

Gender in Ethiopian Media Landscape



An indicative research report with recommendations for the Fojo-IMS Ethiopia Programme:

“MEDIA REFORM IN A TIME OF CHANGE: PROMOTING JOURNALISM AND DEMOCRACY”

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Addis Ababa, March 2021

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Acronyms

AAU	Addis Ababa University
AMMA	Amhara Mass Media Agency
BDU	Bahir Dar University
EBA	Ethiopian Broadcasting Authority
EBC	Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation
EJA	Ethiopian Journalists Association
EMC	Ethiopian Media Council
EMWA	Ethiopian Media Women Association
EPA	Ethiopian Press Agency
ETV	Ethiopian Television
FBC	Fana Broadcast Corporate
MCC	Media and Communication Center Plc.
MoSHE	Ministry of Science and Higher Education
MoWCY	Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth
MU	Mekelle University
SRTA	South Radio and Television Agency
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Definition of terms and concepts

Editorial decision-making positions: in this research, senior editorial positions include those with overall editorial power, such as editors-in-chief and producers. Mid-level positions include team leader, editor and senior editor. Despite the term “senior editor”, this research categorises this as a mid-level editorial position.

Gender balance: a human resource issue calling for equal participation of women and men in all areas of work (international and national staff at all levels, including at senior positions) and in programmes that agencies initiate or support (e.g. food distribution programmes). Achieving a balance in staffing patterns and creating a working environment that is conducive to a diverse workforce improves the overall effectiveness of our policies and programmes, and will enhance agencies’ capacity to better serve the entire population.

Gender-based violence (GBV): an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between females and males. The nature and extent of specific types of GBV vary across cultures, countries and regions.

Gender bias: making decisions based on gender that result in favoring one gender over the other which often results in contexts that are favoring men and/or boys over women and/or girls.

Gender gap: disproportionate difference between men and women and boys and girls, particularly as reflected in attainment of development goals, access to resources and levels of participation. A gender gap indicates gender inequality.

Gender mainstreaming: the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s, as well as men’s, concerns and experience an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres, such that inequality between men and women is not perpetuated.

Senior management positions: the use of the term is largely defined by the structure of the organisations surveyed, but includes department heads, division heads, deputy directors, directors, and board members.

Sex disaggregated data: data that is cross-classified by sex, presenting information separately for men and women, boys and girls. When data is not disaggregated by sex, it is more difficult to identify real and potential inequalities. Sex-disaggregated data is necessary for effective gender analysis.

Soft news versus hard news: as used in this research, “soft news” is defined as news or programming that is primarily entertaining or personally useful (Zaller, 2003). It could include writing for the society pages, gossip columns, or on general social issues, or producing programming on entertainment and culture. In contrast, hard news is reporting on the latest events and breaking news, which might include changes in the political and economic, or include covering disasters and emergencies.

Executive summary

Fojo Media Institute (Fojo) and International Media Support (IMS) are implementing the programme “Media Reform in a Time of Change - Promoting Journalism and Democracy” in Ethiopia (2020-2023). The programme is supported by Sida and Danida, the international development agencies of Sweden and Denmark. The overall objective of the programme is to enable men and women in Ethiopia to have access to independent and balanced public interest journalism, enabling democratic peaceful citizen engagement and accountable governance. Promoting women's representation in newsrooms, the fair and balanced portrayal of women and men in media content and promoting media access to women are critical to realizing these objectives. The purpose of this study, which was conducted in 2020, was to generate key baseline information and programme recommendations on the state of gender and the media in Ethiopia. It consists of a desk review of available literature; a summary of gender disaggregated data from seven media houses; and the results of 21 interviews and a focus-group discussion with seven informants that speak to several key areas of concern, such as the presence or absence of workplace policies that impact on women, and access to gender training for journalists. A short concluding section overviews the mainstreaming of gender in journalism department in select universities.

This study should be considered indicative, and as a useful reference point for discussion and further research. Research limitations, including its small sample size, meant that it was only able to provide a high-level analysis of gender data and policies in the newsroom, which would benefit from more detailed study of policies and processes in place. The research also occurs against a backdrop of rapid changes in the Ethiopian media landscape, a number of which have occurred since this assessment was finalised. This includes the approval of the country's new media policy in September 2020, and the new media law approved by Parliament in February 2021. Covid-19 has led to the restructuring of several media organisations - some, such as Nahoo TV, ARTs TV and Balageru TV, have appointed women CEOs - and the closure of both private and state media organisations. Meanwhile the war in Tigray has resulted in the shutting down of both private and state media organisations. The results of this study therefore need to be read in light of these changes.

Major findings of this study include:

- This research confirmed an upward trend in number of women journalists working in newsrooms. Over 30% of the journalists employed in the seven surveyed media houses are women. Women are however disproportionately represented in managerial (15%) and editorial decision-making positions (26%) compared to men.
- Most female journalists report on so-called “soft news” topics compared to hard news. Historical and informal preferences for men reporting on certain topics, the gender bias of supervisors, and the personal interests of some women journalists appear to be the key factors determining this. However, in some newsrooms as many women report on hard news topics compared to soft news, while men also work on entertainment, cultural and children's programming. This suggests that the editorial roles in the newsrooms surveyed is not always strictly gendered.
- Most newsrooms lack a gender desk to co-ordinate reporting on women's issues, or to respond to the needs of women journalists in the newsroom. While several newsrooms have adopted gender-sensitive guidelines developed with the help of UN Women, the

extent to which these had been applied in a practical way in newsrooms was unclear. Gender-sensitivity training for journalists in newsrooms is also limited without outside intervention.

- Key workplace policies remain absent in many newsrooms, including policies on sexual harassment, policies that support women journalists with child-care responsibilities, and career development programmes for women journalists. At the same time, existing gender-based media associations and organizations are few and often too weak to support and advocate for gender-sensitive media content and operations.
- An increase in the number of female students enrolled undergraduate studies in journalism and communication departments has been reported in recent years. However, there are few gender-related courses in undergraduate journalism and communications studies.

The following programme intervention areas to improve gender balance in the media resulted from the study. Specific intervention strategies are laid down under 7.2. of this report.

- **The need to create an enabling environment in the newsroom to advance gender equality in media content, programming and operations.** Actions here include motivating newsroom decision-makers to develop gender-sensitive policies, including editorial guidelines and codes of conduct, policies that create a supportive working context for women journalists, including on sexual harassment, and policies that advance women in leadership positions in newsrooms. Newsrooms should also be encouraged to establish gender desks.
- **Build the institutional capacity of media organisations so that they can implement gender policies effectively.** Actions here include advanced gender training for editorial decision-makers, developing the technical capacity for newsrooms to monitor their gender coverage over time, and creating a directory of expert women sources for journalists.
- **Build the capacity of women journalists.** Actions here include designing training and mentoring programmes for women journalists and supporting peer-to-peer mentoring networks amongst women journalists.
- **Strengthen multi-sectoral collaborations and learning.** Actions here include establishing and supporting a multi-stakeholder Technical Gender Advisory Committee; supporting forums for multi-stakeholder engagement; running webinars to learn about best practices; and creating stronger links between media houses and the Media Standing Committee of the House of People's Representatives and the Ministry of Women, Children and the Youth.
- **Build the institutional capacity of EMWA.** A key action here is helping EMWA to redevelop its institutional capacity so that it once again becomes an effective advocacy actor in the media space.
- **Support academic institutions to promote gender perspectives in journalism and communication education curriculums.** Actions here include addressing the absence of gender and media content in undergraduate curriculums, knowledge-sharing, and developing internship programmes with media houses that have a particular focus on gender in the media.

Chapter One: Introduction

The empowerment of women has been a significant part of the political reform process that began in Ethiopia in 2018. Amongst other things, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed appointed women ministers to half the posts in his new cabinet, and in 2019 Meaza Ashenafi, a woman's rights activist, was appointed the first female president of the Supreme Court. The election of Sahle-Work Zewde as the first female president has also raised hopes for gender equality in the country.

Commenting on the formation of his new cabinet, Abiy said that he intended to disprove the old saying that women cannot lead. With particular reference to the important role of the media in shaping perceptions and framing attitudes, he added, "If you look at the experience of other countries like India, the media representation of strong women is what helped women become stronger in the society".¹

According to the Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS, 2016), women make up half of the Ethiopian population. This numerical power, however, has not guaranteed their participation and balanced representation in many spheres of life, including in the media.

Instead past research shows that the country's media has perpetuated deep-rooted stereotypes and prejudices against women - both in the newsroom and in the news produced by media organisations. When women are written about, they are often portrayed as victims, household workers, or the objects of men's desires, while men are depicted as strong leaders, heads of families, decision-makers, and saviours (Seble, 2006; Nardos, 2008). Echoing earlier studies, a recent assessment also found that men were more than twice as likely to appear as sources in the news (Mulatu, 2019).

That these prejudices reflect a broader societal attitude towards women was suggested during the appointment of the women ministers to Abiy's cabinet. Bruktawit and Sarikasis found that Facebook posts during the appointment of the ministers were stereotypical to the extent of implying women's increasing role in politics is "unnatural" (Bruktawit and Sarikasis 2019).

At the same time, the literature reviewed suggests there is a gender imbalance in the number of women employed as journalists and producers, or in top management in media houses - and some analysts have suggested that this is partly responsible for the gender bias in coverage. A review of graduate research at the Centre for Gender Studies in Addis Ababa University (AAU) by Enguday (2018) suggested that although there is an increase of women in the media industry, media production in Ethiopia is still male-dominated, with women comprising less than 30 percent of newsrooms. The review suggested that in major media outlets in Ethiopia there is no minimum quota for women's representation in recruitment or promotions.

There is for example only one woman among the top five leadership positions, and three women at director level, at the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), the national broadcaster, and the second biggest employer of journalists in the country. There are also no women in the top leadership positions at the Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA).

^{1.} Speech by Abiy Ahmed, while he appointed women to half of his government's ministerial posts, October 16, 2018.

There are also few women owners across all types of media in Ethiopia, with *Capital Newspaper*² and the online Addis Standard being exceptions. In broadcast, only five women can be said to have significant share in radio.³

In the last two years, the government has demonstrated commitment and leadership to amend laws and regulations that were governing major political and economic sectors in the country.

Although the detention of bloggers and journalists is still reported - most notably during the World Press Freedom Day in Addis Ababa in May 2019 - the new administration has since 2018 started to open up the media environment.⁴ Journalists who were previously detained were released, and the banning of hundreds of websites, as well as television networks lifted. The Ethiopian Media Council, which was formed as an independent regulatory body in 2016, was also formally recognized as an independent civil society organization in 2019.

In another promising development the government established the Legal and Justice Affairs Advisory Council under the Federal Attorney General's Office in June 2018, with a mandate to examine and provide legal recommendations to reform the justice system and amend contentious laws, including media laws.

