

MEDIATION



Biannual
publication
of Fondation
Hironnelle

UNDERSTANDING THROUGH INFORMATION AND DIALOGUE



A French student, victim of sexual harassment, interviewed by journalists at the Palais de Justice in Paris in October 2018. © Philippe Lopez / AFP

Working for more inclusive newsrooms

Fondation Hironnelle defends independent, balanced journalism, practised by editorial teams that speak to the greatest number of people. Are we really as inclusive and representative, especially on the gender issue, as we wish? Overall, we have as many women as men among our journalists, without a quota policy, and in countries where the social and economic reality is not yet favourable to women in employment. But among our editors, there is currently only one woman out of six! We are now working to ensure that the ways we recruit, train and advocate not only ensure equal rights and opportunities but also make it possible for our women journalists to take up positions of responsibility.

In the media as in society, it is still a predominantly male vision that dominates. And in countries in transition where the digital revolution is taking hold, the digital divide is penalizing women more. It is therefore more than ever the responsibility of the media to provide news and information that is produced by women and men together, without any gender hierarchy, so that it will better speak to everyone.

Caroline Vuillemin
General Director

TIME FOR WOMEN IN THE MEDIA

In 2019, media in every country continue to primarily reflect a man's world. But two years after the #MeToo movement emerged, there is growing awareness of the need to make newsrooms and editorial coverage more gender balanced.

What place do the media give to women? Worldwide, only 37% of articles, television or radio reports are written by women. Only 24% of these reports mention or give women the opportunity to speak. And only 20% of the experts interviewed in the media are female. Half of humanity therefore remains largely under-represented in the media, and this is even more true in Africa and Asia.

In theory, however, it has been twenty-five years since the planet mobilized on the subject. As early as 1995 in Beijing, the United Nations adopted a Platform for Action for the empowerment of women in twelve chapters, including one on the media. It calls on media companies to promote "greater participation of women in production and decision-making", "ensure that women's concerns are properly taken into account" in news and information, and to "encourage the use of new technolo-

gies as a means to strengthen women's participation in democratic processes".

For a long time, these recommendations remained more or less a dead letter. The Global Media Monitoring Project, a benchmark report that measures women's place in the media every five years, shows only very slow progress between 1995 and 2015. And in the past twenty years, the development of new technologies has resulted for women not only in a new space for expression but also for harassment on social networks. However, it was in this new space that a turning point occurred: in 2017, the #MeToo movement made gender inequalities so visible in the North that many media felt the need to implement proactive policies to reduce these inequalities, both in the composition of their editorial staff and in their editorial coverage.

However, these policies also raise other ethical questions. If the media make it a priority to bring gender balance in the number of people interviewed or photographed, for example, how can they still fulfil their primary mission: to reflect a reality that often remains unequal in terms of gender? These questions also arise in the countries of the South, particularly in countries in crisis or conflict. In these contexts, where the situation of women is often even less enviable than in the North and where the media are often less professional, the search for ways to reduce gender inequalities in the media remains wide open. ■

Interview

HOW CAN THE MEDIA PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY IN FRAGILE CONTEXTS?



A journalist from Studio Kalangou reporting in Niamey, Niger. © Anne Mimault / Fondation Hironnelle



Emma Heywood is a lecturer and researcher at the University of Sheffield's Department of Journalism Studies. She describes her experience (including with Fondation Hironnelle) in assessing the impact of radio programmes on women's empowerment in areas of crisis.

For years, your research has focused on media in areas of conflict. In your opinion, what are the specific needs of women living in these areas?

Emma Heywood: It is no secret that women are often the most affected by conflict. Their menfolk may be actively involved in conflict or may be injured or killed, leaving them to fend for the family in times of extreme hardship, often becoming victims of sexual or other violence. Not having the same status as men in many patriarchal and traditional societies, women are left without support. They cannot inherit the estates of their husbands, being consid-

ered to be "goods" themselves, and are forced to return to their own parents' homes... They may already be subject to widespread gender inequality in societies where polygamy, male dominance, domestic violence, female genital mutilation, and resistance to women's work outside the home prevail.

Yet, as heads of households and, in many cases, important stakeholders in many aspects of daily life, women are perceived as being the binding force in society. These women do everything! in Niger and Mali, for example where I have been working recently, it is they who fetch the wood, who get the water, who look after the children

and the men, who cook the meals, do the washing and often have to find a source of income, however small, to supplement the family income. The list of their tasks is endless but so is their strength to go on. In the West Bank under Israeli occupation, where I recently conducted a three-year research program, women face serious specific problems such as the absence of their men who are likely to be jailed by the occupation army or, when these women

are candidates during elections, they often appear on electoral lists under their husband's or their brother's name. And yet, I observed that they have still more agency than in West Africa.

