding the rights and dignity of women and girls. The strategy adopts a socially transformative approach that focuses on the participation of men and boys as change agents and champions for protecting women and girls in their families, communities, schools and workplaces. It treats men not just as perpetrators of violence but as allies in changing power relations and systems in society that sustain gender inequality and violence. It recognizes men and boys as victims of SGBV along with women and girls. This Strategy harmonizes growing efforts in the country to mobilize men and boys towards SGBV prevention. Its overarching themes include an enabling environment, coordination and partnerships, capacity strengthening, research and knowledge sharing. The Strategy outlines the mandate of the Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The implementing modalities is inter-ministerial and multisectoral. Interventions will be community-led and will use the male role model approach while

building on women only initiatives and programs. The Strategy document presents the historical, economic and political context of gender inequality in the country which results in SGBV. It outlines the legal and policy framework that exists for a viable National Male Involvement Strategy and the ratified international conventions and protocols that Sierra Leone is obligated to. The Strategy's five guiding principles are (1) Being women-centered (2) Adopting multisectoral approach (3) Respecting human rights (4) Community-driven (5) Gender transformative in design and implementation. The four primary objectives includes: (1) providing an enabling environment for male involvement (2) enhancing partnerships (3) strengthening institutional capacity; and (4) improving data collection and knowledge sharing.[12]

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT (GEWE) BILL 2021

Sierra Leone's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Bill 2021 addresses gender imbalances by making provisions for increased elective positions for women, to promote gender equality in employment and training, implementation of gender mainstreaming in budgeting and financial institutions, and prescribing procedures for the improvement of women's access to finance and to provide for other related matters.

The purpose of this Bill is to address gender imbalances in access to decision making positions by providing for a minimum representation of each gender and to provide for other related matters. Some key components of the Bill as related to gender equality are:

Component	Section
District Block Representation System	2. (a) For every two male representative there shall be one female representative for all public elections (b) If a Political Party fails to comply with Section 2 (a), NEC will reject the entire list
Appointment to Positions in Public Offices	3. (a) In making appointments to cabinet and other government positions, the President shall take due consideration to the possibility of appointing women to as much as 30%.
Duty to Promote Gender Equality	5. (1) A public or private employer, including civil society organisations shall have a minimum of 30% of each gender in his employment
	(2) An employer shall, in addition to his responsibility to employ a minimum of 30% of each gender under subsection (1), ensure that a minimum of 30% of each gender in his employment, is in a decision-making position within his organisation
	(3) An employer shall, in addition to his responsibility to employ shall prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender and prohibit dismissal as a result of pregnancy.
	(4) An employer shall in addition to his responsibility ensure the prohibition of Sexual harassment with associate civil remedies in work places.
	(5) An employer shall in addition to his responsibility ensure that paid maternity leave of at least 14 weeks to

---

[12] Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs (February, 2020). National male involvement strategy for the prevention of sexual and gender based violence in Sierra Leone. Freetown: Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs.

	women.
Equal Pay	**6.** All employees, male and female, regardless of their employer, shall be granted equal pay for the same work or work of equal value without discrimination of any kind.
Equal Training Education etc.	**7.** An employer shall, in relation to training, education and scholarship provide equal opportunity for male and female employees.
Access to Finance	**8.** (1) Females and males shall have equal access and rights to credit and financial services, transactions and products.
	(2) A Government financial institution, including the Bank of Sierra Leone and the Ministry of Finance shall prescribe procedures and processes for improving access to finance for females.
	(3) A person who discriminates in the provision and access to financial services or resources, based on gender or any other grounds commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of not less than 50,000,000.00 Leones or to imprisonment for a term not less than 5years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Other Significant Policies and Legislations in Sierra Leone[13]
There has also been significant progress on policy and legislation. The National Policy on the Advancement of Women and the National Gender Mainstreaming Policy were developed in 2000; VAW was recognised as requiring specific responses within the 2008 Poverty Reduction Strategy; a National Action Plan was developed in 2008 to implement UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820; and the National Committee on Gender-based Violence (the NAC GBV), set up in 2009, brings together government, donor, local and international NGOs working on VAW.

There are also progressive legislation to deal with VAW. Three 'Gender Acts' were introduced in 2007 (Domestic Violence, Registration of Customary Marriage and Devolution of Estates). The Domestic Violence Act "situates domestic violence as a criminal act in and of itself and uses a broad definition of domestic abuse which includes physical and sexual abuses, economic abuses, verbal, emotion and psychological abuse" (Swaine in Denney, & Ibrahim, 2012, p.6). The Registration of Customary Marriage Act raises the legal marriageable age and requires customary marriages to be registered. The Devolution of Estates Act aims to address issues of women's inheritance by allowing men and women to inherit equally and abolishing customary practices whereby widows were often required to marry a member of her deceased husband's family. In 2012, these Gender Acts were complemented by the Sexual Offences Act, which criminalizes rape (with marriage explicitly denied as a defense), indecent assault and harassment and imposes a maximum 15-year sentence for cases of rape. It also entitles victims of sexual offences to free medical treatment, as well as a free medical report (necessary for prosecution).

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
The 8 MDGs were accompanied by 16 global targets and 48 global indicators. The main focus of **Goal 3: "Promoting Gender Equality and Empowering Women"** although gender cuts across all the other goals.

---

[13] Denney, L. & Ibrahim, A. F. (2012, December). Violence against women in Sierra Leone: How women seek redress. *Politics & Governance*. London: UKAid.

Goal 3 Target: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015.

Indicators:
- Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education
- Ratio of literate females to males of 15–24-year-olds
- Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector

The targets and indicators were created to provide concrete measurements of the extent to which countries are making progress towards achieving the goals. This progress was assessed on a regular basis at the country levels through national MDG reports.

Deadline for the attainment of the MDGs was 2015. The MDGs established measurable, universally agreed objectives for tackling extreme poverty and hunger, preventing deadly diseases, and expanding primary education to all children, among other development priorities.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) replaced the MDGs. It started a global effort in 2000 to tackle the indignity of poverty. As a collection of 17 interlinked global goals adopted by all UN Member States in 2015, the SDGs present a universal call to action to ascertain that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030.

Goals 5 (Gender Equality) and **10** (Reduced Inequality) resonate largely with the challenges of SGBV and girl child education. While balancing the challenges of changes and developments the world encounters, identification of these goals is paramount to the pledge to 'Leave No One Behind'; countries have committed to accelerate advancement for those furthest behind first.

Materials: Essays, transparencies and/or other material prepared in advance by a participant in collaboration with the facilitator (e.g.: Flipchart, markers, VIPP cards or sticky notes, masking tape, PowerPoint projector).

Activities: Existing policies and laws to prevent SGBV, HPs and promote access to SRHR

Objective: At the end of the activity, participants will be familiar with some policies and laws related to SGBV and HPs

Preparations: Presentation on the manual objectives, VIPP cards with SGBV policies written on one side.

Facilitator Steps:
1. Welcome participants and present the session objectives. Mention that through a few activities, we are set to identify useful resources to tackle, reduce and eventually end SGBV and HPs in our community.
2. Start by identifying some policies, laws and/or guidelines that regulate behavior with regards to SGBV and HPs in Sierra Leone (e.g.: National Male Involvement Strategy for the prevention of Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Sierra Leone)
3. Make a PowerPoint presentation giving an overview of policies and laws relevant to these themes.
4. Ask the group to mention the policies, laws or regulations **(and list on a flipchart)** at local or community levels across Sierra Leone to address SGBV and HPs.
5. Ask participants to tell stories of how any of these regulations have been deployed to address cases of SGBV and HPs.
    - **Are there clear channels to report violation?**

6. Ask – Since we now know that policies and laws exist, how can we promote their implementation? Take inputs on flipchart and encourage participants to study existing policies and laws, commit to comply, educate others and engage in advocacies.
7. Take questions, comments and wrap up.

NOTE ONE:
Gender Sensitive Journalism

> This section is developed to support the media in the efforts to depict the world in more gender sensitive and gender responsive manner, thus contributing to more inclusive and equal societies.

It uses the 4Ws + H (Who, What, Where, Why and How) on Gender Sensitive Reporting

Who	The reporting journalists, editors, editors-in-chief, photographers, managers, board ... Gender is everybody's business.
What	To be sensitive to gender inequalities, portray and treat women and men in a fair and just manner.
Where	On all levels: - at the managerial level where the general directions are made, - at the editorial department where decisions are taken about stories to be covered, - on the field when information is being gathered, - at the desks when information is being selected,
Why	Fair gender portrayal is a professional and ethical aspiration, similar to respect for accuracy, fairness and honesty. It can importantly contribute and co-create more gender balanced and inclusive societies
How	Achieved through: - selection of sources and stories; - fair portrayal of women and men through elimination of stereotypes; - use of gender fair language; and - promoting gender equality within media organizations.

1. Selection of sources and stories to achieve balanced presence of women and men, reflecting the composition of society and human experiences

The world is composed of almost equal number of women and men, however women are heard about or read about only in approximately 23% of the world news. With other worlds, "76% of the people heard or read about in the world's news are male. The world seen in news media remains largely a male one«. This does not reflect the actual composition of society; it also does not show the various human experiences in the societies, and also makes the large (mainly female) part of our societies relatively invisible. Furthermore, when women do make it to the news, they are rarely presented and involved as an expert or spokesperson. In 2010 in world's media only 19% of spokespersons and 20% of experts were women. In contrast, 81% of spokespersons and 80% of experts in the news were male. This again portraits the world of experts/professional mainly as a »men's world«, while women were more often depicted in the »ordinary people categories«. This is limiting possibilities for the women's angles and expert's opinion to be heard and to shape our world. Furthermore, there is a lack of coverage of stories linked to gender or women's rights, such as gender-based violence, making those stories, although often the reality of great share of women's (and men's) experiences, almost invisible or non-existent. Therefore, it is essential to work towards fair coverage of real issues, which are important to women and which fairly present their experiences.[14]

To achieve more gender equality in media content, try to:

- pay attention towards achieving balanced representation of women and men seen, heard or read about in news and current affairs. Also make special considerations to make sure diverse stories and voices of people, particularly the ones that are often almost invisible in media (e.g.: older women), are included and represented.
- pay attention to balanced representation of women and men in the news and media in all spheres, including making sure to report on stories of women in the (often male dominated) areas, such as politics and government, economy and business, war and conflicts, science and technology, sports, etc.;
- pay attention to balanced representation of men and women as a source of information, opinion and expertise in the news (e.g.: make sure you pay attention to involve women as experts and professionals, not only as "ordinary" persons or victims).
- pay attention that your sources represent range of opinions coming from diverse groups, including from often neglected groups (e.g.: persons with disabilities, ethnic communities, etc.). If relevant, consult women's rights NGOs and other groups working on gender equality or representing the group in question, to get more balanced view;
- pay attention so that proportion of stories focus specifically on women or issues considered as a particular concern for women (e.g.: gender-based violence, women's rights, women's achievements, etc.);
- pay attention to covering stories that focus on issues of gender equality/inequality (stories about specific cases of equality or inequality between women and men, relevant policies, legislative issues, programs designed to promote gender equality and transform unequal gender norms). Ensure that these stories get a fair share of prominence in your media organization.

2. Use of gender sensitive language

Structures of many societies have been based on assumptions of sex-biased roles, which are entrenched in the use of language. To be truly equal, women and men must be seen and heard to be equal. This means eliminating language that misrepresents, excludes or offends women. Careful use of language and images in the media gives more accurate reflection of the audience or readership, and this can positively affect people's consciousness over time (UNESCO, 2012).

In the attempt to use a gender sensitive language:

- avoid using "he" as a generic pronoun unless the gender of the subject is known and is relevant to the context. The pseudo-generic "he" or "his", when referring to both a

---

[14] Global Media Monitoring Projects (2010).

female and a male excludes the female. To be inclusive, use both he and she, and consciously balance use of pronouns by sometimes reversing their order. For example: Instead of "If a student studies hard, he will succeed"; use "If a student studies hard, he or she will succeed" OR "If a student studies hard, she or he will succeed"; OR "Students who study hard will succeed".

✦ 'Avoid using "man" as a generic noun, as if men represent the whole human race. The use of the word man to represent both women and men excludes women, and it minimalizes their contributions and their worth as human beings. For example, to make language more inclusive use "humanity, human beings, people" instead of "mankind", "artificial materials" instead of "man-made materials"; use "the best person for the job" instead of "the best man for the job", etc.

✦ When describing a job or career both men and women might perform, avoid using term that specifies gender and replace gender-specific words with gender-neutral word to avoid associating men and women with certain professions. For example: chairman/ chairwoman vs. chair, coordinator, moderator, presiding officer, head, chairperson; businessman/businesswoman vs. business executive, manager, businessperson, policeman/policewoman vs. police officer; mailman vs. postal worker, letter carrier, etc.

✦ Seek alternatives to language that omits, patronizes, or trivializes women, and to language that reinforces stereotyped images of both women and men. For example: Do not use terms like "the little lady" or "better half" when you are referring to someone's spouse, or wife. Avoid the use of exaggerated language such as "Blonde beauty wins song contest!"; "Mother of three elopes with lover"; "Woman driver crashes into fence"; "Maria is a career woman"; "Spinster", etc.