The empowerment of women socio-economically and politically is part of this reform agenda. That Ethiopia is making strides in improving gender equality in the country is also reflected in the Global Gender Equality Gap Index, where it was ranked 82 out of 153 countries in 2020, compared to 117 out of 149 in 2018.

Yet the strident measures taken with respect to gender empowerment have only partially trickled down into the country's media operations, both in terms of the strengthening the role and purpose of women journalists in the newsroom, and in the kind of content produced.

This study seeks to provide some impetus for change in the media - both at the legislative level and in practice - and for it to take gender rights seriously. It points to several lacunae both in the current laws, and in the newsroom that require attention for the country's international commitments and the constitutional requirements to be met, to empower women in the workplace, and to improve the professionalism and quality of the country's journalism from a gender perspective.

1.1. Background and rationale to the study

With the change in administration in Ethiopia 2018, and the government's commitment to reform - including the empowerment of women across all spheres of activity - a window of opportunity has been created to advocate for the strengthening of the country's media laws and the practice of journalism from a gender perspective. This opportunity is highlighted by the ongoing legal reform process that has resulted in three draft proclamations being placed before the Parliament, which at the time of writing this report are still open for comment. At

² Capital is among the oldest and credible outlets in the market.

³ Sheger, Awash, Tsedey, Ahadu, and Ethio FM radios have women shareholders. Capital, it the only newspaper solely owned by a woman.

⁴ <https://freedomhouse.org/country/ethiopia/freedom-world/2020>

the same time, the lessening of restrictions on civil society organisations has allowed journalists to become more proactive in the articulation of their needs and rights. At least two new media-related associations have been formed in as many years, alongside the relatively recent formation of the Ethiopian Media Council as an independent self-regulatory body which has now been granted non-profit status. This period of transition offers an opportunity for gender-rights advocates to leverage the current momentum to achieve a more gender-responsive media in Ethiopia, that both empowers women in the newsroom, and helps to create a more gender equal society.

In light of this, Fojo Media Institute (Fojo) and International Media Support aims to have a deeper understanding of gender equality in Ethiopia's media landscape through scrutinizing women representation in the news media and the media law reform process, gender balance in the journalism profession and media workforce as well as the promotion of gender-sensitive journalism, noting gaps that will inform the "Media Reform in a Time of Change: Promoting Journalism and Democracy program" including recommendations for scoping and prioritizing intervention points.

1.2. Purpose and objectives of the baseline study

The main purpose of this study is to generate key baseline information and recommend relevant interventions for Fojo-IMS to inform the programme's actions towards advancing gender equality in the media using the opportune time of the media reform process. The specific objectives of the study include:

- To provide an overview of the state of gender equality and the media in Ethiopia;
- To provide a quantitative baseline of the number of women journalists working in newsrooms, their levels of seniority (including their participation in management structures), and to suggest the extent to which gender norms determine the kind of issues women are likely to report on;
- To provide a qualitative account of workplace policies and process in place that support the empowerment of women in the newsroom.
- To provide recommendations on actions required to promote a gender-responsive media in Ethiopia.

1.3. Methodology

This study primarily relied on key informant interviews, and a focus group discussion to generate up-to-date information about gender and the media in Ethiopia. A desk review of existing research on the issue provided data as background. However, available literature was used to support the analysis of data obtained through key informant interviews and focus group discussion, and to understand the changes and trends of gender balance in Ethiopia's media landscape.

Twenty-one telephonic and face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted. Purposively targeted interviewees were drawn from public and privately-owned broadcast and print media houses; gender-focused media associations, selected academic institutions,

national media regulatory body, and the Media Law Working Group. Thirteen women and eight men made up the interview sample.

During selection of informants, deliberate attempts were made to ensure the sample reflected the diversity in the Ethiopian media landscape taking into consideration media types (broadcast and print), media ownership (public and privately owned), audience size and geographic coverage, as well as federal and regional representation. A list of Key informants is attached as Annex 1.

A focus group discussion was conducted virtually via Zoom with seven female participants, that included journalists, gender and media experts, and women's right advocates to capture more complete evidence and views on how gender balance in the media is being perceived and practiced in Ethiopia. A list of focus group participants can be found in Annex 2.

Data on the newsroom workforce, journalists in editorial decision-making and senior management positions was collected through a tailored survey questionnaire from the largest employers of journalists in the country, and a mix between broadcast and print news media. Two private sector media houses are included for comparative purpose, although both are relatively small employers of journalists. The media organisations surveyed were (state) Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC), Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC), Amhara Mass Media Agency (AMMA), South Radio and Television Agency (SRTA), and Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA); and (private) Sheger 102.1 FM Radio and Media and Communications Center (MCC). Together these account for over 85% of all journalists employed in Ethiopia.

For the number of journalists employed by each selected media organization, please see Chapter 3.

1.4. Structure of the report

The report is divided into seven sections. Following the Introduction (which includes methodological considerations), Chapter 2 provides an overview of available literature into gender and the media in Ethiopia. Chapter 3 presents quantitative and qualitative data findings of gender in the newsroom. Chapter 4 offers a brief overview of gender mainstreaming in universities. The concluding Chapter 5 summarises key findings and offers recommendations for further action.

1.5. Limitations of the study

Restrictions imposed due to the COVID19 pandemic limited face-to-face interaction with interviewees and focus-group participants which delayed the data collection process. As a result, the data collection was mainly relied on phone-based interviews with the key informants. The focus-group discussion was held through Zoom, an online platform for video and audio conferencing.

This research should be considered suggestive only. While quantitative data was provided by the media organisations under review, it was not possible to verify this data, or to ensure that the categories were consistently applied by the respondents. At the same time, discussions on workplace policies in place were largely anecdotal, and there remains scope for further systematic research in media organisations to determine the exact extent to which gender-sensitive practices and policies have been implemented in the organisations. The results of the interviews nevertheless point to areas where this research could be extended. This study also did not consider online news media specifically, focusing instead on broadcast and print

newsrooms. There therefore remains scope for further research into online news production from a gender perspective.

1.6. Ethical considerations

Prior to the data collection, an informed consent form to explain purpose of the study was provided to all key informants and focus group discussion participants to guarantee their confidentiality. If a comment is attributed to an interviewee, it is through their consent.

Chapter Two: Literature review - Gender and the media in Ethiopia

2.1. The representation of women in the media

Although women make up half of the Ethiopian population, several research findings consistently show that women are misrepresented and underrepresented in media content (Abebech, 2004; Mesay, 2003 quoted by Seble, 2006; Tigist, 2010; Agaredech, 2013; Skjerdal, 2012 and 2017; Etsegenet 2016; Moges 2019). Studies suggest that mainstream media news-making continues to rely on men as information sources and experts, while often reinforcing patriarchal perceptions that women are powerless and soft. Ethiopian women are frequently portrayed as housewives, mothers, and victims of violence. Even though the stereotypes of women as caregivers are perceived dominantly as positive, it is stereotypical in that it does not reflect women's multifaceted experiences and aspirations. As a result the harmful stereotypical portrayal of women in the media strengthens societal expectations on how women should behave or act based on their gender.

A rapid assessment (Mulatu, 2019) of the media environment in 2019 found that men were more than twice as likely to appear as sources in the news (203 women sources were identified compared to 480 male sources in the surveyed media over a three-month period).⁵ Earlier studies suggest an even worse ratio of gender bias in news sources. A comprehensive study conducted on two highly circulated and read newspapers, the state-owned *Addis Zemen* and the private *Addis Admass*, indicated that far fewer women were sourced in news reports compared to men (59,1% versus 2,9% for individual female sources in *Addis Zemen*, and 32,6% versus 8,8% in *Addis Admass*).⁶ Interestingly, outside the news reporting category, women were the sources of a higher number of profile articles, and in the case of the state-run newspaper, more women were sourced for profiles compared to men (66,7% female sources versus only 13,3% men). However, overall the balance of sources was in the favour of men in both publications, 53% versus 5,3% in *Addis Zemen*, and 54,3% versus 8,3% in *Addis Admass*. (Agaredech, 2013). This can be compared to an earlier content analysis of over 600 news stories published in *Addis Zemen* and *Reporter* which showed that men represented 68,9% of news sources while women represented only 8% of the sources⁷ (Seble, 2006). A more recent study of the *Ethiopian Herald* and *The Reporter* English newspapers showed that men and women news sources represented 90.4% and 9.6% respectively (Selamawit, 2016).

Studies suggest there is some variability in the status of women accessed as sources in the media, with some showing a clear gender gap in social role. For example, the 2016 study indicated that from the total news sources used in *The Reporter* and the *Ethiopian Herald* newspapers, of the government officials quoted, only 5.7% of them were women (Selamawit, 2016). The 2013 study by Agaredech showed that only a third of the female professional sources were women (compared to more than two-thirds of the male sources) in *Addis Zemen*. The

⁵ The assessment analysed content in mainstream media (television and newspapers) in four languages: Amharic, Oromiffa, English, and Tigrigna. It also looked at online media, which it defined as Facebook and Youtube, where it found that "online writers" quoted far fewer women than mainstream media (just under 50 women were quoted compared to just under 200 men).

⁶ The remaining percentages are for categories such as "neutral", "multiple sources" and women in groups.

⁷ The rest are made up of "groups/individuals", "institutions/organisations" or "not stated".

study also found that nearly half (46,5%) of the women quoted were professionals in *Addis Admass* (compared to 64,6% of the male sources), and as a percentage of each gender category women were represented strongly both as officials and investors compared to men in both newspapers. However, other studies found that when depicted as professional, women are often described as nurses and secretaries while male counterparts are portrayed as innovators, leaders, and heroes (Etsegenet 2016).

Research also found a gender gap in the use of images. Research into the inclusion of photos in news stories published in several prominent newspapers showed that photographs of women are published less frequently compared to men, and that many women are portrayed as having lower-class status, as being observers rather than participants, as lacking agency and power, or being victims. For example, the findings of an analysis of photos used with news stories by Seble (2006) showed that men appeared in 14 percent of the lead-in photos published in *Addis Zemen* and *The Reporter* newspapers, while women only in two percent. Nardos (2005) meanwhile found that photos of women were mostly included with human interest stories. There were also more photos of women in domestic roles and as victims than in professional and political roles.

A study by Roman (2014) assessed the representation of women in photography by analyzing photos published in *Addis Zemen* and *The Ethiopian Herald*. The findings show that women are more frequently portrayed as inferior, with lower-class occupational statuses, while men are portrayed as superiors with higher status such as orators and leaders. She also found that women are often portrayed as passive and observant rather than active contributors during events such as conferences.

Even publications aimed specifically at women can be stereotypical in that they do not reflect women's multifaceted experiences and aspirations. *Kalkidan Magazine*, the first magazine in Ethiopia published as 'women's magazine', was researched in two studies. The publishers said they started the magazine to highlight social issues and problems faced by women in the society. However, as Tereza (2007) found in her reception study, a focus on celebrities, fashion, and matters of love, did not match the objectives of the magazine nor the lived reality of women in society. The research found that the magazine is more likely to appeal to women with a lower-level of education, than to more educated women. Educated readers generally felt unsatisfied with the magazine content, as they felt that it lacked relevance to their real lives. Gubae (2009) meanwhile found that there was a need for a diversification in the portrayal of women's images, rather than just focusing on beauty.

