



# 10 ESSENTIALS TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN AND THROUGH MEDIA



## PRINCIPLES



### **Operate within a framework of ethics and safety** across media engagements, by guaranteeing women's and girls' rights to safety and security, confidentiality and privacy, expression of opinion and autonomy to make decisions.

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### **Avoid social and cultural bias** by understanding intersectional identities, the stereotypes and biases that exist and by recognizing how this manifests in the views of personnel, their inter-personal relationships and in the content and work produced.

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### **Maintain a human rights-based and gender equality lens** by framing violence against women and girls as a violation of women's human rights without exceptions and presenting it as a problem of social norms underpinned by discrimination and inequality.

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## PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND RESPECT

1

Strive for gender equality within the organization, including through the recruitment, retention and promotion of women; ensuring women's representation in decision-making; and strengthening entity policies on sexual harassment and work-life balance (with special attention to more equitable caring responsibilities among men and women staff).

2

Address the safety of women journalists' by implementing industry-wide guidelines to identify and monitor harassment and abuse, including online abuse and ensure victims (staff, freelancers – all personnel) have access to reporting mechanisms and support. Practical measure should address prevention of abuse within the organization and specific risks that may arise while on assignment.

3

Conduct training and educational programming to familiarize personnel with the organizational structures, policies, codes and guidelines that exist, as well as, to shift institutional cultures, so that human rights, equality and non-discrimination are embedded in structures and practice.

## MONITOR AND IMPROVE CONTENT

4

Conduct media monitoring across mediums (print, screen, radio and ICTs) to assess if and how stereotypical and discriminatory portrayals of girls, boys, women and men are being reinforced and how violence against women is treated. Use the analysis of the monitoring results to engage with media for positive change.

5

Elaborate ethical, survivor-centred and human rights-based guidelines for editorial content and for the engagement of and interviewing of victims, witnesses and others who may be affected by violence.

6

Build media and information literacy through skills-building to empower women and girls and men and boys to navigate, engage with and critically think about the vast content (including harmful content) they are exposed to, especially through easily accessible video and digital formats. Foster equitable access to information and knowledge.

7

Facilitate media access to the voices of survivors from diverse backgrounds. Ensure informed consent of the survivor and provide her with psychological and public speaking support to enable her to effectively communicate her experience and the messages she wishes to convey.

## PARTNER FOR CHANGE

8

Design an edutainment strategy focused on challenging gender stereotypes, discrimination, inequality and harmful masculinities to highlight the role of social norms in the perpetration and acceptance of violence against women and girls. Approach production companies or create your own media programme using widely available formats such as community radio or social media.

9

Partner with other stakeholders (e.g. women's rights groups, municipal governments) to engage in deeper prevention of violence work, especially those which have roots in the local community to reach men and women, girls and boys through face-to-face dialogue and programming to challenge harmful social norms.

10

Create or join an existing network dedicated to gender, violence against women and girls and media to share information and lessons learned, partner on projects and advocate for change where it is needed.

## Promising Practice Examples

A rigorous **global framework of gender sensitive indicators** was launched in 2012 by **UNESCO**. It aims to help the media assess their progress on issues ranging from gender equality within media organisations to gender portrayal in the media, including violence against women. UNESCO also conducts training, for example for French-speaking member countries of the African Union Radio and TV Broadcasting (AUB) and for members of the Union of Broadcasting of Arab States and Private Media, among others.

The NGO **Gender Links for Equality and Justice** has carried out and published research on gender progress in and through the media, spanning fourteen countries in Southern Africa. Their 2010 audit of media in education programmes sought to understand the state of media gender mainstreaming. Thirteen countries gained centres of excellence for gender and media as a result. These centres work with local councils to integrate gender, through policy, capacity building and monitoring and evaluation, into their work.

The **World Association for Christian Communication** and **The Global Media Monitoring Project** launched an exciting campaign in 2016, aimed at ending media sexism by 2020. This campaign advocates change in journalistic practice and seeks out effective strategies to ensure fair, balanced and non-discriminatory media representation. It offers advocacy materials, a gender-equality scorecard and a media training toolkit to engage the public on this important issue. important fight.

**The 'VOICES' project** saw the NGO Equal Access train rural women in Nepal as community radio reporters. They created a radio programme 'Changing our World' from the collected perspectives of marginalised women, covering issues from peace-building to violence against women and girls. Two million listeners were reached, and sixty listener groups were established to promote behaviour change. An impact assessment demonstrated that the show had increased dialogue and encouraged community action against violence against women.

*Puntos de Encuentro*, a Nicaraguan feminist NGO, ran the weekly TV soap 'Sexto Sentido' as the centrepiece of their '**Somos Diferentes, Somos Iguales**' strategy. The show aired alongside the dissemination of resources for local groups as well as training workshops. The strategy aimed to equip teenagers to make informed choices and contribute to debates on several 'taboo' topics, from sexual violence, to LGBT rights. Exposure to the programme was shown to result, amongst other things, in a reduction of gender-inequitable attitudes and an increase in dialogue on HIV prevention and sexual behaviour.

**Soul City** is one of the most significant and longest running edutainment programmes aimed at the prevention of violence against women and girls. Accompanied by radio output, advertising and public resources, it's rigorously researched and evaluated episodes reached millions of people in South Africa and beyond. Exposure to the show made victims and survivors of violence more likely to seek support, and viewers generally more likely to recognise domestic violence as a serious injustice.