✦ When referring to men and women, make sure they are addressed in the same manner. For example, instead of saying "Mr. Smith and Mary Jones" refer to them as "John Smith and Mary Jones" (using both of their first names) or "Mr. Smith and Ms. Jones" (using titles, rather than names), instead of "The reading list included Jane Austen, Joyce, Proust, and Virginia Woolf", use "The reading list included Austen, Joyce, Proust, and Woolf (or Jane Austen, James Joyce, Marcel Proust, and Virginia Woolf)".

✦ Use courtesy titles to promote gender equity, e.g.: instead of Miss, Mrs., use Ms.

✦ Describe a woman as her own person, and not in relationship to someone else. Try to avoid forms of address that depict a woman as the mere appendage of her husband, which trivializes women or render them invisible. For example, instead of saying "Mary Smith, who is married to John Smith", say "Mary Smith, who is a writer" or instead of "The steward seated President Julius Maada Bio and his lovely wife Fatima", use "The steward seated Mr. and Mrs. Bio".

3. **Fair portrayal of women and men through elimination of stereotypes and promotion of multi-dimensional representation/portrayal**

The media plays a very significant role in shaping public perceptions about women and men. Therefore, it is important that reporting in the media avoids any form of gender stereotypes, which often limit and trivialize females and males, as well as presents an inaccurate view of the world and its possibilities. Furthermore, the use of stereotypes reflect a mental block, not only in terms of what society may expect from women and men, but also more seriously – in terms of what women and men may expect from themselves (UNESCO, 2012).

To ensure fair portrayal of women and men:

✦ Avoid stories with stereotypes, including openly sexist's interpretations of the characteristic and roles of women and men in society. Avoid making any gender based assumptions, including when depicting traditional "feminine/masculine characteristics and male/female roles" (e.g.: avoid representing certain jobs or roles as only appropriate for, or held by, women or men, i.e.: farmers are men and elementary

teachers are women, or using common stereotypes that reinforce gender roles, e.g.: portraying women as mothers, homemakers, etc.).

‡ Do not represent females and males with stereotypic gendered attributes and characteristics. For example, do not always imply that girls are timid, and boys are brave; males are admired for their accomplishments and women for their physical attributes; females are passive, and males are active. Equally, in the case of crime, violence or disasters, do not portray only women as victims and men as survivors.

‡ Make sure you include stories that show multidimensional representation/portrayal of men and women (indicating journalistic effort to challenge/counter challenge gender-based stereotypes).

‡ Make sure you have a fair portrayal of men and women in commercial ads, commercial messages and images; minimize ads for various product categories or services that stereotypically naturalize gender roles (e.g.: household goods associated with cooking and cleaning, food, beverages, products for children, electronic goods; mainly women in services such as education, health, childcare, and men in banking and investment, real estate and sport events).

‡ Avoid depicting sexuality in ads and images, particularly depicting women as sexual objects. Also pay attention to balanced proportion of ads that show women and men appearing assertive rather than passive in advertisements (voices and images), and that show occupations of women and men in ads, etc.

4. Gender equality in media organizations

Studies show that while women have considerably outnumbered men in university-level and practice-based journalism programs and that as the employment of women in the media is increasing, organisational culture of media remains large (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2012)

To achieve greater gender equality in a media organisation, try to:

‡ guarantee balanced representation of women and men in ownership, business management, board positions, and women and men holding leadership positions within media (e.g.: editors-in-chief, editors, head of departments, and heads of desks);

‡ develop policies on gender equality/codes of conduct; equal opportunities/diversity (including gender); sexual harassment in the workplace; dignity in the work-place; work-life balance (policy of flexible working arrangements, availability and accessibility of quality child care and support facilities for all staff, etc.);

‡ develop a human resource policy on gender equality, securing equal treatment with respect to general working conditions/environment and rights, including wages and promotion rates for women and men, equal and transparent recruitment practices (e.g. all interview panels should be gender balanced, etc.); transparent pay scale within the media company, using the same criteria to determine pay structures for men and women.

‡ set the gender desk or gender mainstreaming officer for monitoring and evaluation of gender equality in the workspace.

‡ introduce practical measures to foster women's advancement and the portrayal of women in the media, including trainee positions specifically for women; leadership/management training for women; and equality awareness training for staff.

NOTE TWO:

Good Journalism in Election Reporting

> For citizens to make well-informed decisions in an election there must be a free media. But the media must be more than free. It must be reliable. It must be trusted. It must have opportunity to form independent and diverse views. Around the world, journalists have developed principles and standards to show how they will provide news people can trust. Unfortunately, there are places where journalists have to work under standards that are imposed by governments or powerful interests that interfere with professionalism. But wherever journalists come together freely to consider what they do, and how to guide themselves, they refer to their professional standards

A. What should good journalism be?
Accuracy + Impartiality + Responsibility = Reliability

Good journalists use only honest methods to obtain news, which means they do not break the law.

These are the basic standards that produce journalism which the people can trust. It is called reliable journalism. All reliable reporting should be accurate, impartial and responsible. It applies to every aspect of the job – assigning stories, editing copy or sound bites, writing headlines, directing, producing, or managing newsrooms.

At any time, good reporters ask themselves: does my work meet the test of reliable journalism? Is my report accurate, impartial and responsible?

For journalists covering election to make well-informed decisions and perhaps underpin accuracy on the field, they MUST give accurate information and practice good journalism. Around the world, professional journalists have developed principles and basic standards to achieve good journalism. Unfortunately, in many places, journalists work under different rules imposed by ruling governments or by powerful interests. But wherever professional journalists come together to freely consider what they do, and to guide themselves, they refer to these professional standards.

> As key election stakeholders, journalists have an important role to play in facilitating political discourse, fostering transparency and information-sharing, and serving as an effective forum for public debate, all of which strengthens the democratic process. In order to fulfill these responsibilities, journalists must be equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to conduct accurate election reporting, and they must also be made aware of their duty to mitigate hate speech and incitement to violence that too often arise in election environments.

B. What bad journalism does:
- **Defamatory:** Good journalism does not tell lies and twist the truth about people.
- **Derivative:** Good journalism does not simply repeat what has been reported somewhere else. Copying others' news may repeat false information.
- **Malicious:** Journalism is powerful. News reports can ruin reputations, put people in danger, or cause public panic. Good journalism is not used to intentionally harm others.
- **Corrupt:** Good journalism does not accept bribes. It does no special favors for anyone. Good journalism is not for sale.

C. Good journalism should include the following:

1. **Accuracy:** Getting the correct information is most important of all. Everything which is reported must be described accurately – the spelling of names, factual occurrences, and the real meanings of utterances. Before reporting it, good journalists seek evidence and accurate facts. A good journalist can rush to get the news first but ensures that what is reported is factual and correct. People will not talk to journalists if they fear journalists will not repeat their words accurately or will not describe things as they really are.

During the campaign period preceding the voting day, the media should give prominence to all the candidates. As much as possible equal coverage and attention should be given to all the participating candidate:

- *The issues*: All political parties and their candidates have their party policies or party platform or party manifesto that they try to sell to the people, it is the job of professional media to report these issues and ask the political parties to respond.
- *The political parties and candidates*: It is the responsibility of the media to provide voters with fair information about every political party and the candidates.
- *The voting process*: It is also the responsibility of the media to watch the process of the election; to see how well or if the rules are followed without corruption or favourtism to any one party, or abuse of any group of voters. Information about the election rules and processes are necessary to assist people in participating. This information includes defining how voters can register; the length of the campaign; who will count the votes; how much money parties can spend on their campaigns; rules on advertising and media coverage; and who will impose penalties on parties or the media who violate the rules.
- *Other considerations*:
  Journalists should
  - ❖ be careful not to colour your reports with inflammatory 25 language.
  - ❖ report what candidates say and not what interested parties say candidates said.
  - ❖ be careful not to be seen to be taking sides in political arguments.
  - ❖ not (in any circumstances whatsoever) accept any inducement from a candidate or his/her supporters. Do not even take a ride in a politician's car.
  - ❖ not promise any politician (or anyone else for that matter) that a report or story will appear in the paper.
  - ❖ report what them see without exaggeration.
  - ❖ exercise fair play. If a candidate makes an accusation against his opponent, ask that opponent for a comment

2. Impartiality (balance):

Almost every code of good journalism assigns importance to impartiality, on not taking sides. To do this, a good journalist produces a balanced report that includes both sides. There are always two sides in any story involving conflict. Citizens need to know what the other side says, and how it affects them. Balance is as important in every story as accuracy. People will not talk to a journalist who only reports one side of the story. Impartiality also means that the professional journalist is not an active leader in any political group or movement. Impartial journalism is an important defense for reporters in a time of conflict. Journalists who do not take sides are respected.

3. **Responsibility:** Journalists have obligations to the people they report about, and to the society to whom they report the news. Journalists have a responsibility to protect their sources. Many people will not tell journalists important news if they fear they will be revealed.

D. Key Considerations for Good Journalism

Reliable journalism is accurate, balanced and responsible. Culture, race and religion should have no influence on how journalists report. Journalists are supposed to be colour-blind, while the newsrooms and offices should represent many colors of race, religion and culture. It should be diverse. While covering election, a good journalist should consider the following to checkmate bias:

Reliable journalism and democracy	**Reliable reporting earns journalism a privileged place in many countries' constitutions and laws. Through the media, the people can exercise their rights to free speech, guaranteed in Article 19 of the International Declaration of Human Rights. Where there is free speech and reliable journalism, citizens can make well-informed decisions in their best interests. That is an essential element of democracy.**
Reliable, diverse and independent	But for democracy to properly flourish and bloom, the media must not only be reliable but also diverse. No single media outlet can do enough. It takes many media outlets to ensure that competing points of view and different reports are brought to the public's attention. Reliable and diverse media MUST be independent. The media must be free of government or powerful interference that blocks the reporting of other voices and other interests. An independent media must be supported by laws and courts and independent regulators, who protect the media from interference.
Reaching the other side	One way the professional journalists can help bridge the barriers between the opposing sides is to search for stories about what is common to both sides. It can be news about common environmental concerns, business prospects, health concerns or new farming techniques. The stories should report solutions that can be shared by both sides. Another way of breaking the barriers is to write stories about trans-ethnic identities, or people who are national heroes, while being gender sensitive. These are people who rise from one group or region to represent the whole country, in business, or international politics or education. The most important way is to remove stereotypes and assumptions from our news. Stereotypes always report what is different about the other side, such as race or religion or caste, as if it is important. Such reports give the assumption that the other side always acts in certain ways and never changes. Stereotypes blame the other side's religion, caste or culture for whatever happens. Such reports are often wrong and create prejudice and conflict.

E. Checklist for Detecting and Avoiding Gender Insensitive Reporting

Who are the sources of the reports?	- How many sources are government and corporate officials? - How many belong to the progressive, public interest groups? - How many sources are women? - How many sources are from minority groups?
Whose point of view is in the news reported?	- Whose interest does the report serve? - Does this interest coincide with that of the government? - Does it coincide with that of the corporate world? - Is the report in the public's interest? Which public?
Does the news report contain double standards?	Are there contradictory double standard? For example, single fathers sympathized with for their circumstances, while single mothers are said to "deserve" the hardship.
Are stereotypes used in the news report?	- How is one group portrayed in the story? - Is this group always associated with certain characteristics?
Is loaded language used?	- Is the language objective enough to not sway public opinion? - Is the language objective enough so the public can form opinions independently?
Is the report contextualized?	- Is the story put in context so that members of the public can form their own opinions?
Do the graphics match the content?	- Do the images and illustrations used contradict the content? - Do they lead the public to understand the story content differently?
Is this news necessary?	- What is the public interest in this report? Is it news only because it is about the other side? - Even if the facts are correct, will this report encourage prejudice? Can it be reported differently?

SOURCE: Inspired by UNESCO

RESOURCES

Barnes, K., Albrecht, P. & Olson, M. (2007). Addressing gender-based violence in Sierra Leone: Mapping challenges, responses and future entry points. London: International Alert.

European Institute for Gender Equality (2012). Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organizations. http://eige.europa.eu/content/document/advancing-gender-equality-in-decisionmaking-in-media-organizations-main-findings

Global Media Monitoring Projects (2010). Who makes the news. http://whomakesthenews.org/gmmp/gmmp-reports/gmmp-2010-reports

Howard, R. (2004). Conflict sensitive journalism: A handbook. International Media Support.

National Council of Teachers of English. Guidelines for gender-fair use of language. http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/genderfairuseoflang

UNESCO. (2012). Gender-sensitive indicators for media. Framework of indicators to gauge gender sensitivity in media operations and content. Paris.

UNESCO. Gender sensitive reporting.

MODULE 2: MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

MATERIALS:
Flip charts, videos, Pictures on card boards and illustrations, case studies.

FACILITATOR'S NOTE

According to a thematic consultation, Addressing Inequalities – Post 2015 Development Agenda, "Gender-based discrimination and the denial of the rights of women and girls remain the single most widespread drivers of inequalities in today's world."

Facilitator should bring to the notice of participants that the proliferation of media, the explosion of new technologies and the emergence of social media in many parts of the world have provided multiple sources for access to gender-related information and knowledge.