A key area of concern for gender rights activists is research that shows that women are more likely to be represented as victims than men. Agaredech (2013) found that in *Addis Admass*, just over 9% of the women sources were victims (compared to 1,1% of the male sources). In *Addis Zemen* 16,8% of the female sources were victims, compared to 1,1% of the male sources. While other studies (Tigist, 2010, Martha 2006, Biruktawit, 2008) have produced similar findings, the framing of gender-based violence and the nature of its reporting was also found to be problematic. For example, women who are victims of rape are sometimes blamed and stigmatized by the media (Kedir 2016: 37 Quoted in a Study by Fojo, 2017).

Research on coverage of domestic violence in the media (Martha, 2006) noted that although a new law on domestic violence was enacted in May 2005, there seems to be a significant lack of awareness about this law among media editors. Most editors were not aware of the severity of the threat domestic violence poses to many women, in terms of health, economic and societal costs. There is a tendency to attach more weight to rape, female genital mutilations and other

forms of violence against women. The research showed that domestic violence is generally considered a ‘women’s issue’ to be addressed solely by women’s programmes and forums, and usually only becomes newsworthy either when the perpetrators of such acts are legally convicted or when the violence is so grave that it has led to death or when a woman has been severely injured. Moreover the study concluded that editors, in general, maintain a sceptical attitude towards organizations that work on women-related issues.

Research by Biruktawit (2008), which focused on three newspapers namely, *Police Ena Ermijaw*, *Medical*, and *Addis Admass*, found that most media news reported gender-based crimes and court trials, but that little was done to educate the public about violence against women. Few experts, such as social workers, psychologists or doctors, were quoted in the news stories. The most dominant frames employed by the newspapers when reporting on gender-based violence were human interest and empathy. Solutions mostly suggested for gender-based violence were government action and societal responsibility. The study also suggested that women journalists were also more likely to want to report on issues to do with gender-based violence.

Studies highlighted the general absence or underrepresentation of women in various social, economic, and political spheres as major factors that have contributed to the existing underrepresentation of women in news media content (Nardos 2005; Seble 2006; & Emawayish 2019). Due to a lack of awareness in gender-sensitive news sourcing and reporting among journalists, media professionals, in such circumstances, often focus on targeting and quoting men sources resulting in women’s voices being less heard. As a result, journalists tend to perpetuate the existing patterns of inequality between women and men in society at large.

Another important point that helps to understand the underrepresentation of women in media is news sourcing and newsgathering techniques. A study conducted at Ethiopian Television (ETV) shows that invitations to prescheduled media events are the predominant sources of news than that of reporter-initiated news (Getachew, 2006). The same study indicated that government sources, particularly from the executive body, the legislature (the parliament), and the judiciary (the court and police) are the major sources compared to other news sources accessed at the station. However, senior government officials and those in decision-making positions are mostly men. Therefore, any journalist assigned to report news from these sources will have a little opportunity not to perpetuate gender biases in representativity in their news stories. While the study was conducted at a time when the seats held by women in parliament was only just over 21%, as from Bruktawit and Sarikasis (2019) suggest, while this has been improving over time, it has been at a lethargic pace.

The lower number of women working in the media workforce has been the most widely suggested reason in the existing research. Along these lines, two types of arguments dominate the reviewed literature. Some researchers such as have argued that the increased presence of women journalists in the media houses including in decision-making positions will automatically contribute to the fair and balanced portrayal of women in media content, both as news sources and subjects (Nardos 2005; Seble 2006; Emawayish 2019). However, others have criticized this view and argued that the presence of women journalists in the workforce did not ensure positive and adequate representation of women in media content (Agaredech, 2013). The former gives little or no attention to the contribution of other vital factors such as institutional policy, practice, and commitment to this inequality compared to the latter.

Creating an equal opportunity for more women journalists to enter the media workforce is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to realize gender-equality outcomes in media content (Agaredech, 2013). Interventions informed by the first assumption fail to address underlying causes of the problem for two reasons. First, focusing on increasing the number of women in the media work force as the only solution to improving the coverage of women in the media can mean that the need for effective gender-sensitive in-house policies as well as building the institutional capacity of women to advance gender equality in operations and at editorial levels are ignored. Second, these efforts are likely to ignore the role and contribution male media professionals could play in advancing gender equality in the media. Given their dominance in the country's media workforce, if supported by effective internal gender-sensitive policy and working guidelines, men journalists can be potential change agents.

2.2. Gender balance in the Ethiopia media workforce, management, and ownership

2.2.1. Gender balance in the media workforce

This section presents findings from studies on the gender balance in the media workforce in Ethiopia, including in decision-making positions. Studies suggest a sharp upward trend in the number of women employed in media houses (Azeb, 2017; Skjerdal, 2017). A recent study (Skjerdal, 2017) that included 350 reporters and editors from 27 media companies representing various state and privately-owned broadcast and print media houses found that men and women represent 71% and 29% of the media workforce respectively. This can be compared to previous studies which reported that the proportion of women employed in newsrooms was between 14% and 17% (Agaredech, 2003; Mengistu, 2007) almost a decade ago; which means the number of women employed has nearly doubled in recent years. One possible explanation for the increase could be that more female students are now enrolling in journalism courses at universities, where the gender balance is better than in most media organizations (Skjerdal, 2017; Mengistu, 2007).

Most media outlets assessed by Initiative Africa in May 2019 do not have guidelines that promote plurality and inclusiveness (gender, ethnicity, minority languages, and social groups) in the industry. Instead the proportion of men and women journalists employed appears to vary across media institutions depending on the type and ownership status of the media. There seems to be consensus in the reviewed literature regarding the relatively higher presence of women in broadcast media compared to print media (Abebech, 2007; Mengistu, 2007; Rahel, 2010). Some researchers such as Mengistu (2007) have argued that for women journalists it is more challenging to enter, stay, and succeed in print than in broadcast media, while others associate the problem with the sharp decrease in the number of print media in the country over the years (Agaredech, 2013). Accordingly, the comparatively low number of women journalists working in print corresponds with the decline in the number of print media outlets in the country, and the shrinking print newsrooms. Although several newspapers and magazines joined the market in the past two decades, only a few have survived (Ibid).

The number of women in media leadership and decision-making positions in Ethiopia is low relative to their number in the workforce (Skjerdal, 2017). Men are well represented in top and

middle management, while women are more strongly represented in positions such as producers, reporters and news writers (Ibid). Despite an increasing number of women graduating from academic institutions and entering media houses, most women are often restricted to middle management positions, and rarely achieve higher leadership positions (Ibid). A study conducted by Abebech (2007) on six media companies representing various broadcast and print media houses revealed that women and men holding the positions of editor and above accounted for 4% and 27% respectively. Due to the existing gender imbalance in leadership positions, some studies suggest that women's roles in influencing editorial decisions is negligible (Emawaysh, 2019; Selamawit, 2016).

Among government-owned media organizations, Addis Media Network is a pioneer in having appointed a female leader, and is the first to replace the outgoing female leader with another. Both Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) and *Ethiopian Broadcasting Service* (EBS), an *Ethiopian* privately owned satellite TV channel, have female deputy directors. There are few women media owners in Ethiopia, with only one woman-owned digital magazine (Addis Standard). The radio broadcast sector has five women with significant shareholdings⁸, while there is only one newspaper in the market solely owned by a female investor - *Capital Newspaper*⁹. Among women radio owners in the media industry, only one (from Sheger FM) holds a leadership position and engages in content production. Women ownership in the television sector is minimal, with only Nahoo TV claiming to have a woman shareholder.

The majority of women employed in newsrooms were also young (below the age of thirty). Consequently, women have less work experience compared to men in most media houses. Regarding marital status, research found that two-thirds of the total number of female journalists surveyed were single (Abebech, 2007; Skjerdal, 2017).

A high proportion of younger and less experienced women journalists could indicate that women leave the profession sooner than men do (Skjerdal, 2017). An overview of the institutional practices, working conditions, and criteria for the promotion of journalists suggest that the pressure of needing to maintain a work-life balance often limit the ability of women to thrive professionally over time (Abebech, 2007; Seble, 2006).

2.2.2. Gender equality in working conditions and division of work in media houses

Although the overall difference in remuneration for media professionals across media types is insignificant, salaries were found to be generally better for journalists working in the private sector media - specifically satellite television stations and magazines - than in the state media (Skjerdal, 2012). On the other hand, a notable gender pay gap for media professionals has been observed, suggesting women on average earn less than their male counterparts. This is mainly because they disproportionately hold lower positions in media houses. However no disparity between the remuneration of women and men journalists working in the same positions was found (Skjerdal, 2017).

One study found that majority of men and women journalists in state-owned media houses have a low level of job satisfaction (Abebech, 2007). As a result, journalists leave their organization and even, in some circumstances, the profession. The same research indicated that women

⁸ Sheger, Awash, Tsedey, Ahadu, and Ethio FM radios have women shareholders. Capital, it the only newspaper solely owned by a woman.

⁹ Capital is among the oldest and credible outlets in the market.

were more dissatisfied than men with respect to the working conditions in state media houses, such as practices when it came to staff promotion, as well as the nature of their work. As mentioned, women have the additional burden of maintaining a work-life balance (Abebech, 2007; Emawaysh, 2019).

Azeb (2017) found that women journalists in privately owned print media such as *Addis Admas*, *Reporter*, *Fortune*, and *Capital* have professional autonomy in the selection of issues or topics they wish to cover, and sources of information their use, and as a result they experience more professional satisfaction. Skjerdal (2017) found that most Ethiopian journalists regard themselves as generalists, which means they do not specialize in any particular issue, but can be assigned to report on a range of issues. His research showed that there is no difference in this along gender lines. A quarter of women and men journalists nevertheless said that they focused on one reporting area (or beat).

Gender differences were noted in some of the most popular beats such as news, development, politics, the economy, current affairs, sports, and entertainment (Skjerdal 2017). Men dominated politics and economics and reported sport exclusively, while women dominated entertainment and culture, and exclusively covered gender-related issues. The same study indicated that both genders have comparable participation in reporting agriculture, development, education, health, and social issues. This result differed to research by Emawaysh (2019) that found that mostly women journalists covered health, social issues, and entertainment, which are traditionally termed 'soft stories', and are less likely to report on agriculture, development, politics, the economy, and education, which are characterized as 'hard stories'. The difference between these two findings may lie in the scope and size of the research sample. The former involved a large and diverse sample size both in terms of respondents and diversity of media houses such as state and privately-owned broadcast and print media, while the latter had a narrow scope focusing on a few prominent print media houses.