These women display astonishing resilience which must be tapped into by giving them a greater voice in society. Yet, to do so and on a more basic level, they need to be informed of their rights. They need to be educated on an equal footing with their male counterparts, they need equal access to all levels of society be it politically, economically or socially. They need to be valued. Society needs to value them as much as it seems to value men.

You are currently conducting a study on the influence of Studio Kalangou, Fondation Hironnelle's radio programme in Niger, on promoting the rights of Nigerien women. What are the main trends of this study so far?

Last April in six localities in Niger, we started the impact assessment of women-related radio programmes broadcast by Studio Kalangou on women's rights and empowerment, mostly radio debates and magazines. This study is being conducted by the FemmepowermentAfrique research project based at the University of Sheffield in the UK.

We noted changes in behaviour amongst people who listened to women related programmes

We conducted around twenty focus groups with a hundred or so listeners in and around Niamey, including married women, single women and men. We tried to assess their knowledge, perceptions and behaviours before and after listening to two series of women-related programmes broadcast by Studio Kalangou. The two series focused on women, politics and elections, and child marriage. We also ran workshops alongside the focus groups to receive feedback from representatives of civil society and media organisations.

In order to promote women's empowerment, programmes must also address men

The main trends of the study are largely positive. We noted changes in behaviour amongst most listeners, both female and male. Many stated that prior to listening to the broadcasts they weren't sure about certain issues but had received clarification from Studio Kalangou after listening, particularly regarding the politics series. Female listeners also stated that the programmes had encouraged them to become more politically active now they knew more about how to do so. Generally, the increased information broadcast by Studio Kalangou enabled listeners to discuss politics more easily without it all ending unpleasantly.

However, there is still work to be done. Young people need to be encouraged to listen to the radio more. This is a significant challenge facing Studio Kalangou. There are also editorial differences to be taken into account! often the information given to listeners is not necessarily what they actually need to know and understand. More targeted listener profiling is needed.

In your opinion, should the media seek to specifically address women in areas of crisis?

Women obviously play a very important part in such societies and they have a major role to play in contributing to and securing peace particularly at a local level. However, in order to raise the voice of women and to promote their rights and empowerment, programmes must also address men. It is men who control women. Women must be encouraged to fight and stand up for themselves but they will only be able to do so with the support of men. It must also be noted that "women" are not one homoge-

nous group. Some women have considerable agency and examples of this must be promoted. Similarly, in many cases, women in extended families are the ones who control younger females. We should not fall into the trap of categorising all women as being the same, with the same power over each other, or having the same freedom to act as each other. Nonetheless, providing accurate and independent information about women, their rights and ways of promoting

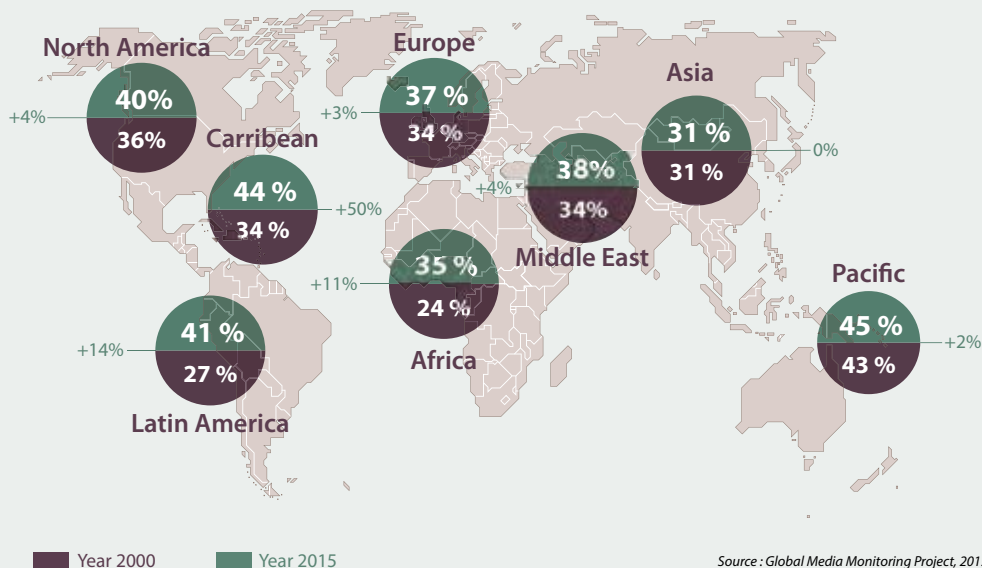
those rights can only contribute to female empowerment. Such information, in whatever form in the media, must be free of negative stereotypes against women, must give equal voice to both male and female participants, and must seek to promote greater gender equality in society. ■

Initiatives to measure and reduce gender inequality in the media

At the very end of the 20th century, international awareness emerged among NGOs and governments of the need to reduce gender inequality in the media. The World Association for Christian Communication, a Canadian NGO, was a pioneer in this field: following the conclusions of the 4th United Nations World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), it launched the Global Media Monitoring Project in 1995, a report that reviews, every five years, the state of women's global participation in media production. International media organizations later mobilized in the wake of the #MeToo movement. Two examples among many: the development of the Gender Council of the International Federation of Journalists, and the creation of a "Women in the Media" working group within the Global Forum for Media Development. Both focus on promoting gender equality among their member structures.