While inequalities and gender stereotypes exist in social structures and the minds of people, media and other information providers, including those on the Internet, have the potential to propagate and perpetuate or to ameliorate these imbalances. Imparting MIL competencies to women/girls and men/boys will enable them to be critical about and challenge these stereotypes.

The importance of affording media and information literacy (MIL) competencies to women/girls and men/boys globally has received increasing attention and has been renewed over the past decade.

MIL is now a basis for the ethical use of information, freedom of expression and freedom of information. It is a tool for stimulating personal, social, economic, cultural and political development, and for enhancing education. This session explores how MIL could be enlisted to promote gender equality in and through media. The concept of MIL is discussed from UNESCO's standpoint, drawing on what many experts call converging literacies.

SESSION 2.1: Communication, Information and Media

People assume that it is only the media and communication practitioners that communicate. However, in reality, people communicate every day. People communicate with indigenous media/oramedia like town announcers, drums, town hall meetings, etc.; conventional media like television, radio and newspapers and alternative media such as films, music, computer games and new media such as *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Twitter* and *WhatsApp*, etc.
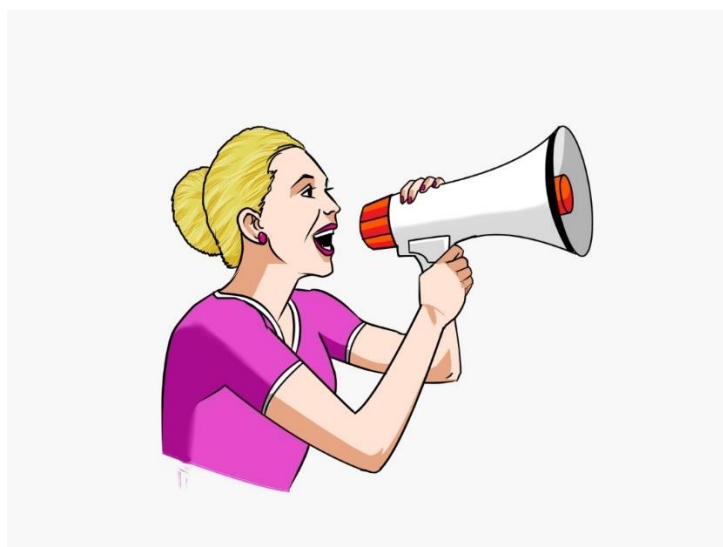
Gender is an integral part of MIL. In any community engagement plan, women, girls, men and boys have to be a key part. Gender is not about the sex of a person. It involves much more (see in earlier activities on Gender).

Objective: By the end of this lesson, participants should understand the basic concepts of Communication, Information and Media.

INSTRUCTOR/FACILITATOR'S NOTE:
1. Explain the basic concepts of communication, information and media.
2. What is Communication?
3. *Communication is the sharing and exchange of messages for the purpose of achieving common understanding.
4. What is Information? Information is any fact, idea, knowledge or experience that helps people make decisions.
5. What is Media? Media are the channels for sharing information among people. Media include indigenous/oramedia like town announcer, drum, town hall meeting, etc., and conventional media such as radio and TV.

Materials: Pictures on card boards and illustrations, as well as newspapers and new media such as *Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp,* etc.

SESSION 2.2: Importance and Role of Media and Information Providers in Society[15]

The media and other information providers such as libraries, museums and oramedia help provide people with facts, ideas, knowledge or experiences that help them to make the right choices every day.

Objectives: By the end of this lesson, users should understand:
1. the importance and roles of different media and information providers;
2. how to engage the media and information providers; and
3. different ways to use messages from media and information providers, including how to actively participate in their community

Importance of Media and Information Providers in Society

The media and other information providers are an essential part of every society. The media:
1. empower citizens with the knowledge and information they need to be active and become useful members of their communities;
2. ensure people are aware of on-goings in society;
3. provide people with information that helps them carry out their everyday activities;
4. teach audiences skills that can lead to employment opportunities;
5. stand as watchdogs to protect people from harm by releasing relevant information that helps them take necessary precautions;
6. provide a platform for interaction; and
7. champion different causes.

Roles of Media and Information Providers in Society

The media and information providers do different things in society:
o They educate people. They show them how to do different things they did not know how to do before. Examples include showing people how to make soap and how to recycle old materials.
o The media also inform and enlighten citizens on what is going on at different times of the day. They find ways to explain things that people do not understand. Examples include telling people when there are roadblocks, traffic jams or early warning for natural disasters like floods, earthquakes, mudslides.

o Media and oramedia can also be used to mobilize people. The media use inspiring and appealing content to gather people for a worthy cause like supporting a project to help people. People are entertained by media content through music, films, books, etc.
o In addition, the media serve as platforms for persuading people to believe in something or behave in a certain way. For instance, the media is used extensively by politicians to persuade people to support them during elections.
o The content in traditional, new media and oramedia are used to record or capture history, as well as promote new sets of values that would be beneficial to all.

Note:
- The roles of these media platforms are not always neutral. They usually take on the beliefs and perception of the person who created the message.
- The platforms can promote the celebration of mutually shared values irrespective of the background of the people.

---

[15] Adapted from the UNESCO MIL Non-Formal Guide, 2019

Materials: Illustration, Pictures, Oramedia items.

SESSION 2.3: MIL – What and Why

MIL stands for "Media and Information Literacy". Before now, we had different types of literacies which include media literacy, information literacy and library literacy, and so on. But all of these have been merged into one and are now being described as Media and Information Literacy.

Objectives:
1. to understand the basic meaning of MIL as composite concept which encompasses competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes);
2. to engage in critical thinking;
3. to easily evaluate information; and
4. to analyze information.

Expected Outcomes: Participants should be able to:
- understand the roles and functions of media and other information providers in democratic societies, including those on the internet;
- understand the conditions under which those functions can be fulfilled;
- locate and access relevant information;
- critically evaluate information, content of media and other information providers, including those on the Internet, in terms of authority, credibility and current purpose, opportunities and potential risks;
- extract and organise information and media content;
- ethically and responsibly use information and communicate one's understanding or newly created knowledge to an audience or readership in an appropriate form and medium;
- be able to apply ICT skills to process information and produce user-generated content; and
- engage with media and other information providers for self-expression, freedom of expression, intercultural dialogue, democratic participation, gender equality and advocacy against all forms of inequalities.

What is MIL?
- MIL is the ability to access, critically analyze, evaluate and produce media and information content.
- This means that an individual will know how to find information and test whether such information is true or not. Understanding how to test for fake information should also encourage people to create and spread only true content on any media or information platform.

Why MIL?
- There is a lot of fake news and hate speech causing problems in different societies. People believe fake news posted on social media networks, mistakenly carried by media houses in error or circulated by word-of-mouth.
- Wrong information has caused people to make decisions that affect them and others negatively. There have also been casualties from people who act on wrong information.
- With MIL people will understand how to create responsible media and information content.
- They will learn to be responsible when sharing media and information content. Basically, people need to live by the code: **#thinkb4youclick**.
- Eventually, MIL will create responsible and active citizens who crosscheck information and data no matter who said it or where it is coming from before sending. They are also able to caution others because they know the right thing to do.

Presentation mode: Illustration and pictures.

SESSION 2.4 Intersections of MIL and Gender: Implications for Women and Girls

Gender is an **important** consideration in **development**. It is a way of looking at how social norms and power structures impact on the lives and opportunities available to different groups of men and women. Globally, more women than men live in poverty. Thus, it is key to consider gender and gender-based approaches to development.

Objective:
- To emphasize the role of the media and other information providers such as libraries, archives and the Internet to achieve the objectives of the Declaration.
- Explore questions such as: How can media and other information providers effectively assess their gender sensitive responsiveness, and how can civil society in turn, evaluate this responsiveness? Are media merely transmitters of information relating to gender equality or are they joint partners in operationalizing the Beijing Declaration, enabling the creation of knowledge and multiplying its outcomes? If they are indeed a partner, how can media effectively play this role?

Outcomes:
- Participants should be able to understand how the media can address issues surrounding gender equality and women's empowerment.
- To realize how MIL is necessary for users of media and information systems and can promote gender sensitive media behavior.
- Through MIL, to ensure that audiences (readers, viewers and listeners) are equipped with the necessary competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) to assess the gender sensitive performances of media and information systems, and to participate in them.

Activity:

In plenary session, let participants
- discuss the ways that MIL can help to address gender equality?
- Identify local development programs relating to gender issues in their communities?
- Identify some of the challenges in the implementation of these programs?
- Determine the extent to which the media and other information providers are involved in these projects?
- Explore creative ways in which MIL can be used to mainstream gender issues in media and information and to improve the representation of women
- Make recommendations in considering gender equality, and MIL.
- Share their personal views and experiences on gender equality and how they might influence their interpretation of gender representations in the media and other information sources?

Materials: Movie clips on *YouTube*, flip charts and pictures.

Group work (20mins)

Facilitator should divide participants into groups. Have them:
1. get a script that any one of them may have written for one of their programs;
2. rework it to be gender sensitive in such a manner that the language will portray women and men through the elimination of stereotypes; and
3. if it is okay, get set to present it.

Gallery Walk: 15 minutes

Conclusion: 6 minutes
The facilitator should conclude by reinforcing that:
- the media are communication tools used to store and deliver information;
- the media provides access to knowledge about people's customs and culture and the media being a very important player in the society affects how various practices are viewed, especially patriarchal, sexist and exclusionary issues, and the way they are perceived;
- the media exposes how certain people, values and norms in society are perceived. They are also capable of changing the views and perceptions of a society about a thing or a concept. In this case, patriarchy, sexism and exclusion;
- the media, especially social media, is highly influential. This influence is instrumental to the promotion or eradication of patriarchy, sexism and exclusionary practices;
- for the media to accurately mirror our societies, to produce coverage that is complete and diverse, it is critical that the news reflect the world as seen through the eyes of both women and men.

Examples of Gender-specific MIL Programs
Hundreds of global youth media organizations and library programs reaching out to youth provide great potential to mainstream gender-sensitive MIL and enable more girls and boys to advocate for gender equality in and through the media. Most gender-specific media literacy programs target youth and are, in essence, youth media initiatives. With reference to information literacy, these programs are largely academic and therefore involve mostly adults.

1. Youth media programs such as TVbyGIRLS, Reel Grrls, Beyondmedia Education and the Arab Women Media Centre offer gender-focused media literacy education (Richards Bullen, 2009; See also Lapayese, 2012). Through these programs, young girls receive training to develop their critical thinking by analyzing commercials, public service announcements and TV shows, to express themselves through creative and collaborative image, media and film productions.
2. In 2014, UNESCO launched a self-paced online course targeting girls and boys aged 15 to 25. The course focuses on MIL as a tool to promote gender equality and covers related topics including intercultural dialogue.
3. The Gender and Media South African Network and Gender Links developed a seminal resource, *Watching the Watchdogs: A gender and media literacy toolkit for South Africa*, which formed the basis of a successful program in the region. According to Davidson (2006) in her assessment of the initiative, the toolkit offers a "standardized yet flexible approach to gender and media literacy training; it creates a systematic approach to training that can be adapted to any community or organization in the region".
4. Femina19, an organization based in Tanzania, empowers youth and encourages discussion on gender-related topics of economic empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and citizen engagement. Femina19 connects with young Tanzanians via its popular magazines and TV shows, among other methods, to communicate information about these three themes. Using media to reach ten million youth in the area, the organization improves access to information to young men and women to help overcome gender inequality with respect to health, economic and democratic participation.
5. Women's Research and Documentation Center (WORDOC) hosts an annual summit for girls aged 10-16 where sessions on media literacy for girls are held. Activities include media textual analysis to tease gender stereotypes, sexism and gender-based violence ingrained in musicals, movies, internet and so on.

ACTIVITY 1:

> **FACILITATOR'S NOTE**
>
> Facilitator should let participants know that: Enlisting MIL as a tool for advancing gender equality opens up a flood of opportunities for pragmatic development programs needed to drive public policies and resources allocation. Effective gender-specific MIL programs should:
> - Involve women/girls and men/boys
> - Look beyond just the media or the Internet and consider books, political and education processes, interpersonal relations (advocacy), religious beliefs and cultural practices
> - Consider the whole range of MIL competencies
> - Combine innovative and concrete empowerment projects with research
> - Facilitate national, regional and international networking to create MIL and gender movement
> - Include both theory and practice
> - Be linked to policy debates and formulation concerning women, media and MIL.
> - Focus not only on the potential negatives of media, technology and the flood of information they mediate but more on the opportunities they provide to give impetus to gender equality.

The facilitator should bring up the following contextual questions during Plenary Discussion or during Group Work:

1. Are the attitude of people in Sierra Leone towards participation/engagement in democratic discourses and governance processes, on issues (such as gender equality, freedom of expression and diversity in media) different consequent to MIL competencies?
2. How can people in Sierra Leone respond to personal research needs in light of MIL competencies and how can they become more critical of information and media content about women?
3. Are the responses of people in Sierra Leone to MIL reflected in particular attitudes toward the role of women in cultural expressions and the promotion of peace?
4. Can MIL help to reduce the vulnerability of women in Sierra Leone in the cyberspace? How? If yes Why? If no.
5. Do they think that gender-specific MIL initiatives which consider the whole range of MIL competencies can result in greater empowerment or agency for women and men of all ages in Sierra Leone?
6. Can a media and information literate society help to accelerate achievement of the national gender equality objectives in Sierra Leone?
7. What new frameworks do participants think are required to assess MIL, and monitor the efficiency of national and international public policies in this area?
8. To what extent can MIL policies and strategies formulation and implementation ensure the involvement of women and girls result in greater impact at the community level in Sierra Leone?
9. Do participants think that gender equality activists in Sierra Leone will be more effective when they are media and information literate? Why do they think so? Let them give reasons and debate.