Some researchers found that privately-owned media houses seemed to show more flexibility in assigning men or women to different topics (AlemSeged, 2005; Abebech, 2007). Azeb (2017), for instance, found that there is relatively even reporting of various genres by women journalists in privately owned print media. With respect to state-run media, Frehiwot (2014) found that the government-owned Amharic weekly *Addis Zemen* was an exception, and was unique in that both male and female journalists covered economic and political issues. These findings suggest that there is high degree of variability in the coverage of hard and soft news stories by women and men journalists across media houses.

Selamawit (2016) has suggested that although there were no written rules and practices that govern the assignment of journalists to specific news stories based on gender, informal practices and misperceptions of the capacity of women journalist to deliver quality work in the hard news genre influences the division of work in newsrooms. On the other hand, individual factors such as interest and experience are also equally important in underpinning the segregation of work in media houses (Abebech, 2007). For this reason, women tend to choose to report on soft news stories in many cases. Nevertheless ample evidence has demonstrated comparable or even better performance by women journalists compared to men when reporting hard news (Frehiwot, 2014; Azeb, 2017).

2.3. Women as media consumers

While the portrayal of women in the media, and a positive work environment for women journalists are crucial, there also remains much work to be done in empowering women as media consumers.

Ethiopian women do not have adequate access to the media and quality information that may empower them to play a significant role in society. Research has shown that access to all types of media is lower among women, the elderly, and people living in rural areas (BBCMA 2020). Most women rely on word-of-mouth sources of information rather than of media. Women in rural parts of the country report better access to radio than TV (BBC MA 2020, Etsegenet 2016).

According to Etsegenet (2016, p:29-34), even women with adequate knowledge and income do not use the internet and other available communication technologies as often as men because they are burdened with taking care of their families and household routines.

Women are also more likely to say they never follow news and current affairs than men. An audience survey conducted in five selected regions¹⁰ shows that 49% of women respondents never follow news and current affairs in the media. The same audience survey report by the BBC MA highlights that the general public desires to get quality information to improve their skills and to make an informed decision on issues that matter most. Similarly, women in general, and rural women in particular, were found to be interested in listening and participating in radio programmes specifically designed to address gender relations and women issues¹¹.

¹⁰ Amhara, Oromia, Tigray, SNNP, Addis Ababa

¹¹ Gender Audit of Ethiopian Broadcast Media. Initiative Africa, May 2019

Chapter Three: Gender in the newsroom

The first three sections to this chapter are based primarily on the quantitative data obtained from the surveyed media organisations. These outline the gender balance in the journalist workforce at these organisations, the number of women employed in editorial decision-making positions and at the managerial level, and the genre of news stories women are more likely to report on. These sections are followed by a qualitative overview of gender-sensitive workplace policies in place, including in editorial guidelines and training for reporting on women. The qualitative data is the result of the interviews and focus-group discussion conducted as part of this research and should be taken as indicative of areas that require further attention, whether through more detailed research or programme interventions.

3.1. Current editorial staffing

The results from the survey suggest that media houses remain largely dominated by male journalists in terms of staffing, regardless of media type and ownership. However, as also found by Skjerdal (2017), there is a notable upward trend in the number of women journalists working in newsrooms. Women journalists make up 31% of the total number of journalists in the surveyed media houses (Table 1), compared to some 17% reported by earlier studies. Our survey suggests that more women journalists tend to work in broadcast media compared to print news media, and that woman journalists make up a smaller percentage of the total workforce in print news compared to broadcast. This is consistent with the findings of the desk review.

Table 1. Current staffing of journalists in surveyed media

Media	Male	Female	Total	Percentage	
				Male	Female
FBC	274	111	385	71%	29%
EBC	179	100	279	64%	36%
AMMA	153	94	247	62%	38%
SRTA	83	32	115	72%	28%
Sheger FM 102.1 Radio	14	6	20	70%	30%
EPA	96	22	118	81%	19%
MCC	24	3	27	89%	11%
Total	823	368	1,191	69%	31%

Source: quantitative data gathered from the surveyed media during the data collection

As the biggest employer of journalists in Ethiopia, the parastatal Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC) employs a total of 385 journalists, of which 111 (29%) are women. The public broadcaster, EBC, is the second biggest employer of journalists in the country, and employs 279 journalists of which 100 (36%) are women. Regional state-owned media Amhara Mass Media Agency (AMMA) and South Radio and Television Agency (SRTA) are also big employers in the media industry. AMMA, based in Bahir Dar, employs a total of 240 journalists with 88 (37%) women who work across its TV, radio, newspaper and online platforms. SRTA, based in Hawassa, employs 115 journalists, of which 32 (28%) are women. The private sector is a comparatively smaller

employer of journalists in Ethiopia. Of the surveyed broadcast media, 20 (30% female) radio journalists are currently employed by Sheger 102.1 FM Radio.

When it comes to print news, the percentage of women journalists employed is notably lower. The state-run Ethiopian Press Agency (EPA) employs 118 journalists across its newspaper titles and only 18% of them are women. Currently, 27 journalists work for the Media and Communication Center (MCC), of which only 3 (11%) are women.

3.2. Gender balance in decision-making positions

Men dominate both senior management and editorial decision-making positions in all the media houses surveyed, with notably fewer women occupying senior management positions. Overall, women hold 15% of senior management positions, and 26% of editorial decision-making positions amongst the surveyed media. However, at one media house, the ratio of women in senior management dropped as low as one out of 23 positions. The highest ratio reported was at Sheger FM, which although it has a lower number of senior managerial positions to fill, something of gender parity is observed.

There is meaningful variation between broadcast and print media, particularly in editorial decision-making positions, which stands at 27% and 17% respectively. The lower number of women in senior editor positions at newspapers perhaps reflects the lower percentage of women journalists employed in the print news industry overall.

3.2.1. Women in senior management positions

The following graph summarizes the gender composition of senior management positions across surveyed media houses.

Table 3: Women in senior management positions

	Male	Female	Total
FBC	24	1	25
EBC	51	13	64
Amma	32	3	35
SRTA	12	2	14
Sheger FM	4	3	7
EPA	10	3	13
MCC	10	1	11

Given the government’s commitment to gender empowerment in the formal sector and political sphere, it is notable that state-aligned media houses still show a marked gender disparity in women appointed to senior management positions - with in some instances boards being made up of men only.

Of the surveyed media houses, there were the fewest women in senior management positions (including board members) at FBC. Only one out of 25 of the senior management team there is female (she holds a department head position). All other positions are held by men (i.e. five department heads, five division heads, five deputy directors, two directors, and seven board members).

EBC’s senior management fares better with respect to the male-female ratio. From a total of 64 senior management positions at the broadcaster, 13 (20%) are female. It has three female board members (out of nine), one female among its four deputy directors, two females out of 14 division heads and seven females amongst its 39 department heads.

A similar picture emerges when considering the two state-owned regional broadcasters surveyed for this study. At AMMA women hold three (9%) of the 35 senior management positions. Two of the three women are department heads (there are 16 department heads in total), while one woman occupies the five division head positions available. As with FBC, all nine board members are men, while the rest of the senior positions - the directorship and four deputy director positions - and are held by men. Women only hold two out of 14 senior management positions in SRTA - both of these as board members.

Of the two private media companies surveyed, Sheger FM has reasonably stronger male-female ratio for senior management positions. Three out of seven senior positions are occupied by women, although the total number of staff is small when compared with the other surveyed media organisations.

Although the state-run newspapers at EPA employ a notable number of journalists (nearly 120), only three out of 13 senior positions are currently occupied by women: two of these are board positions, while one is a deputy directorship. At MCC, there are 11 senior management positions and only one is held by a woman (one out of seven division head positions). Other key positions, including CEO and department heads, are also occupied by men.

3.2.2. Women in editorial decision-making positions

When it comes to women in editorial decision-making positions across the surveyed media, a somewhat stronger picture emerges. It is particularly noteworthy that more women than men occupy senior editorial positions at FBC. The gender breakdown at the media organisations surveyed is summarized in the graph below.

Table 3: Women in editorial decision-making positions

	Male	Female	Total
FBC	71	48	119
EBC	155	31	186
Amma	135	49	184
SRTA	102	62	164
Sheger FM	7	1	8
EPA	46	11	57
MCC	14	1	15

Despite having few women in managerial positions at FBC, and none on its board, women are strongly represented in mid-higher editorial levels at the parastatal. The broadcaster has a total of 119 editorial decision-making positions, with 48 of them (40%) taken up by women. Of these, 20 (59%) are in senior positions (out of a possible 34 senior editorial positions at the broadcaster), while 28 (33%) are in the mid-level positions such as team leader, editor and

senior editor (out of a possible of 85 positions). However, women only occupy three (17%) out of 17 possible positions at the executive producer level.

At EBC women hold 31 (17%) of the 186 editorial decision-making positions. Of these, women hold six (16%) positions out of 37 senior editorial positions, including one as producer, three as deputy-editors-in-chief and two as executive producers. Women also hold 25 (16%) out of 149 mid-level editorial positions.

At the regional state broadcaster AMMA, 32 women (25%) hold mid-level editorial positions (editors and team leaders) out of a possible 127 positions. At SRTA, women hold 62 (38%) out of 164 editorial decision-making positions: they occupy 17 (33%) of 52 senior and 45 (40%) of 112 mid-level positions.

Only one out of eight possible editorial positions at Sheger FM is held by a woman, in contrast to the strong influence women have in managerial positions at the broadcaster.

Both the print media houses surveyed show a comparatively weaker representativity of women in editorial decision-making positions. At the state-owned EPA, women hold 11 (19%) of the 57 editorial positions at its newspapers, only two out of 20 senior positions (deputy- editors-in-chief) and nine of the 37 mid-level positions (particularly senior editor and editor). EPA’s Amharic daily, *Addis Zemen*, appointed its first female deputy-editor-in chief in 2020. MCC has only one woman in the 15 editorial decision-making positions available at the newspaper house.

3.3. Gender and reporting ‘beats’

While past research showed a tendency for more women journalists to report on so-called “soft news” compared to hard news, data made available to us suggests a more nuanced picture. At MCC’s Amharic and English language newspapers there appears to be a clear gender divide in the kinds of stories covered by journalists. All journalists (7) focusing on hard news beats are men, while two women write the social column that deals with women’s, children’s and health issues. (One male works on arts and cultural issues - a tendency for men to work on arts and culture beats was also found at other organisations). However, this extreme - where no women are said to report hard news stories - should be balanced by the gender balance reported at Sheger FM, which claims to have more women reporting on topics such as politics and science than men.

Quantitative data made available from the two biggest employers of journalists in the country - FBC and EBC - is included in the table below.

Table 2: Gender breakdown - hard versus soft news

		Male*	Female*
FBC	Hard news	41	16
	‘Soft news’	26	52
EBC	Hard news	60	19
	‘Soft news’	15	18

*Number of journalists

A few observations can be made from this data. At FBC, out of 135 journalists who follow beats, 57 of them work in the hard news category. The majority of them (41 or 71%) are male while 16 (29%) are female. When it comes to soft news, from a total of 78 journalists, 52 (66%) are female journalists compared to 26 (34%) male.