In the media itself, initiatives have recently multiplied. In France, journalists looking for female experts for their reports or interviews can turn to the Expertes.fr website, which was created in 2015. In Switzerland, the newspaper Le Temps set up a parity barometer in 2018 to measure the place of women in the newspaper and gradually correct gender inequalities. In the United States, the New York Times created a gender editor position in 2017 to better address women's issues... and to attract more female readers.

Share of TV/radio articles or reports produced by women

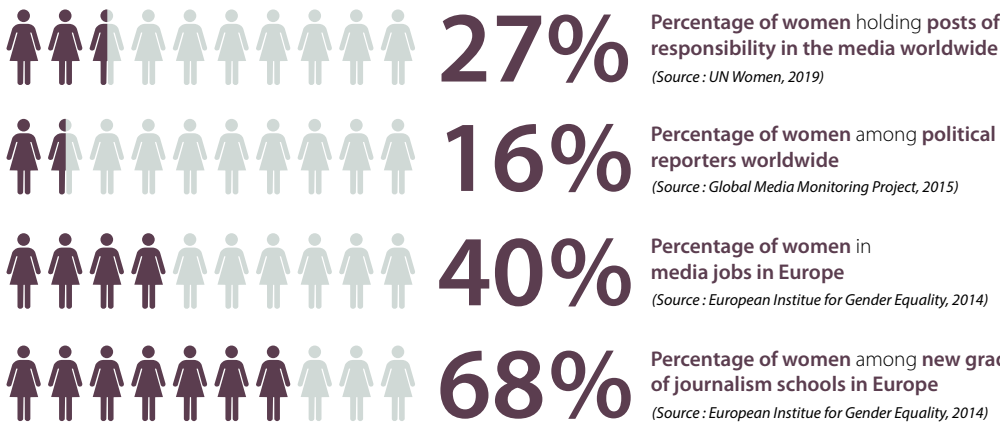


Big Data



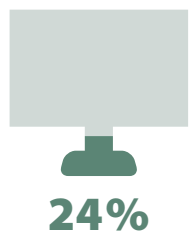
In a street café in Yangon, Myanmar, in April 2019. © Lâm Duc Hiền / Fondation Hirondelle

Women in editorial teams



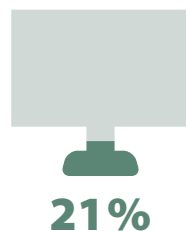
Representation of women by the media

Percentage of women among people seen, heard or mentioned in the media worldwide



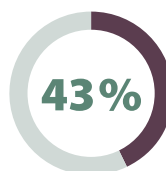
(Source : Global Media Monitoring Project, 2015)

Percentage of women among experts interviewed in the media in the United States



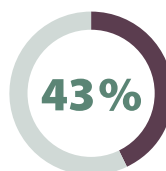
(Source : Women's Media Center, 2019)

Percentage of photos showing only women in the media in Europe



(Source : Observatoire européen du journalisme, 2018)

Percentage of photossowing only men in the media in Europe



Use of the Internet by women

Internet users worldwide



Source : UN Women, 2019

Percentage of women aged 18-29 who have been sexually harassed on the Internet in the United States



Source : UN Women, 2019

Percentage of women harassed on Internet who have chosen to restrict their online expression worldwide



Source : Amnesty International, 2017

Our experience

BUILDING WOMEN'S CITIZENSHIP THROUGH MEDIA



During a debate organized by Fondation Hironnelle in Kinshasa, in June 2018. © Fondation Hironnelle / Justin Makangara



Pauline Bend, Fondation Hironnelle Representative in the Democratic Republic of Congo, points to how this country's media do not cover gender issues enough and what Studio Hironnelle DRC is doing about it.

In the fragile contexts where Fondation Hironnelle operates, particularly in the Democratic Republic of Congo, what are the specific issues with regard to media coverage of women?