ACTIVITY 2

DURATION: 1 Hour

MATERIALS: PowerPoint presentation, Short video clips, Charts and Illustrations.

INSTRUCTIONS: Divide participants into groups to discuss:
How does might MIL empower citizens to advocate for gender equality in all aspects of development, including in and through the media? (20 minutes)
- Let participants make presentations using Gallery Walk (15 minutes)
- The facilitator will reinforce in Plenary (20 minutes)

ECOLOGY NOTIONS OF MIL

CASE STUDY

Smart media consumption
On a media literacy radio program titled "Before you Click", The Center for Applied Ethics and Political Communication in Africa (CAEPOCOM AFRICA) discusses a wide range of media literacy issues that affect youth, children and families.

Feedbacks from one of the episodes showed that a large number of the listener have little information on dangers of computer games on children.

"All I have ever seen with computer games is that they engage children while I proceed with my office work or domestic chores. I believe they make children smart; I never knew that they pass specific messages which could target children or encourage delinquencies", says a regular listener.

With the proliferation of new media technologies, MIL is an invaluable asset for everyone.

Are you a smart consumer of media content? What can you also do to build a media literate community? Adapted from www.caepocomafrica.org.ng

BENEFITS AND REQUIREMENTS OF MIL

FACILITATOR'S NOTE
Facilitator should be able to evaluate the performance of media and information providers in light of the expected functions – a society that is media and information literate fosters the development of free, independent and pluralistic media and open information systems.

ACTIVITY 1: MIL and Civic Participation

DURATION: 2 hours

LECTURE

Media and information literacy enhances the capacity of people to enjoy their fundamental human rights, in particular as expressed in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." The main benefits of MIL are:
1. equipping people with enhanced knowledge to empower future citizens in the teaching and learning processes;
2. imparting crucial knowledge about the functions of media and information channels in democratic societies; and
3. imparting reasonable understanding about the conditions needed to perform those functions effectively and basic skills necessary to influence decision making.

FACILITATOR'S NOTE

Facilitators should let participants know that journalism and media sources are important in every society. Without journalists and the news media, there would be no 'window on the world' – people would have little way of knowing what was happening in their communities or in the world beyond their immediate experience. There are several key factors that journalistic practices should respect, and that citizens have come to expect of journalism:

- **Organizing knowledge:** Making chaotic information organized and comprehensible, and going behind official positions to uncover special interests.
- **Truthfulness:** In the media, sources of information should be clearly stated so that citizens can judge relevance, reliability and potential biases; important unanswered questions should be noted with an expectation of a follow-up if controversy exists.
- **Public interest: I**n the work they do, journalists can do much to further the public interest by equipping citizens with the information they need to take part in public affairs.

Objectives:
- Identify the functions of the media and other information providers such as libraries, archives and the Internet.
- Highlight what citizens should expect from the media and other information providers, such as libraries, archives and the Internet.
- Highlight the importance of MIL to democracy and good governance.
- Understand the significance of freedom of expression, editorial independence of the media, plurality and diversity in media and other information providers.

Learning Outcomes

Participants will be able to:
- understand and describe the functions of the media and other information providers in terms of access to information and knowledge, self-expression, and participation in democratic processes; and
- identify the conditions needed for media and other information providers to perform those functions.

Session (Lecture)
- **Independence:** It should be clear that the citizen debate should take place over and above personal biases; commentators must examine "both sides of the coin" (i.e.: discuss ideas they agree and disagree with); and journalists must show independent thinking in their work.
- **Forum for public criticism and problem solving:** The media should offer several channels for public interaction (letters, e-mail, phone contact or public forum); citizens also expect that the media give them access to space or airtime to allow conversations in their own "language" with fellow citizens. Further, people expect the visibility of a broad representation of views and values in news coverage.
- **Accountability:** The media should monitor all those who exercise power, not only governments, but also important public and private bodies. By holding the powerful to account, the media can inform community thinking.
- **Proportional and relevant news:** Citizens have a need for timely knowledge of important issues and trends. News reports should not overstate or understate the true nature of threats and risks.
- **Balancing privacy and the right to know:** Citizens expect media professionals to balance between the public's right to know with the personal right to privacy.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Access to information is essential for both democracy and development. Citizens have the right to free speech and the right of access to public information. This information is equally the property of citizens. Media and other information providers such as libraries, archives and the Internet should help to ensure the right to freedom of information for each citizen.

CHANGING ROLES OF THE MEDIA IN NEW TECHNOLOGIES

The role of media and other information providers is changing with the rapid spread of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), which almost instantaneously provide access to information and knowledge. Media and information providers, such as libraries, archives and the Internet, are able to provide new services and are becoming more than just resource centers or information providers. These new possibilities offer new opportunities for effectively and efficiently meeting the needs of citizens for life-long learning, research and entertainment, and for connecting communities.

Media and information providers have several key functions, which include:
-   providing open access to information resources without any racial, gender, occupational and religious restrictions; public libraries, in particular, provide access free of charge;
-   protecting readers' privacy and confidentiality in terms of content consulted on the premises or online;
-   providing access to diverse and plural information resources, based on professionalism and without political, religious or moral bias; and
-   collecting and preserving information for future generations.

ACTIVITIES

Facilitator may choose one or all of the below either in groups, as individuals or in plenary:
-   Use relevant library and Internet resources to research between 5 and 10 news stories of the past year on a national or global level. Identify which of the expectations listed above are met in each of the stories. What are the key elements in these stories that make them effective examples? For any of the stories that fail to meet these expectations, suggest changes to improve them.
-   Select coverage of a Sierra Leonean issue or story and examine it closely. Part of being media and information literate is having the awareness of, and the ability, to apply the above criteria to the coverage that various issues receive. To what extent were citizens' expectations met in those stories? What impact did the coverage have on the local community? Where citizens' expectations were unmet, what recourse did citizens have to address problems? What roles can MIL play in supporting citizens?
-   Do you agree that a well-informed citizen is better equipped to make decisions and to participate in a democratic society? Why? Write an editorial expressing your opinion.
-   DISCUSS: How is the role of information viewed and valued in Sierra Leone? What is the relationship between information and knowledge and between information and power?

LECTURE:
Freedom of Expression, Editorial Independence, Plurality and Diversity

Freedom of information and expression underpin MIL. In this context, use of the term *freedom of information* refers to access to public information. Information is key to the understanding of the world around us, the ability to find a meaningful role in it, and the capacity to take advantage of the resources available. When information is concentrated in the hands of a few or only in the hands of elites, the public's ability, both to make decisions and to assess the decisions is greatly reduced. An ethical and pluralistic media can ensure transparency, accountability and the rule of law (UNESCO Freedom of

Expression Tool Kit). Independent media draw their power from reporting responsibly on the communities they serve.

Freedom of Expression and the Press

Freedom of expression is the freedom to express and exchange views and opinions without fear of threats or punitive action. Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right. The right to freedom of expression protects not only freedom of speech but any act of seeking, receiving and imparting information or ideas, regardless of the medium used. Freedom of the press is a necessary underpinning of this right as it enables free expression to be public and shared and is thus essential to the building and supporting of communities and civil society. Freedom of expression can promote a true sense of ownership within society by allowing ordinary individuals to examine and express different thoughts and opinions. Freedom of expression *is an integral part of* civic responsibility, and essential for critical thinking. Restrictions to freedom of expression are allowed only when such restrictions are necessary to protect the freedoms of others. Limitations, such as the laws preventing 'hate speech', should be narrowly defined to avoid misuse.
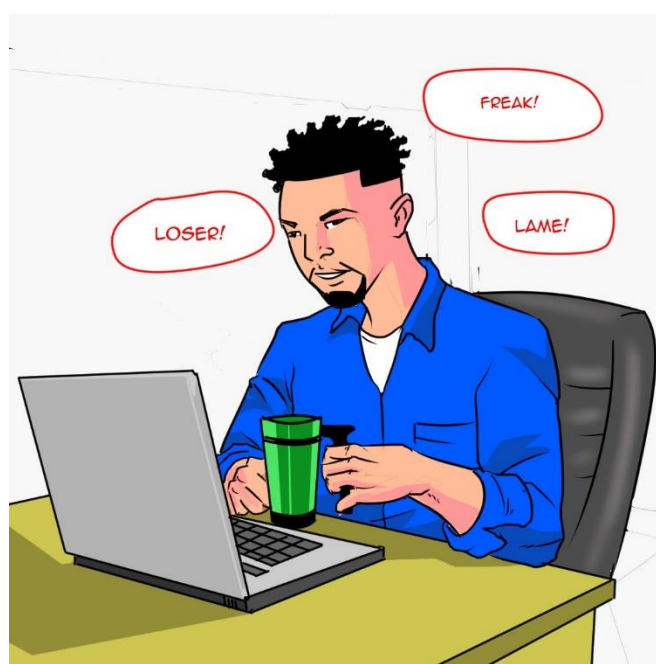
ACTIVITIES

- Assess the role of alternative or independent media in Sierra Leone. Select one example and describe the key ingredients that make it *independent*. In what ways does it allow people to participate in the democratic process? In what ways is it different from mainstream media?
- Discuss why government at any level in Sierra Leone should respect the media's right to editorial independence and, in particular, refrain from pressurizing the media with respect to their news and current affairs coverage.
- Expand the discussion to other potential influences over editorial independence and suggest how such undue influences could be prevented.

Knowledge of Media and Information for Democratic Discourse and Social Participation

The objective is to develop a critical understanding of how media and information can enhance the ability of citizens to engage with media and use libraries, archives and other information providers as tools for freedom of expression, pluralism, intercultural dialogue and tolerance, and as contributors to democratic debate and good governance.

MODULE 3: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

SESSION 3.1: The Role of Community Media in Community Action

HANDOUT 1: What is a community?
A **community** is a set of people living together with a common interest bound by territory and shared resources, such as language, culture, religion and occupation.

What roles can the community play? The most valuable resource in the community is the people; they can make decisions about their development. Cooperation among people within a community is important to develop self-sufficiency and self-reliance. The community has an important role to identify and use its resources, and to plan and act accordingly. Where there is a mechanism for local self-government, important decisions are usually made at the local level by the local people.

Community mobilization is an essential strategy for promoting action for GBV and SRHR. It is a process where a group of people have transcended their differences to meet on equal terms to facilitate a participatory decision-making process. It is a process that begins a dialogue among members of the community to determine who, what, and how issues are decided, and to provide an avenue for everyone to participate in decisions that affect their lives. It is a dynamic process that involves planned actions to reach, influence, enable, and involve key segments of the community to collectively create an environment that will affect positive behavior and bring about desired social change. Segments include influential groups or individuals as well as formal and informal leaders among those who will directly benefit from the desired social change. The process is grounded in local concerns and energy, and empowers/ensures local ownership, leading to greater sustainability and impact. In community mobilization, action is stimulated by a community itself, or by others, that is planned, carried out, and evaluated by a community's individuals, groups, and organizations on a participatory and sustained basis.

Community mobilization is not a campaign, nor is it a series of campaigns. It is a continual and cumulative communication, educational and organizational process that produces a growing autonomy and conscience. IT IS NOT SOCIAL MOBILIZATION, COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION, ADVOCACY OR INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION. Although community mobilization may utilize the above strategies, or may be a strategy utilized by them, these terms are not synonymous.

What Community Mobilization is and What it is not

Community Mobilization is	What it is not
- Fostering collective power	- Using power over others
- Sustaining engagement with a community	- One-off activities
- Systematic	- Ad hoc or done without a plan
- Multi-faceted	- Done with one strategy
- A process	- A project
- A struggle for social justice	- A technical quick fix
- About fostering activism	- About implementing activities
- Requiring a range of people, groups and institutions	- Possible with few individuals or groups
- Going beyond individuals to influence groups	- Focused only on individuals
- Building social networks or capital	- Dividing individuals or groups
	- Providing only information and facts
	- Telling people what to think

- *Fostering alternative values*	- Limited to specific individuals or groups
- *Stimulating critical thinking*	- Based on benevolence or protectionism
- *Holistic and inclusive*	- Blaming and shaming
- *Based on principles of human rights*	- Hierarchical
- *Positive and supportive*	- Changing just specific behaviors
- *Democratic*	- Possible with individuals acting in isolation
- *Changing norms*	- Punitive
- *Collective: Everyone works together for change*	- Focused on manifestations of violence
- *Benefits-based*	
- *Focused on root cause (power imbalance)*	

SOURCE: *SASA[16]: An activist kit for preventing violence against women and HIV (2009).*

A community mobiliser is a person who mobilizes – get things going. S/he is a catalyst and helps in bringing people together, building trust, encouraging participation, facilitating discussion and decision making and facilitating during community mobilization.