While a senior editor at FBC interviewed for this study felt that female journalists mostly focus on social issues traditionally considered 'soft' - about twice as many women report on soft news issues compared to men - it is worth noting that the total of 29% of women journalists working in the hard news category is close to the percentage total of the number of women journalists working at the organisation. In other words, the reason for fewer women working on hard news topics than men could also be influenced by fewer women journalists working at the news organisation overall, rather than because of gendered news roles. In this context, it is also worth noting that two males (out of 15 journalists) work on women's programming and six males (out of 19 journalists) work on children's programming, both considered soft news categories.

While EBC's CEO similarly feels that there is a tendency for women journalists to take on soft news topics, he said that the broadcaster "considers who does the assignment best, not their gender" when allocating tasks. Out of 112 journalists said to have specialized beats at the broadcaster, 79 of them focus on hard news topics, out of which 19 (24%) are female. In comparison, of the 33 journalists covering what is considered soft news at the broadcaster, 18 (54%) are women. However, a more-or-less equal number of women journalists cover hard news topics compared to those that cover soft news topics. There is also very little gender disparity between the number of male journalists covering soft news topics compared to female journalists, suggesting that the assignment of beats is not rigidly gendered.

Most media managers interviewed believed that women journalist are capable of performing well when covering hard news topics, and some are even better than their male colleagues. Nevertheless, it remains the case that in many cases women journalists are still not equally assigned to hard news tasks. Some of this is because the assignment of new beats remains overlaid with gender biases, such as informal internal practices in task assignment and the attitude of supervisors. However, the individual preferences of women journalists also appears to play a role.

The lack of clear and consistent procedures to ensure balanced task assignments in newsrooms resulted in entrenched historical and informal internal practices that prejudiced women journalists continuing. One interviewee argued that male decision-makers in the newsroom traditionally tend to prefer male journalists for 'important' assignments: "Decision-makers assign female journalists if there is no male journalist in sight, and are often caught off guard by the results that female journalists bring". Similarly, focus group participants said that female journalists are often assigned to report on 'women's issues' and social events, amongst other categories considered soft news.

The prejudicial attitudes of some supervisors towards the competency of female journalists to deliver on hard news stories also influences their decisions in task assignment. Interviewees said that these biases were felt in different ways. A recurrent bias was the assumption by some supervisors that women are less competent compared to men working on equivalent tasks. Moreover, it was felt that supervisors may believe that female journalists tend more toward covering soft news topics because they are seen as easier to cover. An unwillingness to

challenge the assumption that male journalists are better at their work than females entrenches this bias.

It is worth noting that some of these task assignments can be pragmatic. EBC's Deputy CEO noted that the broadcaster refrains from sending female journalists to places of conflict "for the sake of safety and security of female journalists, who are more vulnerable compared to their male counterparts". The result nevertheless was that in general entrenched informal practices and bias meant that women journalists were less exposed to covering issues that could help them to challenge the status quo and prove themselves capable of reporting hard news stories.

The other reason contributing to fewer woman journalists reporting on hard news stories is said to be an apparent preference amongst some women journalists to report on soft news topics instead. This was cited as a reason for the gender disparity in news beats by the Deputy CEO of EBC. This view was substantiated by a young journalist working in the private sector press who agreed that female journalists shy away from reporting on 'hard issues' such as politics and the economy. The reasons for this preference may be many and could also relate to the personal context of the woman journalist that influences their preference not to take on hard news stories, which often may involve fieldwork. For example, a former journalist at EBS TV recalled: *"I once refused to take an assignment to go and produce a report on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) because I was pregnant and feared traveling there could compromise my health."*

3.4. Recruitment, promotion and remuneration

Our interviews suggest that many media houses lack appropriate mechanisms to empower women in the recruitment process. Overall promotion is on a competitive basis in the media houses surveyed, including at state-run media organisations. Appointments rely on generic criteria set for both male and female staff, with no specific considerations for women candidates. Major media houses also reported that there is no quota system in place to ensure gender balance in decision-making positions.

For example, while one might anticipate that as a state broadcaster EBC would have developed specific mechanisms to increase the number of women journalists it employs, women and men applicants are said to be scored in the same way when hiring. A similar practice is reported at AMMA and at Sheger FM, even though both have incorporated gender considerations into their editorial policies.

Nevertheless, it is also the case that a more nuanced - and somewhat contradictory - picture emerges. Interviewees from both EBC and AMMA said that there is some effort to maintain a gender balance and favour female journalists when it comes to promotion, such as compensating female candidates with additional points, and preferring female to male candidates when both score equal points in an evaluation. For instance, EBC's Deputy CEO mentioned that the organization favours women in promotion by granting additional three points during the evaluation. He also said that this has internal policy support.

The extent to which these mechanisms were used was nevertheless unclear. Interviewees, particularly from SRTA and EBC, mentioned a gradual increase in female journalists in editorial decision-making positions in recent years, but they believed that most women were appointed

to these positions because of personal effort and hard work, and not because they were empowered or favoured through systems in place to rectify gender imbalances in the newsroom.

Despite these considerations, interviewees suggested that women tend to be less competitive in positions that demand some years of experience compared to male counterparts. One reason given is that over time some women journalists who reach positions of seniority in the newsroom tend to struggle to maintain a work-life balance and leave the workplace. Mostly this “work-life balance” related to home and childcare responsibilities. In such circumstances, women may refrain from competing at all. The result is said to be that overall women journalists tend to be younger and less experienced.

Some focus group discussion participants pointed to informal networks and relationships as well as political party affiliations as factors influencing the promotion of journalists in some cases. This was said to favour male over female candidates. As one interviewee put it: *“Sometimes, subjective evaluations motivated by friendship and comradery influence the process.”*

While salaries in public media are determined by directives for state-owned media, the issue of equal pay was raised by journalists working in both the public and the private sector press. In the private sector, there is frequently said to be no formal pay structure and scale in place. For example, an interviewee from *Ethiopian Reporter* mentioned cases where newly hired junior staff used to get higher salaries than staff in senior positions. She also recalled a time when there were more female journalists in the newsroom, but some left due to the lack of equal treatment and compensation.

3.5. Gender-sensitive workplace policies

With some notable exceptions, interviewees said that newsrooms lacked gender-sensitive workplace policies - including on sexual harassment - and that few had dedicated personnel dealing with gender-related issues in the workplace. It was also stated that there was little workplace gender sensitisation training happening in newsrooms.

Most media houses do not monitor and evaluate gender equality in the workplace. EBC is an exception - it also runs a day care centre for the children of employees (see below) - although this is done by one woman who also runs its gender desk, while also being part of the management team. She raises issues impacting on women in the workplace in management meetings, such as how gender issues are addressed during the revision of directives, or other work challenges, such the functioning of the organization’s day care centre.

There was said to be an absence of career development programmes for women journalists. Instead, particularly in the print media surveyed for this study, continuity in a journalist’s field of work could be disrupted in an ad hoc way when new staff were appointed to senior positions. As a senior editor at *Addis Zemen*, published by the EPA, suggested, this is partly due to the lack of a gender directorate that could offer a framework for the career path a women journalist pursued: *“We don’t have a gender policy in the organization. Other government organizations have gender directorates; this agency never had one. We don’t have a system as an organization, hence the way of work changes with each CEO and manager he or she appoints, and the teams he or she forms.”*

Most interviewees said that there was also no compulsory or regular training of journalists and other media workers, including management, on gender equality in the workplace. In

at least two cases reported, this lack of gender-awareness training in the newsroom appeared to perpetuate gender stereotypes and prejudices both in responding to sexual harassment claims, and in assigning outspoken women journalists to report on women's issues for fear of bias.

Policies on sexual harassment appeared to be absent, although some interviewees said that there were disciplinary committees that managed sexual harassment issues. There were also suggestions that a number of incidents of sexual harassment go unreported. According to interviewees, women journalists were subject to sexual harassment in newsrooms and on fieldwork assignments to varied extents across the surveyed media houses. A young journalist working in the private press said she experienced harassment from another male colleague who hurled insults on her in front of other colleagues while out on a fieldwork assignment. While some media houses described it as being a "serious issue", one said that it had had "no reported cases" - which nevertheless does not suggest that sexual harassment does not occur at the media house, just that cases have not been reported.

While one interviewee recalled at least three instances where male perpetrators faced disciplinary action for harassing female journalists, a case was also mentioned where a journalist who filed a complaint was told to "give him space and understand him" by a male editor-in-chief. This attitude is likely to discourage the reporting of sexual harassment in the newsroom and is in line with a general attitude of gender discrimination reported in some newsrooms, where women's voices are frequently side-lined. A Senior Editor at FBC said that although women generally "feel heard" in the newsroom, assertive women are often labelled as 'angry', 'feminist' and 'difficult'. A former journalist at EBS TV (a diaspora-based satellite TV) noted that female journalists are not treated well when they are assertive. For example, it was claimed that if women frequently speak out against programming that misrepresent women, they will be excluded from working on issues related to women. She also said: *"I was told I can't produce a program on women's issue because they say I am a feminist, biased towards women, hence not objective."*

Two interviewees who mentioned sexual harassment cases in their respective media houses said that although women often fail to report the harassment, they talk about the harassment to colleagues, suggesting some measure of peer-support in the newsroom. Women journalists who do report sexual harassment cases are said to be applauded by female colleagues, who recognise it as a serious issue.

Women journalists who work for state-owned media houses have a right to four months maternity leave as stipulated in public service employee directives. Private sector media houses are governed by labour law which states that women have the right to three months maternity leave.

In an initiative that is considered exemplary amongst government agencies, EBC has set up a day care centre for the children of employees who are younger than three-years old. According to EBC's Deputy CEO, the broadcaster has worked on making the environment comfortable for women journalists. He also said that most journalists received more than the four months maternity leave stipulated for government employees.

However, these sorts of initiatives appear to be the exception. Most media houses do not appear to offer special arrangement for flexible working hours for woman journalist with children. An interviewee also said that woman journalists often found it difficult to get promoted after they

have taken time off from work for maternity leave, unless they excel exceptionally in their work. No policies were in place at the broadcaster to address this issue. Instead the perspective expressed was that “female journalists lose their motivation, especially after they have children. They prefer to do a programme that can be completed in normal working hours so that they can go back to their kids”.

3.6. Gender-sensitive editorial guidelines and training

The extent to which media houses had developed editorial guidelines or offered training to journalists for reporting on women was mixed. Guidelines were said to be part of newsroom policy in at least three of the media houses surveyed, but it was less clear if these had been translated into practical day-to-day editorial rules for journalists. There also appeared to be little in-house training offered to journalists on reporting on women in a gender-sensitive way, with media houses largely depending on ad-hoc funded interventions by organisations such as UN Women, or the Women Can Do It project, with support from the European Union. Most media houses assessed also do not have a gender desk that oversees gender-related reporting. EBC is an exception, although its gender desk is said to be “not well organised and strong”.

