Gender Discrimination in Zambian Media Workplaces: Airing Out The *Laundry*

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About Media Monitoring Africa

MMA’s vision is a just and fair society empowered by a free, responsible and quality media. Through a human rights-based approach, MMA aims to promote the development of:

- Media that is transparent, diverse, ethical and accountable to its audiences;
- Critical and constructive communications by the powerful; and;
- Informed, engaged and connected citizenry

MMA does gender-specific work, but also integrates gender into all the research we do. We were one of the first organisations to mainstream gender issues in South Africa, having seen the need for gender sensitive research as early as 1994.

MMA’s Gender Unit aims to deepen and reinvigorate debate around the rights of men and women and the continents commitment to realising gender equality, with a specific focus on the media.
About the research

In 2013 carried out research in Zimbabwean newsrooms examining the prevalence of gender discrimination in the country’s newsrooms.

This research found that:

• Sexual discrimination and harassment is prevalent in all participating newsrooms
• The perpetrators tend to be people who exercise power in the newsrooms;
• Sexual discrimination is seldom reported for various reasons; and,
• There are no mechanisms for dealing with it, and where they are they are inadequate and ineffective.
About the research cont.

• In 2014, we then conducted similar research in South African media workplaces with the hope that this research would become part of a comparative study examining the extent gender discrimination is prevalent in media workplaces across the region and possibly develop solutions to dealing with problem

• And this is how we got to this point...
How information on gender discrimination in Zambian media workplaces was collected

Participation in an online survey:

• An anonymous survey administered via Survey Monkey and a link was distributed to media workers in various organisations

• The online survey was crucial in recording the raw statistical prevalence of the magnitude of gender discrimination

Interviews with media workers:

• Interviews with both male and female media workers were conducted, further exploring gender discrimination in more data
What is discrimination in occupation and employment?

• Discrimination is the distinction, exclusion or preference for or against a person on arbitrary grounds. This could either be on the basis of their gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnic or social origin, race, marital status, HIV status, pregnancy by an employer which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity in employment and occupation.
How do Zambian media workers understand gender discrimination?

• Many of the participants used sex and gender interchangeably often to the point of conflation

• We also found that some media workers understand gender discrimination specifically as an exclusion or restriction on the basis of being female.

• This is illustrated the following quotes:
• “In our organisation gender discrimination is when the male workmates are favoured to take high profile assignments because the organisation feels that men are better performers than women and as a result female journalists feel discriminated.” – Respondent

• “I understand it as a situation where someone is categorized or sidelined based on their sex. For an example preference for certain assignments is given to men and not their female colleagues.”- Respondent

• “Gender discrimination is prejudice or discrimination based on a person’s sex or gender”. – Respondent
Is gender discrimination in Zambian media workplaces a problem?

- Yes: 85%
- No: 15%
Sex of respondents

- 48% Female
- 52% Male
Where did this form of gender discrimination take place?

“It occurs both in the workplace and in the field, we can’t separate it” - Respondent
Where did this form of gender discrimination take place cont.

- In the workplace: 80%
- Outside the workplace in the field: 20%
- Other: 0%
Departments respondents worked in

- Editorial
- Photography
- Production
- Other
Common types of gender discrimination in Zambian media workplaces

- Ageism
- Financial inequality
- Gender stereotypes
- Glass ceiling
- Pregnancy and motherhood
- Sexual harassment
How often does gender discrimination take place?

0% Once a day
5% More than once a day
10% Once a week
15% More than once a week
20% Once a month
25% Once a year
30% More than once a year
Other
Perpetrators of gender discrimination by sex

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What would media workers in Zambian media workplaces do when a colleague experiences gender discrimination?

- 47% Report to the relevant authority
- 21% Say nothing, it’s a personal matter
- 16% Counsel the colleague
- 5% Send anonymous communication to the relevant authority
- 5% Confront the perpetrator
Whether victims of gender discrimination lodged a complaint or not

- Lodged a complaint: 21%
- Never lodged a complaint: 79%
Thank you to our partners