Why Community Mobilization?
Decentralization and democratization require increased community level decision-making. Communities have different needs and problems, different cultures, beliefs and practices – one message may not fit all. Community mobilization also builds mechanisms and systems to sustain health improvements. Communities can also apply political pressure to improve services. Empowering community mobilization approaches can help strengthen community members' skills and capacities to address underlying causes of health problems and reduce barriers to access to information.

Furthermore, social structures and norms may need to change if true access to information and services is to be achieved by those who need them most. Community mobilization can help facilitate these changes. It can also increase members' awareness of their rights to decent treatment and can strengthen their ability to claim their rights. In summary, community mobilization allows people in the community to:
- Identify needs and promote community interests.
- Promote good leadership and democratic decision making.
- Identify specific groups for undertaking specific problems.
- Identify all the available resources in the community.
- Plan the best use of the available resources.
- Enable the community to better govern itself.

Who can help mobilize the community?
Community mobilization can be supported with SRHRs in many places, including individuals, volunteer groups, local government, business groups, school groups, religious groups and political parties. A good community mobilizer for SRHRs should possess the following:

Attitudes
a) Willingness to examine and challenge their own assumptions, opinions and beliefs.
b) Genuine respect for all community members.
c) Non-judgmental and accepting approach.
d) Understand that different people have different views and perspectives.
e) Belief in community capacity to take effective mobilization.

---

[16] Sasa is a Kiswahili word for 'now'. It is chosen to reflect the urgency of addressing the twin pandemics of violence against women and AIDS.

Skills
a) Good communication and listening skills.
b) Good facilitation skills to enable the community to analyze their lives and situations.
c) Techniques to facilitate awareness of political, gender and cultural issues and relationships.
d) An ability to challenge assumptions sensitively (e.g.: about the role of women).

Knowledge
a) The community mobilization process.
b) Principles of community mobilization.
c) Knowledge of relevant issues and problems, causes and effects.
d) Understanding of ethical issues on community mobilization.

Key tasks in community mobilization:
a) Developing an ongoing dialogue between community members.
b) Creating or strengthening community organizations (committees).
c) Creating an environment where individuals can empower themselves to address their own and community needs.
d) Promoting community members' participation.

Some benefits of community mobilization:
It is one thing to mobilize people in a community, but they need to perceive some tangible benefits in their coming together. Some of these benefits include:
-   Empowerment: Community members propose solutions to identified problems and manage the implementation of the solutions to uphold their rights and share responsibilities.
-   Capacity building: Engaging in skills acquisition through training in identified areas like business management, proposal writing, negotiation, climate change mitigation, human rights advocacy, fund raising and so on.
-   More cohesion in the community, by working together as well as sharing and management of resources.
-   Better maintained local infrastructure and environment leading to safer and more secure environments and living conditions.
-   Improved services by articulating their needs and demand for appropriate services.

REFERENCES/FURTHER READING
Michau, L. (2009) The SASA! Way to *Preventing Violence against Women and HIV, Kampala:* Raising Voices .Inspired by: Transforming Communities - What it is and What it isn't. www.transformingcommunities.org; www.raisingvoices.org/staffskills.php

HANDOUT 14: Guiding Principles of Community Mobilization for Empowering Women and Girls in Marginalized Communities

1. Engage the whole community (Circles of influence)

Empowering women and girls require commitment and engagement of the entire community. One-off efforts that engage isolated groups or implementing sporadic activities has limited impact, because of the need to build enough support that the whole community works through the process of change. Success in preventing VAW depends on reaching and engaging a broad group of women, men and youth at the individual, relationship, community and societal levels. Since people live in community with others, the whole community needs to be engaged for community-wide change to occur. By engaging this wide spectrum of people every layer in the social ecology of a community is reached (Heisse 1998).
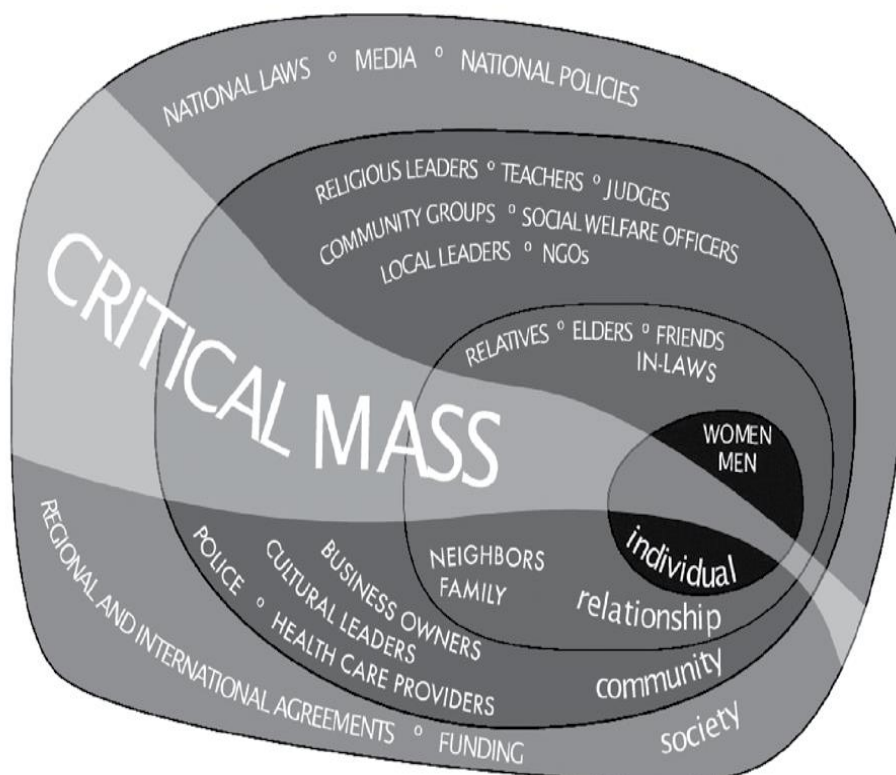

The Ecological Model Circle of Influence

2. Facilitate a process of social change

Changing community norms is a process, not a single event. Projects based on an understanding of how individuals and communities naturally go through a process of change can be more effective than those that thrust haphazard messages into the community. The process of social change mirrors the stages of change and can be broken down into **S**tart, **A**wareness, **S**upport and **A**ction phases.

3. Provide repeated exposure to ideas

Community members need to be engaged with regular ideas that build on and reinforce each other, from a variety of sources over a long period of time. This contributes towards changing the climate in the community and building momentum for change. For example, in one week, a man may hear a sermon about family unity in church or the mosque, see a mural questioning violence against women on his walk to work, hear a radio program about human rights, and be invited by a neighbor to join a men's group to discuss parenting skills. Repeated exposure to ideas from a variety of sources can make a difference in people's attitudes and behaviors.
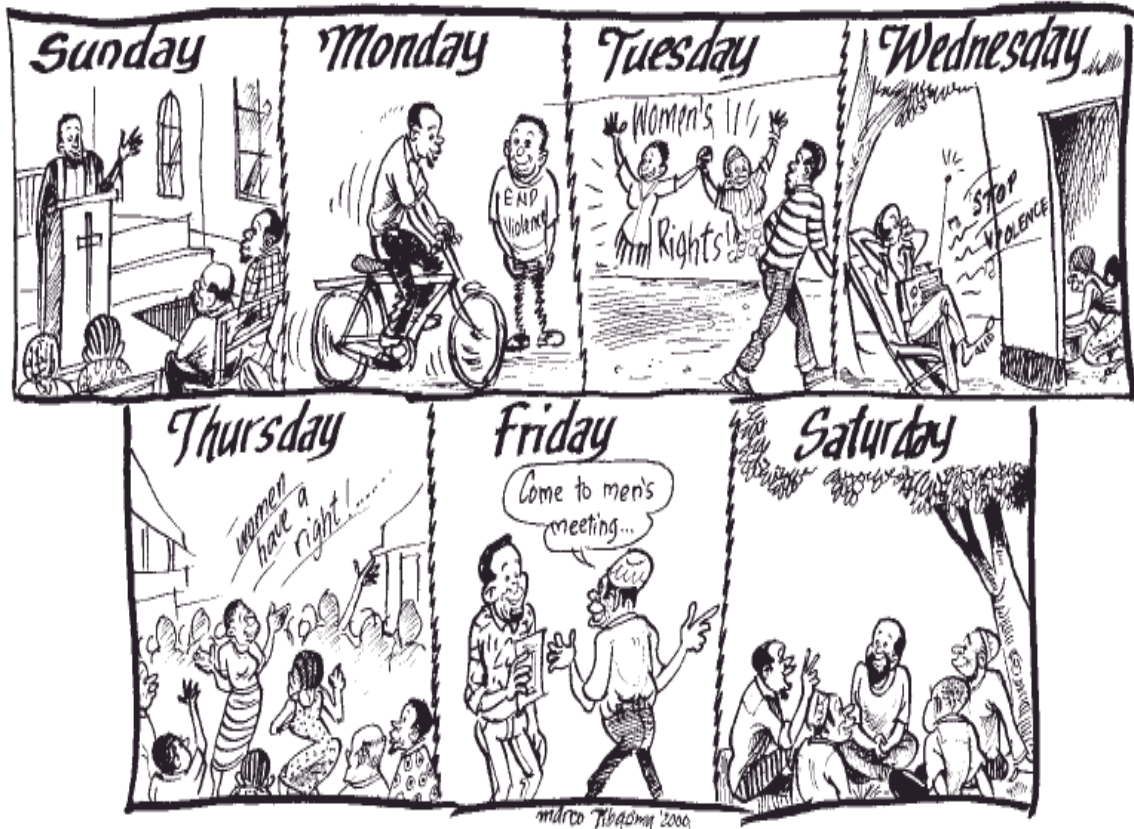
4. Use a Human Rights Framework

A rights-based approach is empowering to women and the community. It uses the broader framework of human rights and justice to create a legitimate channel for discussing women's and young girls' needs and priorities and holds the community accountable for treating them as valuable and equal human beings. It challenges community members to examine and assess their value system and empowers them to make meaningful and sustainable change.

5. Promote Community Ownership
Effective projects aimed at changing harmful beliefs and practices in a community must engage and be led by members of that community. Organizations can facilitate and support change, yet the change must occur in the hearts and minds of community members. Organizations can work closely with individuals, groups, and institutions to strengthen their capacity to be agents of change in their communities. This way, their activism will live long after specific projects end.

SCENARIO 1 :
NGO 1:
NGO 1 has a radio program it plays each day during 16 Days of Activism, where it talks about the difference between sex and gender, women's rights, domestic violence and the importance of utilizing family planning commodities to women and young girls' health. They have no outreach to the community apart from that, but they know couples like Sarah and Musa must be hearing their messages.

Sarah's Reaction
Sarah hears the radio program one day while cleaning and is very interested in the messages. She wishes she knew where to find such people who believe in a woman's right to live without violence and to use family planning (FP) methods. It gives her courage to go out and talk with the pastor at her church. Unfortunately, the pastor thinks the NGO women are evil minded, frustrated women who are encouraging divorce and abortion, which is condemned by the church. A woman's role is to submit to and obey her husband. He asks Sarah never to listen to the program again.

Musa's Reaction
Musa also hears the program one day when he was at a local community leader's house, on some other business. He starts to wonder about what these women are saying – can it be true that men and women are equal? Are they encouraging women to go against the divine order of God for multiplication on earth. He asks the community leader what he

thinks, and the community leader says these women are trying to cause trouble in their homes and the organization should be shut down. A woman's place is behind her man.

SCENARIO 2:
NGO 2
NGO 2 believes that, if couples had better communication skills, GBV would be prevented and there would be better access and utilization of family planning commodities and services. They think that most GBV and the minimal use of FP is caused by women not knowing how to talk quietly and respectfully to their husbands. The organization holds a workshop for police on how to do mediation between couples that helps them to communicate better.

Sarah's and Musa's Reactions
Sarah finally gets the courage to reach out to the police, though many people tell her it will be a waste of time and she should just keep quiet and be kinder to her husband. She goes and explains her story to the police. They insist on holding a mediation session. She can see that Musa is angry because she has reported him to the police, and even in the session the police – who say they have recently been trained by an NGO that works on these issues – says that she must stop refusing Musa sex and learn to speak more quietly to him. She must also defer to him in sexual matters and relations and must not use FP if Musa says so. He, in turn, must learn to beat her less severely when she does wrong. He is asked to agree to correct her behavior with a less severe beating in the future. When the couple return home, Musa beats Sarah for reporting him to the police, and threatens her if she tries to do this again. He believes this beating was light enough and that Sarah has understood what she has done wrong.

SCENARIO 3:
NGO 3:
NGO 3 believes they need to get their message out and be a brand name like Coca Cola. They put their billboards and signs everywhere that say "Men Who Beat Women Are Not Human!

Take Action Against Violence against Women and HIV!" "Women and Young Girls have a Right Over their Bodies and their Sexuality", "Men Should Desist from Seeking to Control Women's Bodies" and put their office phone number on them in case anyone in the community is interested in taking action.