EBA has developed gender-responsive media guidelines in collaboration with UN Women, which are available online and in print. Some media houses (Ahadu Radio, Sheger FM, Ethio FM and Ethiopia News Agency) have adopted the guidelines as part of their editorial policy, which is considered a milestone towards having a gender-responsive media in Ethiopia. Besides these, an interviewee from AMMA said that it took gender issues into account in its editorial policies.

While EBC’s Deputy CEO stated that the organization has never provided training on gender-sensitive reporting for its staff, like other organisations, journalists do receive other kinds of skills development training. For example, at EBC there was a training sponsorship programme where up to 150 employees - including female staffers - were trained for their MAs at AAU’s School of Journalism and Communication. He however said that it was difficult to ensure a gender balance in these interventions: “Many female journalists failed to use that opportunity even after they were nominated by the organization.” Similarly, AMMA’s deputy director said the organization had arranged technical and journalistic skills training interventions to help journalists cover social, political and economic issues. At FBC there is said to be regular training offered to journalists in new communication technologies and other skills that enhance their journalistic expertise.

Two notably editorial gender awareness training interventions are worth highlighting in this context. UN Women in partnership with the EBA has held a two-year capacity building training intervention on gender-sensitive reporting and news coverage for print, broadcasting and online media practitioners from various regions of the country. A total of 125 journalists were trained between 2018- 2020 through this partnership.

Women Can Do It, in a project supported by European Union, provided training in gender-sensitive reporting to 86 journalists and editors drawn from all media houses nationally in 2018. In collaboration with UN Women, the organization also provided training to 39 journalists in 2019.

Relevant indicators to assess any improvement in the coverage of women in the media are nevertheless generally absent. While EBC reports to parliament on gender issues that have been covered, there is little interrogation of the specific nature of the content, or the reasons behind any changes that might be observed.

Chapter Four: Gender balance in journalism education at universities

One possible reason given for an increase in the number of women journalists employed in newsrooms is that there is a similar increase in the enrolment of women in journalism and media courses at universities over recent years. This may indicate that women are becoming more competitive in the marketplace in terms of formal qualifications compared to their male counterparts.

This chapter offers a brief overview of the enrolment of female students in journalism courses at universities. It also considers gender mainstreaming in course design, and the ratio of women teachers compared to men in the journalism and communications departments at the universities are discussed. It focuses on three universities that are the main source of trained professionals for the sector nationally: Bahir Dar University, Mekelle University and Addis Ababa University. It suggests that while there does appear to be an increase in the enrolment of female journalism students in undergraduate programmes, there has been little effort to mainstream gender concerns in course content. Lecturers remain mostly male, despite women serving as heads of department at two of the universities.

4.1. Student gender balance

An increase in the number of female students enrolled in the journalism and communications departments across all three universities has been reported - although gender disaggregated enrolment numbers were not obtained from all institutions.

Addis Ababa's School of Journalism and Communication says there has been an increase in the intake number of female students at the undergraduate level, but less so at the MA and the PhD levels. However, there are mechanisms in place to increase the number of female students enrolled at the MA level. According to the head of the school, if male and female applicants to the MA programme have scored the same grade, the female student is given preference. The school also participates in the Norwegian Partnership Programme for Global Academic Cooperation (NORPART) collaboration, which allows three MA students to study in Norway for a year. The school sends three students every year and there is a quota of one female student per cohort.

Bahir Dar University has a strong gender office which ensures implementation of gender directives released from The Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MoSHE) at all levels. It ensures at least 20% of total enrolment to be female students in every department of undergraduate programmes. The enrolment of female students in its journalism and communication department is usually higher than this figure. Quantitative data collected from the department showed that of a total of 69 students currently enrolled in its undergraduate programme, 59% are women.

The case is a bit different at postgraduate level. Although the university does offer post-graduate scholarships to students, most post-graduate students receive external sponsorship. Because of this the student male-female ratio for enrolment is largely out of the department's control. Data shows that female students comprise one-third of the total students enrolled in the university's postgraduate programmes.

The department attributes the high number of women enrolled in its courses to the preference amongst female students to study humanities. It says the first and second course choices of female students is often journalism. Most students are from urban areas and receive good scores in their evaluation. Journalism is also mostly seen as an urban-based career, which means that urban-based students, who also have more ready access to technology such as the internet, gravitate towards it. The department says it is also effective in promoting its courses amongst students. A more or less similar argument was made by our interviewee from Mekelle University. According to the interviewee, female student enrolment at the school has been comparable to male enrolment in recent years (data reported in a recent online survey of journalism schools suggests that the “probably 55%” of the students enrolled in the school are female).¹² He said there have also been cases where the number of female students has exceeded male students at the department. He says this is despite there being no special effort by the department to attract female students. Moreover, the university’s gender office, which supports female students across all departments, also does not make any special contribution to enrolment in the department.

4.2. Gender mainstreaming in course content

None of the three journalism schools and departments surveyed run gender-in-media courses at the undergraduate level. According to one interviewee, the main reason for this is that curriculums are harmonized nationally, and it is difficult for departments to deviate from the norm.

Addis Ababa University runs a research project funded by the university to encourage lecturers engaged in research work to focus on gender and the media. However, one interviewee said that there was no effort to integrate gender-specific content in the journalism curricula. She also said there was little encouragement or incentive for students, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, to focus their research in the area.

At Bahir Dar University it was reported that there was no special consideration in the department to make its undergraduate curriculum gender sensitive, apart from meeting at least the minimum requirement in terms of female enrolment. Instead it was left to teachers to include gender issues into existing courses as and when they wanted to. As a result, whether or not gender issues were discussed in class depended on the gender sensitivity and interest of teachers. Gender is nevertheless relatively better integrated at postgraduate level, as some courses include gender perspectives in media and communication theories. For instance, courses on media theory and communication for development have both integrated gender theory and perspectives.

While the Journalism and Communication Department at Mekelle University does not run a gender-in-media course, it says the Gender and Environment Institute at the university, which specializes in cross-cutting issues and includes training and research, has a course on gender and the media.

¹²Unpublished data. See Finlay, A. (2020) *Mapping journalism training centres in sub-Saharan Africa*. Fojo Media Institute, Wits Journalism. Kalmar.

4.3. Staffing

In terms of gender composition of staffing, information obtained from Addis Ababa University's School of Journalism and Communication indicated that it has 35 academic and technical staff members out of which ten are women. Starting from 2011 in the Ethiopian calendar, the university put a rule in place for female students with high grades to be employed in their respective departments as assistant lecturers. The school has followed this rule and hired four female students based on their high scores at the school. The undergraduate students joined the MA programme right after graduation.

Bahir Dar University, which has a gender policy in place, monitors the gender balance of staff at all levels, including administrative positions. The journalism and communication department has the highest female staff proportion compared to other departments of the university. The previous head of the department was also a woman.

The information obtained from Mekelle University was a bit different. There are fewer female staff than male in its department of journalism and communications. However, the head of the department for the last three years was a woman. As was the case at Bahir Dar University, she was recently replaced after she completed her term of assignment.

Chapter Five: Summary of key findings and recommendations

5.1. Key findings

Our findings suggest that media houses in Ethiopia remain largely dominated by male journalists, regardless of media type and ownership. However, there is a notable upward trend in the number of women journalists employed newsrooms. Women journalists make up 31% of the total number of journalists in the surveyed media houses, compared to some 17% reported by earlier studies. This trend has been attributed to the proportion of female students studying journalism and communications at universities also increasing over the years, with female students sometimes outnumbering male students in undergraduate courses. This is likely to make female journalists more competitive in the media market.

Our survey also suggests that more women journalists tend to work in broadcast media compared to print news media, and that woman journalists make up a smaller percentage of the total workforce in print news compared to broadcast.

Men dominate both senior management and editorial decision-making positions in all the media houses surveyed, with notably fewer women occupying senior management positions. Overall, women held 15% of senior management positions, and 26% of editorial decision-making positions amongst the surveyed media.

While recruitment was said to be on a competitive basis, some media houses reported favouring women in promotion when they were presented with a choice between equally strong candidates. These practices however did not appear to be widespread. Instead what was more evident was a highly competitive and demanding work environment, which placed stress on the home-care responsibilities many women had, and limited their capacity to remain in newsrooms and rise to senior positions. This was one possible reason for a concentration of relatively young and less experienced female journalists compared to males in newsrooms.

An absence of in-house gender sensitive policies and guidelines - or in some circumstances gaps in the implementation of existing policies mainly due to poor organizational commitment - as well as limitations in a proper understanding of gender mainstreaming in media operations, exacerbate the problem. This, together with a general lack of supportive career planning and development opportunities in the newsroom, can increase the workplace alienation of women journalists.

Several researchers have argued that the low representation of female journalists in the workforce correlates with the existing gender imbalance in media outputs. The proponents of this argument propose bringing more women into the media industry as a strategy to improve gender considerations in media practice and content. Although this may be necessary, it is not a sufficient condition to advance the balanced portrayal of women and adequate coverage of gender issues in media content, without taking into consideration the broader institutional capacity and enabling environment.

The gender-based division of news assignments appears to still be the case in many media houses. This can be attributed to a number of factors, including informal gender bias when tasks are assigned, the resulting lack of opportunities for women journalists to prove

themselves capable of reporting hard news well, and the personal preference of some women journalists who need to balance their work demands with home or child-care needs.

This research suggests that there are few efforts in newsrooms to create flexible working arrangements for women journalists who might face the pressure of balancing their professional and child-care demands. An exception was a day care centre for small children set up at EBC. That women journalists who have child-care needs are sometimes said to prefer easier reporting assignments compared to fieldwork might compromise their newsroom careers unless gender-sensitive institutional frameworks recognise this challenge.

Sexual harassment policies appear to be absent in newsrooms, and many cases of sexual harassment go unreported. At the same time, some male supervisors are said to be insensitive to sexual harassment claims and disciplinary committees are said to often be ineffective, resulting in a lack of institutional trust amongst women journalists.

Generally, the media representation of women in Ethiopia has reinforced the patriarchal perception of women as powerless and as victims. Studies reviewed for this assessment suggest that mainstream media news continues to rely on men as information sources and experts in the fields such as business and politics while women are often featured in entertainment, fashion, and other soft news stories. As a result, women's voices and concerns are underrepresented.

However, training in gender-sensitive reporting, as well as the development of gender-sensitive editorial guidelines have mostly been the result of initiatives by organisations such as UN Women and Women Can Do It. Few newsrooms have strong and effective gender desks that can advocate for mainstreaming gender issues in media content, or represent the needs of women journalists in the newsroom.

Despite the above interventions, previous studies have found that existing gender-based media associations and organizations are few and many are too weak to support and advocate for gender-sensitive media content and the rights of women journalists in newsrooms.