Pauline Bend: In the DR Congo, there is a lack of knowledge of the very issues at stake. Women are socially conditioned to marry. The barrier is cultural, including among journalists and even female journalists. Women are expected to stay at home and, if they work, they are not expected to hold high responsibilities. Media professionals, who tend to be poorly trained and informed on the issue, are

not equipped to understand women's issues. They have little knowledge of statistics, and are not shocked by the imbalances even when they know them. We also see that the media have difficulty depicting women as protagonists of their destiny and in society. There are reports on women rape victims and survivors, but the stories usually end there. They almost never present a constructive perspective for action and possible change in the situation of women.

For Fondation Hironnelle, do women journalists have a specific role in the editorial staff? Do they benefit from a specific policy?

In our teams, we ensure parity and empowerment of women. Although we get a big majority of male candidates for jobs, the editorial team of Studio Hironnelle DRC is composed of four men and four women, including editor-in-chief Suzanne Nzobo. Recently, we chose to hire a journalist who is clearly pregnant. In addition, we are working to promote women journalists through our "Women and Elections" programme, which aims to strengthen women's mobilization and participation in public life. Indeed, the

Parity in the newsroom and Women's empowerment

more female journalists are equipped to understand and know the issues of women's participation, the better they are able to cover them in the media. We are therefore developing training courses for female journalists, then selecting about thirty of them to become correspondents of Fondation Hironnelle within our various partner radio stations in the DR Congo.

How does Fondation Hironnelle speak to women in the DRC?

For Fondation Hironnelle in DR Congo, women are full-fledged citizens, so we address them as we do all citizens. But it is true that gender inequality remains a major problem in this country. Women must therefore also be portrayed as full citizens. If they are shown only as victims, for example of violence in conflict, that is only one aspect. We make an effort to also show women who have resisted, to show women in all their complexity. Talking to leading women like the female candidates in legislative elections portrayed in our radio programme Ngoma Ya Kongo or the journalists we highlight in our latest newsletter helps us to better understand the dynamics underlying their action. And it helps us also to better cover other subjects. ■

Eyewitness

GENDER EQUALITY IN THE MEDIA: IMPACT BEYOND THE NEWSROOM

The **International Federation of Journalists**, which brings together 187 unions and member associations in 140 countries, has made the fight for gender equality a priority. Its president, **Philippe Leruth**, explains why and how.

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) “places the fight for gender equality at the heart of its campaigns”. Why?

Philippe Leruth: Gender equality is a cause that is still far from being won at the global level for journalists. Even in countries where equality is affirmed by law and there are collective agreements on equal pay, the “glass ceiling” that prevents women from accessing positions of responsibility still exists, and women therefore suffer from a pay imbalance overall. Even if the profession is becoming more feminine, especially among young journalists, it is still largely male. Moreover, in many countries, equal pay is not even provided for in labour agreements.

So far, what have been the IFJ’s achievements in this campaign?

There are two areas where the IFJ can promote gender equality. First, by practising gender equality itself in its federal bodies and recommending to its member unions and associations that they do the same. In this respect, much remains to be done: there are few women on the IFJ Executive Committee, even though the statutes provide for one of the vice-president positions to be reserved for them. At the IFJ Triennial Congress, instructions are given to ensure parity of delegations. Externally, the IFJ is running an ongoing campaign to promote gender equality, soliciting testimonies and disseminating “good practices” on its website. It also strives to promote gender equality in collective agreements, which it proposes for its member unions and associations so as to set an example. Finally, we have launched a global campaign against sexual harassment in the workplace. Many of these initiatives have been suggested by the IFJ Gender Council.



Philippe Leruth speaking during a meeting in Paris. © DR

What link does IFJ see between the promotion of women in the media and the impact it can have on women’s place in society?

By definition, the IFJ fights for the defence of the material and moral rights of journalists and limits its action to the journalistic community. But it is illusory to hope for gender equality at the professional level if it does not exist at the societal level, so the fight for gender equality in our profession cannot be separated from the fight for gender equality in society. At the same time, if there were gender equality in the media, especially in television, if there were more women journalists and if more women also appeared in the media as experts, this could spur social change. This requires work, since in 2015 only 24% of women led journalistic investigations or reports. The fight for gender equality in the media is therefore a struggle that resonates beyond the media sector. ■

If there are more women appearing in the media, that can bring social change



Fondation Hironnelle is a Swiss non-profit organization which provides information to populations faced with crisis, empowering them in their daily lives and as citizens. Through our work, millions of people in war-affected countries, post-conflict areas, humanitarian crisis and societies in democratic transition have access to media that speak to them and give them a voice.

Impressum

Mediation

Biannual publication of Fondation Hironnelle

Managing Editor:
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Design and editing:
Nicolas Boissez
Benjamin Bibas / la fabrique
documentaire

Graphic design:
Marek Zielinski

Translation:
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Layout and printing:
Groux arts graphiques SA

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