Sarah's Reaction
Sarah sees billboards and signs everywhere by some NGO that seems to be against men. She is curious if they will help her, but she does not know who they are or where they work and is afraid her husband will be very angry if she goes to them, so she stops looking at the posters and keeps her head down when she passes the billboards.

Musa's Reaction
Musa sees some posters that are very much against men by a group he has never heard of. He becomes very angry and tears some of the posters down.

SCENARIO 4:
NGO 4
NGO 4 believes in engaging as many community members as possible in their efforts to prevent violence against women and HIV. They design posters with thought provoking messages and train interested community members, community leaders, and others how to create discussion using the posters. They have a staff who anchors weekly radio programs that ask people critical questions about the way women and men interact in their communities. They often engage interested community leaders and even religious

leaders to be on their radio program. The religious leaders use quotes from the Bible and Qur'an that support women's rights, human rights and nonviolence.

Sarah's Reaction

Sarah hears one of the radio programs with a pastor on it talking about nonviolence in the home. She feels so happy that a pastor can think this way and goes to see him. On the way, she sees one of the women she buys from at the market, away from her stall but engaging a group of women in a conversation about domestic violence. She is so interested in the topic that she stays to listen. It really makes her think about her own relationship.
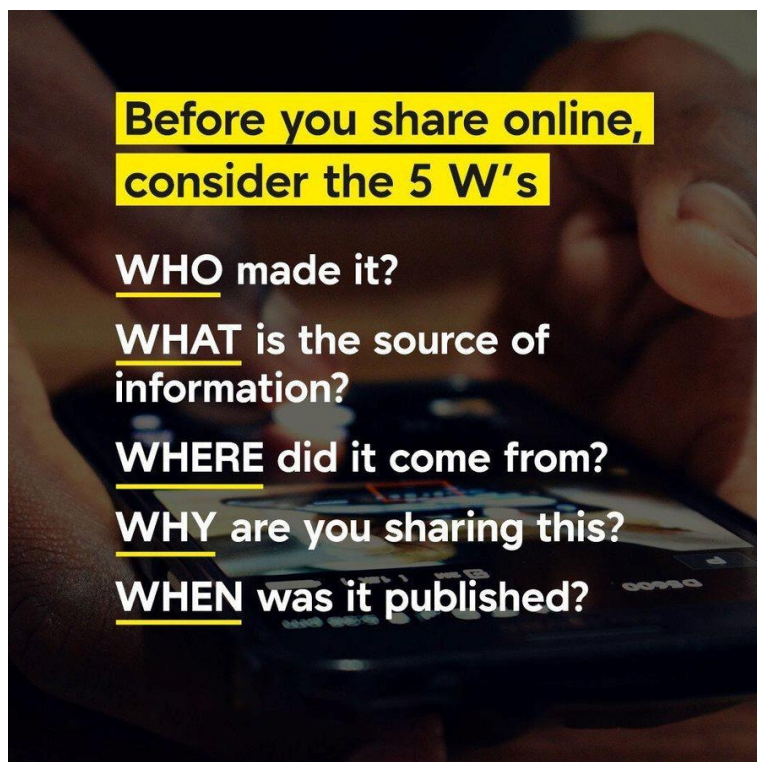
Musa's Reaction

Musa hears a pastor on the radio talking in support of nonviolence and the need for women and men to endorse and use FP to plan their family and achieve a greater wellbeing. He has never heard another man talking like this and thinks he must be very soft or crazy! He goes to attend to some business at the community leader's place and brings up the radio program to him. Much to his surprise, the community leader says he agrees with the pastor. He has been to a workshop by an NGO recently and has come to realize that nonviolence and the use of FP methods has benefits for the whole family and community. He talks to Musa about how he too can benefit from nonviolence in his home. He encourages Musa to come to the activities of a neighbor of his, who has a group for people to discuss these issues and put them into practice in their homes.(Culled from Guiding Principles of Community Mobilization: Principles of Community Mobilization Series Staff Skills Building Raising Voices, 2009)

Role of Media in Community Action

Governance systems require people to make their selection of leaders based on the information they have about them. Since information is a tool of persuasion. Wrong and hateful information can sway people into making wrong choices and exhibiting extreme behavior against those who have opinions that differ from theirs.

Meanwhile, people are bombarded with all sorts of information from different sources on a daily basis. To ensure that people consume and use the right information that is factual and free from hatred and all manner of extremism against people of different ages, genders and tribes etc., it is important to teach them the skills they need to check for facts. These skills would also enable them to identify fake information, disinformation or misinformation to avoid making wrong choices.

Before you share online, consider the 5 W's

WHO made it?

WHAT is the source of information?

WHERE did it come from?

WHY are you sharing this?

WHEN was it published?

ACTIVITY 1:
Selected representatives among participants to share experiences of how:
1. governance enhance or impede community action; and
2. community media in their locality has engaged government for community action.

SESSION 3.2: Social Media as a New Communication Strategy in Community Action

MATERIALS: Lecture notes, PowerPoint presentation, Projector screen, Flip charts and Markers.

> **FACILITATOR'S NOTE:**
> In your lecture, let participants know that the world is full of confrontations between people, groups, and nations who think, feel, and act differently. Similarly, these people, groups, and nations are exposed to common problems which demand cooperation and communication for their solution and which do not stop at national or regional borders. Progressive developments in communication technologies have enabled us to overcome physical barriers and we can go anywhere once we have internet connectivity. Social media is one of such technological advances. There are software and Applications that exist within the internet ecosystem that assist us to achieve these. A new culture has emerged and we are now called *netizens*.
> In Sierra Leone, several conflict points emerge from SGBV. Culture plays a major point of misunderstanding. Distance is overcome, access is expanded, and knowledge is enhanced. We can learn almost anything about many things and carry out campaigns as cheaply and effectively as can be.

Objective:
- To introduce participants to social media as a communication tool.
- To introduce social media as an additional strategy for community mobilization and action by understanding the diverse nature of society.
- To enable participants to understand culture as mental programming in community advocacy and action

Expected outcomes:
- Participants should appreciate the power of effective communication and its linkage to technology.
- Participants should know the importance of the Internet and social media in community advocacy and action.
- Participants should understand that in engaging with one another when programing for community action, culture gives us different minds and common problems – understanding them through education in the social media is key to engaging in dialogue.
- In communicating, participants should understand that every person carries within themselves patterns of **thinking, feeling, and potential action, which were learned throughout their lifetime.**
- Participants should understand that mental programs vary according to the social environments in which they were acquired.

Social Media and its Uses

Many online internet definitions tell us that social media is about websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.

Another defines social media as interactive computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation or sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks.

Most people use social media to stay in touch with friends, family, their community, politicians, colleagues and stay up to date with current news and events on any subject matter of interest.

In modern times, it is probably the only place that is the go-to medium for keeping tabs on information worldwide on any subject and has evolved into a cyber-world with its rules, laws and principles of engagement.

So, it is evident that, the original purpose of social media is not only for communicating with other people but also a way to let people know about your existence and to get insights about your target audience. Generally, social media is key to citizens' engagement and literacy while its usage can be generally categorized into usage intents: Promotion, Education, Connection, Conversation, Inspiration and Entertainment (PECCIE).

REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Acquire Project/Engender Health; Facilitative Supervision Curriculum, Trainers Manual 7-1

Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity. No. 44, AIDS: Global Concerns for Women (2000), pp. 37-47, Published by: Taylor & Francis, Ltd. Article Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/4066433

Disability Rights Wisconsin, (2007), Advocacy Tool Kit; Strategies for Effective Self and Peer Advocacy

Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality; Vignettes from Asia and Africa.

Ezeilo, J.N. (2008). Human Rights Documents Relevant to Women and Children's Rights in Nigeria.   ASAE Press, Lagos.

Four steps to community media as a development tool. Stefania Milan. Development in Practice Vol. 19, No. 4/5 (Jun., 2009), pp. 598-609. Taylor & Francis, Ltd. https://www.jstor.org/stable/27752098

Heise, L. (1998) Violence Against Women: An Integrated Ecological Framework. violence against Women, 4, 262-290

Pranitha Maharaj (2000). Promoting Male Involvement in Reproductive Health.

Siebert, S. Michau. L., & Letiyo. E. (2009) Guiding principles of community mobilization: Principles of community mobilization series staff skills building. *Raising Voices*.

UNFPA (2007) Partnering: A new approach to sexual and reproductive health. Technical Paper No. 3

UNFPA and International Council on the Management of Population Programmes, (2011).

UNFPA. (2003). It takes 2: Partnering with men in reproductive and sexual health: A summary checklist for programming

UNFPA. (2010). Engaging Men in Gender Equality and Health; A Global Tool Kit.

MODULE 4: JOURNALISM IN MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

METHODS: Brainstorming, Discussions, Group work

MATERIALS: Flip charts, Markers, Multi-media projector, Projector screen, Masking tape, Handouts, Newspapers.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
1. To highlight the importance of community media in empowering women and girls in marginalized communities in Sierra Leone.
2. To call their attention to violent extremisms and hate speech in the media in Sierra Leone..
3. To share best practices that can engender gender sensitive journalism in Sierra Leone.by moving participants from a gender-blind approach to a more gender-aware approach

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the module:
1. Participants will be able to recognize how community media influences ideas and ideals in society
2. Participants will locate languages, concepts and statements that insight violent extremism and hate speech in the media
3. Participants learn to wear their gender lens in journalists' best practices for reporting challenges facing women and girls in their communities.

FACILITATOR'S NOTES

Considering the roles of education, information, entertainment and enlightenment which the media offers, it is pertinent for participants to recognize the indispensability of media in engendering society. Consequently, gender sensitivity in media reportage is paramount, particularly in conflict-torn and volatile communities accompanied with the challenges of the COVID 19 Pandemic.

Use each session to call attention to newsroom activities that promote violent extremism and hate speech. Discuss how this plays out within citizen journalism and how the media can heat up the polity in their day-to-day activities. Key concepts, terms, headlines and catchphrases that elicit gender insensitivity in media reportage, and disparaging portrayals of women in the media must be discussed. Also deploy issues in conflict-sensitive reporting to spotlight how women are instrumentalized for media development (Omotoso, 2019). Emphasis must be placed on the need for the media to avoid 'revictimizing the victim' when reporting on gender violence.

Each session may engage with headlines and new stories from selected community media to clearly localize the issues. Examples may also be drawn from international media to establish the pervasiveness of gender insensitivity in media.

The facilitator must however spotlight recent breakthroughs of gender sensitivity in the media and expose participants to skills to identify and curbing gender-biased reporting in community media.

Sessions must begin from the known to the unknown. Provide an atmosphere for all participants to fully comprehend how they feature in the discourse and allow them to deeply reflect on their community media.

SESSION 4.1: Role of Community Media in Marginalized Communities
The Uniqueness of Community Media in Society: An Overview

Community media put the tools of communication in the hands of people in hundreds of communities, particularly women and marginalized groups. It allows them to create their own means of cultural expression, news, information and dialogue. Community media projects are run on a not-for-profit, democratic basis and are based on voluntary participation in program making and in management by members of civil society.

Community media contributes to peoples' empowerment to improve their social and economic conditions, fight against discrimination and racism, become more effectively involved in the democratic development of their community and country and provide an alternative to mainstream commercial content.[17]

MATERIALS: Paper, pens, flipchart.

1. **Aim:** To show how community media is uniquely built to target specific publics.

2. **Objectives:** Participants will be able to affirm the peculiarity of community media, their duties and responsibilities to their target communities.

3. **Sequence**: The **main** activity here is Group discussion or Gallery walk. Participants are to make a group-by-group presentation on the challenges and prospects of community media (Factors to consider include ownership, funding, staffing, location, operations, among others)

4. **Evaluation:** Identify similarities and differences in the issues presented by each group and how these impact on productivity.

NOTE:
- The roles of these media platforms are not always neutral. They usually take on the beliefs and perception of the person who created the message.
- The platforms can promote the celebration of mutually shared values irrespective of the background of the people.

UGANDA: Using Community Media to Prevent Malaria and Distribute Mosquito Nets
Community radios, SMS and community megaphones and film vans were used to convey messages on malaria prevention and use of mosquito nets.

Radio Announcement (script)
Compiled in consultation with the District Health Education (DHE) Supervisor, NGO Supervisor and MoH (Ministry of Health) Supervisor:

The District Health Officer, Amuru and Nwoya informs all households who were registered to receive Insecticide Treated Nets (ITNs) to prevent malaria should collect their ITNs at the respective distribution points on Wednesday 6, 2010 from 9:00 a.m.

Members of the Village Health Teams (VHTs) who participated in the registration together with the local council chairperson and the woman representative are also informed to report to the distribution points to receive the nets on the same day at 7:30 a.m.

---

[17] What is community media? Interview of Nadia Bellardi, *Community Media Forum Europe*, 11 May 2009.
http://europeanjournalists.org/mediaagainsthate/what-is-community-media/

The nets will be distributed to all children Under 5 years and pregnant women. The rest of the households will receive their nets during Phase Two. Any household member who was not registered is also requested to register with his/her VHT during the distribution exercise to be considered in Phase Two.