The comparable enrolment of female to male students in journalism and communication departments at the undergraduate level is reported in recent years. However, there are no gender-related courses in undergraduate studies for journalism and communications. The incorporation of gender issues into existing courses is left entirely up to the lecturers. Gender issues are nevertheless more strongly represented at postgraduate level.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are drawn for future programme intervention at targeted media houses and other relevant media development organizations. The study suggests the “Media Reform in a Time of Change” programme adopt a holistic approach while implementing the identified intervention options. This is because the existing gender imbalance in media content and operations is inherently linked to various institutionalized factors, hence addressing these constraints successfully require all-inclusive responses.

1. **Support targeted media houses to create and strengthen an internal enabling environment to advance gender equality in media content, programming and operations.**
 - **Invest in awareness raising:** Through the sharing of best practices and case examples that highlight the benefits of change, motivate newsroom decision-makers to develop appropriate newsrooms policies and practices that support women and encourage journalists to report professionally and ethically on gender issues.
 - **Promote the fair and balanced portrayal of women in media content:** Support media houses to develop or strengthen editorial guidelines and codes of conduct to guide gender-sensitive reporting, content development, and news sourcing. Work with media houses to develop minimum standards for gender-inclusive coverage that includes action plans and implementation targets.
 - **Advance women in decision-making and leadership positions:** Support media houses to revise existing staff promotion practices to create a system that supports the career progression of woman journalists so that they are able to attain decision-making positions, and in this way expand their influence on media content production and operations. Assist media houses to put in place clearly defined and workable affirmative action policies that take into consideration the professional and personal needs of practicing women journalists.
 - **Cultivate positive working conditions for women journalists:** A women-friendly working environment protects the safety and security of women, provides them with flexible working schedules, and is professionally stimulating. Achieving this is vital to retain women journalists in the newsroom, and to their long-term professional success in the media industry.
 - Assist EMWA and link them with media houses to conduct a thorough examination of the extent of sexual harassment in newsroom, to help media houses to clearly understand and appreciate the problem. Further, support media houses to establish and strengthen a system to effectively protect women from sexual harassment in the newsroom, including through developing clear workplace policies on sexual harassment.
 - Advocate for the top management of targeted media houses to create flexible work schedules for women journalists and arrange appropriate child-care services to enable female professionals to maintain a work-life balance.
 - Create awareness among editorial decision-makers about inherent gender biases in the assignment of reporting tasks, to create more opportunities for women to report on hard news topics.
 - Support targeted media houses to establish a gender directorate with well-defined roles and responsibilities to lead, coordinate, and monitor gender mainstreaming activities internally.
 - **Develop the policies in a participatory way:** Provide advice and technical support to targeted media houses to ensure journalists, editors, and management staff participate in the policy development processes. Assist media houses to publicize existing policies among journalists to facilitate the effective implementation of these policies.

2. **Enhance the institutional capacity of media organisations to improve the coverage of women in media content and programming.**
 - **Organize advanced gender sensitization training:** Provide advanced gender sensitization training tailored to senior and mid-level editorial decision makers in targeted media houses. Support senior and mid-level editorial decision-makers to coach journalists to practice gender sensitive content development and reporting.
 - **Build capacity for evidence-based gender-sensitive media programming and monitoring:** Build the technical capacity of gender desk specialists to enable them to undertake periodic content analysis to generate gender-disaggregated data and provide feedback on the status and progress of gender considerations in media content to top management, editorial decision-makers and female and male journalists.
 - **Diversify the sources journalists have access to:** Develop a directory of women experts, professionals and officials operating in diverse fields who are willing to be consulted by journalists as a way to increase the voices of women experts in the media. Models such as Quote this Women+ in South Africa could be used as examples for this intervention.
 - **Promote and recognize men as change agents in promoting gender equality in the media:** Identify and support male journalists with successful accomplishment on integrating gender issues in their reporting and programming. current affairs and other programmes. Their efforts lessen existing misconceptions among male media professionals who claim that gender issues are the responsibility of women only.

3. **Build the capacity of women journalists and encourage the creation of networks of support.**
 - **Design professional and leadership development programmes for women journalists:** Design and implement training and mentoring programmes for women journalists in order to build their journalistic and leadership skills and their influence in the newsroom.
 - **Support the peer-to-peer networking of women journalists:** Support the peer-to-peer networking of women journalists for mentoring and support, information sharing (including on work opportunities), and the sharing of experiences and challenges and solutions to those challenges. Such a network, which could be aligned with the work of EWMA, can also create a unified voice for women journalists working in Ethiopia.

4. **Cultivate and strengthen multi-sectoral collaborations and partnerships among media institutions, media development organizations, and other relevant partners.**
 - **Establish and support a Technical Gender Advisory Committee:** Establish a gender advisory committee comprising key stakeholders such as representatives of selected broadcast and print media houses, women-focused media associations (such as EWMA), the Women Affairs Directorate of the EBA, civil society organisations involved in gender and media training and programming (such as Women Can Do It), and other relevant media development partners. Support the committee to oversee, promote, and advocate for gender rights in the media, including in the development of gender-

- sensitive newsrooms policies, to share knowledge, and to create the capacity to influence broader policy frameworks.
- **Support multi-stakeholder consultation forums:** Support the committee to organize periodic multi-stakeholder consultation forums that strengthen institutional linkages essential to promoting gender mainstreaming in the media. These forums could be used for the exchange of information, experiences, and best practices in media operations and content development.
 - **Organize webinars to learn about international best practices:** Organize learning webinars with regional and international participants so that best practices from countries can be exchanged.
 - **Strengthen institutional linkages between the media and the responsible public entity:** Establish a platform to facilitate regular consultation between public media houses, the Ministry of Women, Children and the Youth, and the Media Standing Committee of the House of People’s Representatives in parliament to enhance the role of the parliament in overseeing and monitoring implementation media laws and regulations and the integration of gender perspectives in these media houses.
5. **Build the institutional capacity of EMWA to enhance its ability to engage in media policy advocacy to advance gender equality in the media.**
- Support EMWA to strengthen its institutional capacity particularly with respect to human resource development and to fundraising.
 - Link EMWA with important partners, including donors, to support the association to design and implement new programmes.
 - Build the technical capacity of EMWA’s staff to engage in regular media content analysis and audience research to guide its advocacy work in multi-stakeholder consultation forums. Consider supporting EMWA to serve as a secretary of the gender advisory committee and also lead and coordinate key activities of the committee.
 - Support a representative from EMWA or other relevant gender-based media association to participate in the upcoming Global Media Monitoring Project to help them better understand the gender gap in media production and to enhance their awareness raising and advocacy activities.
6. **Support select academic institutions to promote gender perspectives in journalism and communication education curriculums, particularly at the undergraduate level, and to enhance their role in knowledge sharing on gender issues.**
- Work with the MoSHE to enable academic institutions to revise and integrate gender perspective either as part of existing courses or as separate subjects in the curriculum.
 - Create a platform for academic institutions to synthesize and share knowledge generated through research on gender and the media with national and regional media organizations, gender-based media associations, and relevant partners. This can be linked to the multi-stakeholder platform meetings to be organized by the gender advisory committee for better impact.
 - Link academic institutions with media institutions to create and strengthen internship programmes, with a particular focus on female students, and with due consideration of addressing the gender imbalance in media content.

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Annex

Annex 1. List of interview participants

1. Abel Adamu, Deputy CEO, Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation
2. Solomon Goshu, Chairperson, Media Law Reform Working Group
3. Bewnetu Tadesse, Deputy Director, News and Current Affairs, South Television and Radio Organization
4. Dereje Moges, Deputy Director, Amhara Mass Media Agency
5. Assmeret Hailesellasie, Deputy Director, Ethiopia National Radio
6. Mihret Moges, Senior Editor, The Reporter Newspaper
7. Tsega Tariku, Senior Editor, Fana Broadcast Corporate
8. Agaredech Jemaneh, Addis Ababa University School of Journalism (and head of the School's Gender and Media Project)
9. Mekuria Mekasha, Head, Addis Ababa University School of Journalism
10. Meaza Aklilu, a former reporter at Ebs TV
11. Lemlem Mengistu, Editor of Addis Zemen (Press Agency)
12. Yemiwodish Bekele, former Editor in chief of Police Newspaper (*Police ena Ermijaw*) and former EMWA board member of EMWA
13. Selome Desta, former Manager of FM Addis 97.1, Board member of EMWA
14. Tekabech Assefa, EMWA's caretaker for the past 6 years
15. Meaza Worku, producer and director, media content contributor to Fana BC Television
16. Selam Mussie, Gender and Media Trainer, expert
17. Dureti Tadesse, Director, Gender Directorate at Ethiopian Broadcast Authority
18. Haimanot Ashenafi, former editor in chief of Addis Maleda Newspaper, currently a reporter at Addis insight
19. Eshete Assefa, Manager, Program and News Department, Sheger FM 102.1 FM Radio
20. Dr. Hagos Nigussie, Journalism and Communication Department, Mekelle University
21. Dr. Biset Ayalew, Head, Journalism and Communication Department, Bahir Dar University

Annex 2. List of Participants of FGD

1. Mihret Aschalew, former Senior Editor at the Reporter and Producer at BBC Amharic, EMWA member
2. Aklile Solomon, Yellow Movement, Lawyer and Gender and Media Advocate
3. Rahel Zewdu, EMWA member and Communication Specialist at US Embassy
4. Emebet Demeke, a former editor at EBC and EMWA member, co-Producer and co-host of a TV show focuses on gender
5. Rebecca Tadesse, former journalist and EMWA member, member of IWMF
6. Sebah Tewodros, Lawyer and youth activist on gender
7. Kamlaknesh Yasin, Program officer at Setaweet Feminist Movement (CSO advocating for Gender Equality)

Annex 3. Media-based associations and organizations

A research report made by Skjerdal (2017) states that at least 15 organizations and networks for journalists exist in the country but that they are generally either too weak or inactive to negotiate better working conditions for women. It also mentions that few (about 16%) of

Ethiopian journalists are members of a professional association. This indicates that the associations have never become a stronghold for the professional interests of journalists. The following are potentially relevant in the context of this research.

Women Can Do it

Women Can Do It is an organization established six years ago with the support of the Norwegian Labour Party which set up similar organizations in different countries. The founder of the Ethiopian chapter is a former board member of the Ethiopian Media Women Association (EMWA) and the only female editor-in-chief of a newspaper published by the federal police. For its first three years, the organisations worked under the auspices of the Ethiopian Network of Women Associations (NEWA), an umbrella organization that coordinates the work of civil society organizations and charities working on women and children.

The organization now has its own office after receiving support from the European Union, which has also supported a two-year project that includes gender sensitive training in journalism and a weekly radio programme that aims to change gender representation, among other activities that highlight how women can be successful in public life and contribute to the betterment of the society.

Ethiopian Media Women Association (EMWA)

EMWA was founded in 1997 to improve the working conditions of women journalists and advocate for the creation of a diverse and inclusive media landscape in Ethiopia. EMWA challenged conventional cultural norms, held leadership and communication structures accountable and demanded gender inclusion in the media sector. Interviewees and focus-group participants in this study said that EMWA had good track record of raising reporting standards by training its members, as well as formulating various codes of conduct on gender sensitivity, sexual harassment, and child abuse reporting. Its work has included sending journalists on exchange programmes to work abroad.