The District Health Officer, Amuru and Nwoya

SMS messages:
Ur reminded to pick your mosquito net from the distribution point, on Wed. 6, 2010, consult your LCI chairperson. Thnx

SOURCE: Adapted from 'Enabling community media for grassroots change'.
https://wpmu.mah.se/nmict11group6/case-studies/uganda-a-case-study/

SESSION 4.2: Recognizing and Curbing Violent Extremisms and Hate Speech in Community Media

DURATION: 2 hours

METHODS: Self-assessment, Personal learning goals, Group work, Presentations and discussions, Experience sharing, Quiz (Conflict resolution) and PowerPoint presentation.

MATERIALS: Flip charts, Markers, Multi-media projector, Projector screen, Pens, Questionnaire (Triggers), Questionnaire (Conflict resolution), Masking tape, Handouts.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
At the end of the session, learners/participants:
1. should be able to explain the concept of citizen journalism and its linkages with citizens' empowerment and pluralistic media.
2. should have acquired hands-on-skills that leaders must possess to properly advocate participation in their societies' decision-making processes.
3. should be able to identify media languages that promote sexism. Let the participants understand that while utilizing proper language to achieve more gender equality in media content, it is important to:
   - pay attention to achieve balanced representation of women and men seen, heard or read about in news and current affairs. There should also be special consideration to ensure that diverse stories and voices of people, particularly those who are often almost invisible in media (e.g.: older women) are included and represented.
   - pay attention to balanced representation of men and women as a source of information, opinion and expertise in the news (e.g.: make sure you pay attention to involve women as experts and professionals, not only as "ordinary" persons or victims).
   - pay attention that your sources represent range of opinions from diverse groups, including from often neglected groups (e.g.: persons with disabilities, ethnic communities, among others). If relevant, consult women's rights NGOs and other groups working on gender equality or representing the group in question, to get more balanced views.
   - pay attention to balanced representation of women and men in the news and media in all spheres, including making sure to report on stories of women in often male dominated areas, such as politics and government, economy and business, war and conflicts, science and technology, sports, and so on.

- ensure that a proportion of stories focus specifically on women or issues considered as a particular concern for women (e.g.: gender based violence, women's rights, women's achievements, among others).
- pay special attention to stories that focus on issues of gender equality/inequality (stories about specific cases of equality or inequality between women and men, relevant policies, legislative issues, programs designed to promote gender equality and transform unequal gender norms). Make sure these stories get a fair share of prominence in your media.

NOTES:

- An independent and pluralistic media builds lifelong empowerment by keeping citizens informed and facilitating the flow of educational content.
- Education through media is an important way to develop valuable skills that will aid in ending violence and eradicating forms of discrimination such as sexism and racism.
- More fundamentally, the media encourages the acquisition of civic knowledge and facilitates discussion concerning current issues.
- New media and ICTs play an unprecedented role today on issues of education and citizenship. ICTs have a huge potential to train and educate communities that have limited or no access to formal education.
- The media's core role in empowerment and citizenship is the understanding that freedom of the press is not solely the freedom of journalists to report and comment; it is, also, deeply connected with the public's right to freely access information and knowledge and to take an active part in political life.

ACTIVITY 1

Divide participants into groups and ask them to do the following:

1. Identify and discuss types of citizen journalism.
2. Analyse the use of language by the media in reporting similar events or incidents involving women and men.
3. Identify and discuss solutions.
4. Ask groups to present outcomes and discuss their contributions.
5. Share a PowerPoint presentation on media reporting of women in different situations.

ACTIVITY 2:

Ask participants to brainstorm on the power of the media: either to reinforce the status quo (with all its injustices and inequalities) or to ask the kind of questions that are catalysts for positive transformation.

INSTRUCTION: Indicate TRUE or FALSE for each of the following statements, depending on your belief:

1. **Conflicts are inevitable.**
2. **Good communicators do not get into conflict.**
3. **Conflicts by their nature are destructive.**
4. **It is possible to be in conflict without knowing it.**
5. **Whenever a conflict is resolved, there is always a winner and a loser.**
6. **Most people handle conflicts in a productive way.**
7. **Competition is the same as conflict.**
8. **Whenever possible, a conflict is best resolved by an unbiased third party.**
9. **All conflicts arise from misunderstandings.**
10. **Conflicts involve at least two people.**

SESSION 4.3: Media Portrayals of Gender in Marginalized Communities

An Overview

1. **Aim:** To understand the concept of gender, this session aims to unearth how journalists and the media can become more aware and sensitive towards gender issues.

2. **Objectives:** Participants will be able to analyze:
   i.   the image of women in the media;
   ii. language the media uses to represent women, particularly in conflict situations; and
   iii. gender bias in selected news reportage.

3. **Sequence**:
Facilitator may deploy their choice methods, including case study, brainstorming, group discussion to explore headlines, news stories, pictures, cartoon and ads in selected media.

Materials: Paper, Pens, Flipchart, Newspapers, Online new stories.

4. **Evaluation:** Reach a consensus on what is and/or is not gender bias in media portrayal.

NOTE:
How media have been representing women is how the society has been viewing them. Media construct reality. Therefore, there is a chain of processes that determine media portrayal of women.

TRANSPARENCY 1: Indicators in media portrayal.

SOURCE: Adapted from UNESCO Gender Sensitive Indicator for Media (2012).

CRITICAL AREA OF CONCERN (A):
Gender Balance in Education and Life-long Training
1. Percentage of women and men teaching journalism and other media/communication related courses in Sierra Leone.
2. Percentage of women and men who are heads of departments, directors of programs, deans of programs or occupying other leadership positions in Sierra Leone.
3. Professors at journalism universities/colleges who possess training on how to integrate gender specific content and to mainstream gender in curricula and lectures in Sierra Leone.
4. Existence of content specifically dealing with gender equality issues and gender mainstreaming in the curricula of schools and universities of journalism/ communication and industry courses in Sierra Leone.
5. Gender equality issues included for study, research, debate and practice in Sierra Leone.
6. Relevant training institutions monitoring, particularly of female journalism students' performance during education and after graduation in Sierra Leone..
7. Percentage of agreements between journalism schools and media organizations for internships and scholarships that make particular provision for female students in Sierra Leone.
8. Proportions of female and male students from Sierra Leone who are attending gender training courses and exchanges of experiences across different countries.
9. Existence of courses on the production of investigative journalism that generate greater depth and discussion of gender equality issues in Sierra Leone.
10. Proportions of women and men enrolled in formal studies at tertiary level in different fields of journalism and media in technical colleges disaggregated into journalism training institutions and universities.
11. Existence of quota system for female and male enrolment in different fields of journalism and media, in technical colleges, specific journalism training institutions and universities in Sierra Leone.

CRITICAL AREA OF CONCERN (B):
Level of Awareness on Gender Portrayal in Media Content

Indicators:
1. Proportions of women and men seen, heard or read about in news and current affairs content (excluding images) over a random selection of one week in Sierra Leone.
2. Proportions of women and men directly interviewed/quoted in news and current affairs content as sources of information and/or opinion in Sierra Leonean media.
3. Proportions of women and men appearing as (1) Spokespersons; (2) Experts; and (3) 'Ordinary' citizens/vox pop in Sierra Leonean news and current affairs content.
4. Proportion of external or societal orientation of women and men seen, heard or read about in news and current affairs content in Sierra Leone, including images (e.g.: work-related rather than home-related, relationship-related rather than family relationship-related).
5. Proportions of women and men seen, heard or read about in news and current affairs content disaggregated according to social status (e.g.: wealthy, working class, political elite, poor and rural).
6. Proportions of women and men seen, heard or read about and/or interviewed/quoted as sources of information/opinion in Sierra Leonean news and current affairs content differentiated according to thematic areas such as (1) Politics and government; (2) Economics and business; (3) War and conflict; (4) Science and technology; 5) Sports; 6) Other.
7. Percentage of stories focusing centrally/specifically on women and/or issues of special relevance/concern to women in in Sierra Leonean news and current affairs content (e.g.: gender-based violence, women's rights, women's achievements, among others).
8. Proportion of time/space and prominence (in respect to prime time or peak hours, front page or feature story) given to stories featuring women as sources of information/opinion and/or focusing centrally on women or issues of special relevance/concern to women in in Sierra Leonean news and current affairs content.

CRITICAL AREA OF CONCERN (C):
Gender Portrayal in Editorial Content of News Media (written, broadcast and/or online) by Private, Community and/or Public Media

Indicators
1. Proportion of stories in Sierra Leonean media with stereotypes (openly sexist interpretations of the characteristics and roles of women and men in society).
2. Proportions of stories in Sierra Leonean media with stereotypes (depiction of traditional "feminine"/"masculine" characteristics and male/female roles), thereby making them appear normal and inevitable while excluding other possible traits and functions for men and women in society.
3. Proportions of women to men portrayed as victims by the in Sierra Leonean media (e.g.: of crime, violence/atrocity, conflict, disaster, poverty, and so on).
4. Proportions of women to men portrayed as survivors (i.e.: with evidence of active agency despite adverse experiences/circumstances such as crime, violence/atrocity, conflict, disaster, poverty, among others).
5. Percentage of stories that include multi-dimensional representation/portrayal of men and women in Sierra Leonean media (indicating journalistic effort to challenge/counter gender-based stereotypes).
6. Percentage of stories that contain sexist language used by Sierra Leonean reporters or broadcasters, excluding in case of direct quote from a source (i.e., indicative of bias, discrimination or stereotype based on sex or gender roles).

CRITICAL AREA OF CONCERN (D):
Coverage of Gender Based Violence

Indicators:
1. Media use of non-judgmental language, distinguishing between consensual sexual activity and criminal acts, and taking care not to blame the victim/survivor for the crime.
2. Media use of the term 'survivor' rather than 'victim' unless the violence-affected person uses the latter term or has not survived.
3. Media identification of persons affected by gender-based violence as sources, with their evident consent.
4. Media use in percentage of stories that: (i) invade privacy and/or (ii) denigrate dignity, of the violence affected person on gender/sex lines.
5. Media use of background information and statistics to present gender-based violence as a societal problem rather than as an individual, personal tragedy.
6. Media inclusion of local contact information for support organizations and services available to persons affected by gender-based violence.
7. Proportion of time or space and prominence given to stories on gender-based violence in relation to other stories.

CRITICAL AREA OF CONCERN (E):
Gender Portrayal in Advertisements: Fair Portrayal of Women and Men in Commercial Messages in the Media

Indicators
1. Proportions of women and men in Sierra Leonean media adverts (Audio and visual).
2. Proportions of women and men in Sierra Leonean media advert voice-overs (authority voice).
3. Proportions of women and men appearing assertive rather than passive in Sierra Leonean media adverts (Audio and visual).
4. Proportions of women and men featured in adverts as expert/advisor, informed/intelligent/ conscious/cautious consumer, uninformed/gullible/pliant consumer, decorative props.
5. Occupations of women and men in Sierra Leonean media adverts.
6. External or societal orientation of women and men in in Sierra Leonean media adverts (e.g.: work-related, home related, family/relationship-related, and so on).
7. Appearance (including closing and posture) of women and men in adverts that are presented as primary, and other characteristics only secondary or absent
8. Proportions of women and men in advertisements for various product categories that stereotype of naturalize gender roles (e.g.: household goods associated with cooking and cleaning, food, beverages (alcoholic/non-alcoholic), grooming and hygiene products, products for children, electronic goods, automobiles, sports equipment/accessories, etc.).
9. Proportions of women and men in adverts for different categories of services/activities, which stereotype or naturalize gender roles (e.g.: travel and leisure, hospitality, education, health, childcare, telecommunications, banking and investment, real estate, sports events).
10. Depiction of sexuality in adverts (e.g.: relevant or not).

SESSION 4.4: Gender Sensitive Reporting in Marginalized Communities
Why gender training for journalists? An Overview

1. Aim: To prepare participants to incorporate gender awareness in all media activities.

2. Objectives: Participants should:
i.   understand why gender is a critical and analytical framework in the media.
ii. acquire new skills, concepts and intellectual challenges to develop a critical sensitivity from a gender perspective;
iii. change perception and comprehension of power via the media and re-prioritize to address women experiences for sustainable development through best practices.

3. **Sequence:**
Facilitator is at liberty to choose activities that will aid the achievement of the objectives of the session.

MATERIALS: Newspapers, pens, flipchart, projector images

Evaluation: Identify examples of gender insensitive reports in selected media
(**NOTE FOR FACILITATOR:** Choose only Sierra Leonean media outlets).

TRANSPARENCY 1: Gender sensitivity in conflict reportage
"Conflict does not only mean wars between or within countries, but also ethnic/caste/ communal strife, gender violence and poverty".[18]

TRANSPARENCY 2: Commercialization, commodification and concentration:
The 3C effects that can make media more gender blind and less conflict sensitive.[19]

NEW TECHNOLOGY AND THE 3Cs
Advancements in media technologies have proven to be a mixed blessing, especially when that same technology becomes a servant of the 3Cs.

True, new technology has generated many new media voices, but with increased market competition "it can mean they have to shout louder to be heard, and that can act to coarsen what can be said."

---

[18] Angana Parekh. Responses to participant's questionnaire. UNESCO-NPI Roundtable, Kathmandu 2004
[19] *Adapted from Gender, Conflict & Journalism. A Handbook for South Asia.*

How does this affect the quality of journalism?

More news from more places reach more people more often

↓

Pressure increases on media organizations to be the first with breaking news to compete with rivals

↓

Journalists have to produce more reports faster

↓ ↓ ↓

| Complex political stories are simplified and distorted | Journalists rely on sources they can access quickly and easily | Journalists have less time to investigate stories and check facts |

↓

Professional reporting suffers. Diverse voices and viewpoints – especially of the marginalized – are lost. Gender, ethnic and religious stereotypes are reinforced rather than challenged. The media runs a greater risk of being exploited and manipulated by the powerful. Alternatives to conflict, the roots of the conflict, the underlying interests of the other side, the human dimension, go ignored.

↓

Media becomes more Gender-blind and less Conflict-sensitive

HANDOUT 1: Language, labels and gender
"Blessed are the plural pronouns: for theirs is a kingdom beyond gender. The singular nouns, in the first and second persons, are also blessed: for they are free of the sexist and grammatical heresy 'the masculine includes the feminine'. But the singular pronouns in the third person, alas! have to dwell in the house of alternatives if they should escape the wrath of the feminists"[20]

Task
Go through any Sierra Leonean newspaper or the scripts of any Sierra Leonean newscast and **red circle** the gender insensitive use of language and images.

---

[20] Nimaldsan. Available at www.nwmi.org

Transparency

The Daily Mail ran with 'A Crying Shame.'

MODULE 5: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN ELECTIONS

METHODS: Brainstorming, Case study, Discussions and Group work.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
1. to understand VAWE, its typologies, contexts and impacts;
2. to understand how poor media coverage contributes to VAWE;
3. to evaluate journalists' requisite skills in reporting SGBV in elections (e.g.: harassment of female candidates and threat to women).

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the module:
1. Participants should understand the concept of VAWE, its typologies, contexts and impacts;
2. Participants should understand how poor media coverage contributes to VAWE.
3. Journalists to acquire skills in reporting SGBV in election processes.

SESSION 5.1: Violence Against Women in Political Life
1. **What is Violence against women in political life?**

   This is any act of, or threat of, GBV, resulting in physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering to women, that prevents them from exercising and realizing their political rights, in public or private spaces, including the right to vote and hold public office, to vote in secret and to freely campaign, to associate and assemble, and to enjoy freedom of opinion and expression. Such violence can be perpetrated by family or community members and or by the State.

2. **What is VAWE?**

   VAWE is a form of VAW intended to impact the realization of women's political rights in an electoral context, including women's participation as candidates, voters, activists, party supporters, observers, election workers, or public officials. VAWE prevents women from standing as candidates, winning competitive races for political office, discouraging women from voting or punishing them for being active in the electoral process.

3. **Typologies** of VAWE include psychological, physical, sexual, loss of livelihoods, intimidation, physical or sexual assault, residential displacement, and murder. VAWE can take place across contexts: family, community, or state, in public or private spheres. In any of these contexts, acts of VAW become acts of electoral violence when they negatively impact women's participation in an electoral process and the realization of women's political rights.[1]

SEQUENCE:
Activity 1:
(a) Discuss the situation of VAW in Sierra Leonean politics (b) Identify the typologies of VAWE and contextualize the realities with evidence across communities in Sierra Leone (c) Essential points to make and materials to be used are described below:

Materials:
+ 'Election Violence makes a Comeback in Sierra Leone'
+ Transparencies and/or other material prepared in advance by a participant in collaboration with the facilitator.

SESSION 5.2: VAWE Media Report Exemplar in Sierra Leone

Election Violence makes a Comeback in Sierra Leone[21]
By Abdul Rashid Thomas

Police in Sierra Leone have been engaging in fierce street battles with youths this afternoon in the Eastern District of Kenema, after serious violence broke out between supporters of the APC party and the SLPP. There are reports of serious injuries, though so far, the number of deaths remain uncertain.

This wave of political violence comes less than 24 hours after the result of the presidential runoff election between the APC and SLPP was last night announced and the winner – the Retired Brigadier and opposition SLPP candidate – Julius Maada Bio, was declared the winner with a three-percentage point lead.

Until last night's orgy of violence by the supporters of both political parties – APC and SLPP, which took place in the central business district of the capital Freetown, Sierra Leone's 2018 elections had been hailed by international observers as relatively peaceful.

It is not clear what sparked the rioting in central Freetown last night, but it is alleged that supporters of the newly elected president – Julius Maada Bio, took the law into their own hands when they attacked and destroyed hundreds of makeshift market stalls used by street traders.

Although street trading is illegal in the business district of the capital, enforcement of the law by the police has been weak, leading to very serious vehicle and pedestrian traffic difficulties.

The destruction of the street traders' market stalls has been condemned by all sides. And tonight, there are calls for those responsible to be brought to justice, and a permanent location found for housing of the street traders…

Commenting on the attack on street traders' stalls by a rampaging mob in Freetown, a prominent APC member – Dr Sylvia Olayinka Blyden said: "The SLPP supporters are saying they want no more street trading to keep the city clean. I think the new president should step in and resolve this by finding them a nice selling location. In as much as the SLPP supporters may be right, we should also recognize that the economy is damaged, and these market women have to survive too.

"I strongly condemn the abrupt destruction of economic livelihood of lower income women last night by thugs supporting the ruling SLPP Government of President Julius Maada Bio. The destruction of market stalls and threats against those poor women who are their families' breadwinners is just sickening. And it appears to have well organized undertones. It was not a spontaneous event. If even you wanted them removed, it should never be without alternative arrangements put in place. So, I strongly condemn the abrupt destruction of market street trading stalls and threats against women breadwinners without alternative arrangements yet put in place. I hope we are not going to experience any more of such unfortunate actions. APC lost a chunk of support when similar video images appeared of women being displaced in Aberdeen in the year 2015 by the demolition squad. Don't take citizens for granted".

---

[21] Extracted from: Thomas, A. R. (2018, April 5). 'Election Violence makes a comeback in Sierra Leone'. *Sierra Leone Telegraph*. https://www.thesierraleonetelegraph.com/election-violence-makes-a-comeback-in-sierra-leone/

Activity 2:
(a) Discuss the ingredients of the above news article on election violence come back in Sierra Leone and the status of women as news sources in reporting VAWE in the country.
(b) Identify some VAWE media reports in Sierra Leone and discuss the emergent issues
(c) Essential points to make and materials to be used are described below:

SESSION 5.3: Actions to prevent/mitigate VAWE

> Media biases and coverage can heighten public awareness and actions to mitigate VAWE. However, that is constrained by gender-based stereotypes perpetuated in the media. The general lack of awareness of, and reporting about, VAWE means it is not well reported or investigated by the media, or it is eclipsed by reporting on physical electoral violence that is more readily verifiable. Women are also generally underrepresented as assignment editors, producers and managers in news media. Thus, it is mostly men who set the agenda on what constitutes news and how news are reported in everyday production.[22]

Summary of actions that can be taken to mitigate VAWE in the electoral cycle:
- Awareness raising campaigns to prevent VAWE
- Commitment by the media to actively report on VAWE
- Capacity building for media on VAWE
- Media monitoring for gender bias
- Adapt training programmes to introduce VAWE to increase knowledge
- Civic outreach materials adaptation to the issues of VAWE
- Engagement with legislators and parliamentary networks
- Engagement with men as allies and influential advocates

Activity 3:
Discuss actions that participants would initiate or collaborate on to mitigate VAWE in Sierra Leone.

Transparency No. 1
Discuss contentious issues surrounding media reporting on VAWE in Sierra Leone.

Evaluation: Arrive at a consensus on the impacts of VAWE on the realization of women's political rights.

NOTE: VAWE impacts on the realization of women's political rights in an electoral context, including participation as candidates, voters, activists, party supporters, observers, election workers, or public officials. The act includes psychological, physical, sexual acts, loss of livelihoods, intimidation, physical or sexual assault, residential displacement, and murder by family, community, or the State, in public or private spheres, negatively impacting on women's participation in an electoral process and the realization of their political rights[23]. Interventions to address VAWE have supported women to contest elections into LGs, to give them an important opportunity to influence local poverty reduction and development policy and ensure that they meet the particular

---

[22] Ballington cited in Ballington, J., Bardall, G., & Borovsky, G. (2017). *Preventing violence against women in elections: A programming guide*. UN Women and UNDP. https://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/undp-contents-publications-preventing-violence-against-women.pdf
[23] Ballington cited in Ballington, J., Bardall, G., & Borovsky, G. (2017). *Preventing violence against women in elections: A programming guide*. UN Women and UNDP. https://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/undp-contents-publications-preventing-violence-against-women.pdf

needs of poor women[24]. Earlier in 2007, as part of the post-war peacebuilding efforts, women's CSOs supported by UN Women launched a violence-free election advocacy campaign, targeting political parties in response to the rise in political violence in the war-torn country[25]. In the cycle for the 2007 elections, both the APC and the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) provided funds for the initiation costs of girls in regions where they campaigned for votes. This essentially endorsed female circumcision at the highest level of office during an election cycle[26]. Meanwhile, evidence suggests that journalists lack requisite skills to report issues of VAWE like harassment of female candidates, threats, and attacks[27]. What requisite skills are required for media reporting of VAWE?

SESSION 5.4: Effective media coverage of VAWE[28]

The media should support peace and gender equality messages ahead of elections[29], during and after election. The media's role in creating peaceful and non-violent elections are multidimensional and it is the responsibility of both media outlets and journalists to mainstream gender sensitive reporting for conflict prevention. This can be attained if:

1. **journalists and media organizations understand/perform their responsibilities and make appropriate pre-election preparations by**
   - being alert and proactive
   - informing and engaging the potential voter and stakeholders, with bias in representing the neglected interests of women
   - providing training for its reporters and journalists who cover election processes so that media staff will be informed on legal aspects, norms, and revisions (if any) to legal framework(s)
   - presenting citizens with alternative proposals for candidates to form a balanced viewpoint, without taking sides
   - promoting transparency and credibility of elections., including in news sourcing by ensuring women voices are not under- or mis-represented
   - It is also important to consider gender participation; inflammatory language by media and candidates; safety of journalists and media organizations, civil society, and candidates;

2. **Public election knowledge is gained from the media:**
   - The public wants and MUST be informed by the media in a non-biased objective, neutral manner
   - The media serves as a link for the voters to know what transpires during election
   - The public wants credible election results in a timely and transparent fashion, and the media should credibly deliver those results accurately and without stirring gender-based, or other forms of suspicions.
   - The media should inform the public on who is competing for office and their manifesto; when, where, and what time the election will take place; and how citizens can vote, but not who they should vote for.

---

[24] Oxfam. (2008, February). Breaking the barriers: Women's Leadership and Participation. *Programme Insights*. Cowley Oxford: Oxfam GB.

[25] Ballington cited in Ballington, J., Bardall, G., & Borovsky, G. (2017). *Preventing violence against women in elections: A programming guide*. UN Women and UNDP. https://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/undp-contents-publications-preventing-violence-against-women.pdf

[26] IRIN News (2007, March 17) 'Female genital mutilation: A vote-winner in Sierra Leone'. http://www.afrol.com/printable_article/15927

[27] UN Women (2018). Sierra Leone Elections 2018: Who makes the news?".

[28] Adapted from: ACE Electoral Knowledge Network. (2014, August 14). The media's role in creating peaceful and non-violent elections. https://aceproject.org/electoral-advice/archive/questions/replies/760375884

[29] Hlatshwayo, G. & James, W. (2019, October 8). Final evaluation of the improving women's participation in political processes as peace building ambassadors project – Sierra Leone. UN Women, UNDP & UNESCO. https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/sierra_leone_irf_217_improving_womens_participation_final_evaluation.pdf

3. **media engagement in and reporting of elections is time framed:**
   + The media should be involved throughout the 'civic social electoral process,' which may exceed the time frames allocated on an electoral process.
   + The media should inform the electoral population before the election period on the content of legal texts and on raising awareness for the development of responsible citizenship.
   + During post-election, the media can contribute by giving information on lessons learnt from the past election process to prepare for the next election.
   + The media should report on the electoral cycle and updates 365 days a year, 24/7.

Activity 4:
Discuss and reach a consensus on what journalists should consider in effectively reporting VAWE during election cycles in Sierra Leone.

MODULE 6: DESIGNING AND BUILDING AN ACTION PLAN

HANDOUT 1: EVALUATION AND ACTION PLAN
1. Indicate six new things you learnt.
2. How will you use this new knowledge in the future?
3. Were the handouts useful?
4. How could this workshop have been improved?
5. Did the workshops run smoothly? Either way, explain why?
6. What aspects of the workshops did not work?
7. What would you want to change?

HANDOUT 2: ACTION PLAN/COMMITMENT FORM (ACTIVITY 1)

Name: _____ Place of Residence:_____

Organizational Affiliation: _____

E-mail address: _____ Phone No._____

Commitment statement

Having participated in this training, I commit to undertake the following actions in my community.

S/No.	Activity	Timeline
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

Signed _____

Date _____

REFERENCES

Primo, N. (2003). *Gender issues in information society.* Paris: UNESCO

Omotoso S. A. (2019). African women and the mass media. In: Yacob-Haliso O., Falola T. (Eds.) *The Palgrave Handbook of African Women's Studies* (pp.1-17), Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-77030-7_51-1