EMWA's caretaker for the last five years, a retired journalist who was one of the founders of the association, says that the association has been inactive for the last five years due restrictions placed on civil society organisations. In the last five years, projects have nevertheless included a national advocacy campaign on vitamin A intake done for a project called 'Micronutrient Initiative', the co-ordination of a training programme for the US Embassy, and participating in training on reporting harmful traditional practices, in collaboration with the German Embassy. Interviewee from EMWA said: *"Even though we have renewed our licence as per the new civil society organisation law last year, we haven't done any activities so far. Our office was closed and run by a volunteer previously. We have arrears in rent of two years. The office needs staff to start running again. There are positive changes including the law that allows us to work freely now. If we get support to make the office functional, we can get projects and start working again."*

The Ethiopian Media Council (EMC)

The Ethiopian Media Council (EMC) is a media self-regulatory body, which was formed following a general assembly held on January 12, 2016. It has only recently been registered as a civil society organisation, but has since 2016 managed to raise its membership base to 29 from the initial 19 registered members.

According to the EMC, the Council's Executive Committee has five members, two drawn from the print media (*Reporter* newspaper and *Kumneger* magazine), two from broadcasting (EBC and Sheger FM radio); and one from the Ethiopian Journalists Association (EJA), representing only state media journalists. Meaza Biru, a female media co-owner of Sheger FM, is serving as deputy chairperson while Amare Aregawi, the General Manager of MCC is the chairperson. Out of 29 current members of the council, 26 are media institutions and three are media associations, one of them EMWA (MMI, 2019).

Editors Guild

The Editors Guild is a newly established association formed in August 2019 by editors working in different mainstream media organizations. Close to 40 professionals from 20 media organizations attended its assembly as founding members. The guild has seven executive committee members, among which two are female. One is an Editor in-Chief at *Fortune Newspaper*, and is serving as a secretary of the association. According to the memorandum of association, editors at all levels working in a locally registered media organization can be a member of the association.

Ethiopian Mass-Media Professional Association (EMMPA)

The Ethiopian Mass-Media Professional Association (EMMPA) held its inaugural meeting in June 2020. It aims to address the “pressing issues that local journalists face, including lack of training, proper support and compensation and employment opportunities”.¹³ It hopes to develop a strong union that can advocate for journalist’s rights in the workplace.

Ethiopian Journalists Association (EJA)

The Ethiopian Journalists Association (EJA) is Ethiopia’s oldest journalist association. It aims to represent media journalists nationwide, and has a history of state affiliation since its foundation, an organizational track record that it struggles to shake off until today.

¹³ <https://www.thereporterethiopia.com/article/new-journalist-association-advocate-industry>

Annex 4. Key Informant Interview Questions

3.1. Key informant interview with representatives of electronic and print media

I. General information

Name of the interviewee	Position		Sex
Name of the media house	Media type	Ownership	Location/coverage

II. Key thematic areas for discussion

A. *Policy and institutional commitment to gender equality and mainstreaming, and gender sensitive practice in media*

1. Existence of a Gender Policy in the media house either as part of an Editorial Policy or separately (including on equal opportunity in working conditions). Brief overview the Gender Policy development process, if any, -participation and knowledge/publicity of the policy by the professional staff including editors and managerial personnel including board members and senior managers.
2. How effective the policy implementation and monitoring process and mechanisms are (institutional commitment to enforce the Policy, specific instances, if any, and availability of resource especially budget for it).
3. Major barriers that impede the media house from enforcing the Gender Policy

B. *Gender balance in media workforce focusing on staffing and decision-making positions*

1. The media houses' overall assessment or perception of gender balance in staffing specifically program staff. sex-disaggregated data on journalists currently employed).The media houses overall assessment or perception of gender balance in decision-making/leadership position.
2. Existence of measures to consider gender balance in recruitment process and promotion of staff to management positions (Quota system, affirmative actions, etc.)
3. Major barriers that impede female media professionals from joining media houses as well as promoting to decision-making/leadership positions.

C. *Gender equality in working conditions and division of work in media houses*

1. Practices in the newsroom focusing on the division of work between male and female journalists. Existence of specific actions/measures to maintain gender balance especially improve proportion of women on various news subjects.
2. Overall policy and practice in providing access to (paid) maternity and paternity leave for media professionals for sufficient period, and existence and implementation of flexible working arrangements for women and men.
3. Presence of gender desk/gender mainstreaming officer to monitor gender equality in the workplace and practice related to reporting of sexual harassment in the workplace

D. *Gender sensitive journalism including training and practice and women and men portrayal in media contents*

1. Institutional practice in staff training in gender responsive journalism. Existence/utilization of code of ethics focusing on gender representation and

availability of resources for gender-sensitive reporting (manuals and directory of women experts in various fields).

2. As a platform for public discussion, the media is supposed to be serving the interest of all citizens. However, several research shows that voices from all citizens especially women are not being heard and read. Why do you think is the media unsuccessful in bringing diverse sources of news and groups of citizens in news contents?
3. What do you think about coverage of women’s issues in the media? Do you believe these issues are adequately covered? And mechanisms required to promote balanced representation of women in news & current affairs content through producing more stories focusing specifically on women and issues of special relevance to women such as gender-based violence, women’s rights, and women’s achievements.
4. Substantial evidences suggest that Media reports and programs are misrepresenting women, re-enforcing stereotypes and other cultural biases. Do you agree? What do you think is the reason for that?
5. Suggestions on innovative media formats to be employed by media houses to promote fair portrayal of women in media contents specifically by focusing on stories on multi-dimensional representation of men and women to challenge gender-based stereotypes.

3.2. Key informant interview with representatives of gender-based media associations

I. General information

Name of the interviewee	Position	Sex
Name of the association/institution		Location/coverage

II. Key thematic areas for discussion

A. *Gender mainstreaming policies and practices in media associations*

1. Presence of equal opportunity policies with implementing measures and monitoring mechanisms and corresponding budge to support its implementation.

B. *Gender balance in staffing, membership, and decision-making situations in media associations/institutions*

1. Assessment of gender balance in staffing; membership, and decision making positions.
2. Existence of actions/measures to ensure representation of women in decision-making (quota systems and affirmative actions)
3. Existence of actions/measures to ensure representation of women in membership

C. *Gender equality in work and working conditions*

4. Overall policy and practice in providing access to (paid) maternity and paternity leave for media professionals for sufficient period and existence and implementation of flexible working arrangements for women and men.
5. Presence of gender desk/gender mainstreaming officer to monitor gender equality in the workplace and practice related to reporting of sexual harassment in the workplace

D. Gender equality and mainstreaming in practices

1. Capacity and practice to generate gender data on media operations and contents
2. Undertake regular gender audit of media organizations and platforms to share information
3. Capacity and practice in organizing awareness-raising sessions on gender-equality in media to diverse relevant media stakeholder

E. Institutional capacity, and partnership with media organizations and stakeholders to promote gender in media

1. Institutional capacity, opportunities, and challenges to forge efficient and continuous collaboration with various media and media development organizations on gender equality.
2. Key barriers in media associations/institutions that prevent from effectively pursuing their vital roles and efforts in promoting and supporting gender equality in media houses/organizations (human, resources/financial, structural, functional, etc.)

3.3. Key informant interview with representatives of media law and policy reform process

I. General information

Name of the interviewee	Position	Sex

II. Discussion questions: Policy idea and content, and the policy reform process

1. Can you please describe the whole process of media law reform? The steps taken. Problem identification. Core pillars of the policy reform document? List of Proclamations revised
2. How would you describe the process in terms of gender consideration? Evidence/analysis on gender and media available to the tam. Discourse on gender in media is constructed? Attempt to characterize challenges of the previous laws from the point of view of gender. Was there a clear understanding to consider gender in the policy reform process? If yes, how?
3. How and to what extent gender equality and issues related to women empowerment is mainstreamed in the media laws and policies drafted? In which area of proclamation gender is more emphasized? Team’s thought on consideration of gender: at proclamation or at implementation stage? Atmosphere for Women’s Affairs staff and other gender experts to extend their views
4. The gendered institutional interactions. How many organizations participated? Who is the leading organization and support institutions? How many people have participated in the media law reform group? How many of them were female? Participation of women based media associations; Capacity and number of the actors represented the gender issue; timing and extent of involvement-continuity of participation, prioritized media core values and gender perspective; presence of enabling environment to convey agenda.
5. I believe the drafts have been circulated for discussion and feedback, have you included feedback from gender perspective?

3.4. Key informant interview with representatives of academic institutions (schools of

journalism and communications)

I. General information

Name of the interviewee	Position	Sex
Name of the Academic Institution		Location

II. Key thematic areas for discussion

A. Gender balance and consideration in journalism and communication education and training (student enrollment, curriculum, and staffing)

1. Existence of measures taken to ensure gender balance in student enrolment especially actions to increase female students admission in SJC (such as quota system)
2. Efforts to integrate gender and media specific contents in curriculum and courses in undergraduate and graduate level studies.
3. Presence of agreements/cooperation between the journalism school and media houses/organizations for internships that provide particular opportunity for female students
4. Practices and mechanisms to measure gender inclusiveness in journalism and communications professionals training curriculum, research/project related activities, student enrolment, and extra-curricular events/activities.

B. Trends in gender and media research outputs and communication/sharing of findings

1. Trends in gender and media research outputs. Experience and practice/initiative to encourage undertaking of more research on gender and media.
2. Role, experience, and available platforms of academic institutions/SJC in communicating research findings/outputs on gender and media to key players and actors in media industry

3.5 Quantitative data sheet: electronic and print media houses

I. General information

Name of the media house	Media type	Ownership	Location/coverage

II. Key thematic areas

A. Gender balance in media workforce (staffing, decision-making, & division of work)

No.	Variable	Female	Male	Total
1	Journalists			
2	Support - Technical (Graphic design, Editing, Camera Crew, Directing)			
3	Support staff -Administrative (HR, Finance, Admin)			
Total				

1. Editorial decision-making positions

No.	Position	Female	Male	Total
1	Editor -in -Chief/ Executive Producer			
2	Deputy -Editor-in -Chief			
3	Producer/Director			
4	Team Leader			
5	Senior Editor			
6	Editor			
7	Assistant Editor			
Total				

2. Senior Management positions

No.	Variable	Female	Male	Total
1	Board members			
2	CEO/ Director			
3	Deputy Director			
4	Division Heads			
4	Department Heads			

Total			
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3. Division of work in Production

No.	program subjects	Female	Male	Total
1	News Desk			
2	Politics/ Current Affair			
3	Business and Economy			
4	Women			
5	Children			
6	Health			
7	Arts and Culture			
8	Science and Tech Shows			
9	Talk Shows/ Guest interviews			
10	Entertainment Programs			
11	Others (Please Specify)			
Total				