



MEDIA AND GENDER VIOLENCE



30 November -
1 December 2023



Kigali
Rwanda

Conference Report

Overview

The 7th African Women in Media Conference (AWiM23), held in Kigali, Rwanda with 242 attendees, concluded with the adoption of the Kigali Declaration on the Elimination of Gender Violence in and through Media in Africa.

It was a crucial moment as over 200 women and men in media, academia, policymakers, civil society and funders, raised their voices in support of a document that was not only put together for the media, but by people who work within the media space.

The Kigali Declaration, in principle, includes, but not limited to, the following:

- Media portrayal and representation of survivors and victims of gender-based violence should be fair, balanced, unbiased and free of gender stereotypes.
- Media organisations should increase ethical coverage of all forms of violence against all women and girls regardless of ethnicity, class, ability and other distinctions.
- Media organisations and all industry bodies should establish guidelines on all forms of coverage of content on violence against women and girls. They should provide training to foster meaningful implementation and monitoring of the guidelines.
- Media organisations, associations and unions should address and combat sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women in the physical and on-line media workplace.

Read and sign the Declaration here: africanwomeninmedia.com/declaration



africanwomeninmedia.com/awim23

Conference Agenda

Program of activities: Day 1

7.30am - 8.30am Registration

8.30am - 9.00am Welcome

MC - Amandine Ndikumasabo

9.15am - 10.00am Opening Remarks

Dr Yemisi Akinbobola - CEO & Co-founder- African Women in Media

Dr Amina Salihu - MacArthur Foundation
Arthur Asiimwe- Rwanda Broadcasting Agency
Johanna Teague- Swedish Ambassador to Rwanda
Annelie Frank- Rwanda Media Program.

10:00am - 10.45am Keynote on Media and Gender Violence

Moderator - Dr Yemisi Akinbobola
Misako Ito | Dr Sarah Macharia | Agneta Soderberg Jacobson | Arthur Asiimwe

10.45am - 11:00am BREAK
Kilimanjaro Foyer

11:00am - 1:00pm From Headlines to Action:
Accountability and collective action in media coverage of Gender-based violence.

Moderator - Regine AKALIKUMUTIMA
Carolyn Thompson | Latifa Akharbach | Fitih Alemu

Violence & other barriers against women in the media.

Moderator- Susan Makore
Mamaponya Motsai | Uwamahoro Nadine | Keziah Githinji

Sexual Harassment in the media: From awareness to action.

Moderator- Honnette Isimbi
Peace TUMWESIGIRE | Bibio INGABIRE | Meseret Kebede | Najma Abdullahi Ahmed

Tools and Resources: Proposal Writing & Reporting, Online & Field Safety.
Bongiwe Tutu | Thomas Lethoba

LUNCH

2:00pm - 4:00pm What is to be done?
Tackling digital violence against women in and beyond media.

Moderator: Uwera Astrida
Professor Glenda Daniels | Dr Omega Douglas | Nokuthaba Mathema

Visual Vignettes: Gender Based Violence in film, TV and other visual media.

Moderator: Christine Ingabire
Chika Nnabuife | Mwape Kumwenda | Aidah Munzatsi

A look inward: Protecting Women in media and our role as female media leaders.

Type: Panel
Room: Kilimanjaro

Moderator - Oluwadara Ajala
Catherine Gicheru | Adenike Aloba | Toun Okewale Sonaiya

Future of reporting Gender-Based Violence in the media.

Lister Namumba

BREAK - Kilimanjaro Foyer

4.30pm - 6.30pm Tackling the Trolls: Exploring the Effects of Online Harassment and Misogyny on Women in Media.

Moderator - Patricia Namutebi

Joan Letting | Nyarai Sabeka | Nonhlanhla Ngwenya | Rebecca Birungi

The role of the media in countering misinformation and disinformation on gender-based violence.

Moderator- Rachel Ombaka

Carolyn Ashaba | Omogolo Taunyane | Dr Ke Cai | Dr Jingwei Zhang

The role of gender clubs in journalism teaching universities in fighting against gender-based violence.

Ignite Talk 2

Experiences from The Quote This Woman+

Moderator: Diane MUSHIMIYIMANA

Patricia Namutebi | Charlene Furaha | Kath Magrobi

Program of activities: Day 2

8.30am - 9.00am Registration

9:00am - 11.00am Media Business and Financial Models Plenary and Workshop by MacArthur Foundation

Moderators- Dr Yemisi Akinbobola

Oluwadara Ajala | Qaanitah Hunter | Kathryn Kotze | Lars Tallert | Christine Nguku

BREAK

11.15am - 1:00pm Challenges and opportunities in the media's role, representation and coverage of gender-based violence.

Moderator- Queenter Mbori

Agaredech Jemaneh Gameda | Sarah Mawerere | Enatnesh Muluken Fetene
Nomshado Nkosinkulu | Thandi Bombi

Policies and strategies against gender-based violence in media organizations.

Moderator: Amandine NDIKUMASABO

Gladness Munuo | Jan Ajwang | Rebecca Ekpe | Sharon Kimachu

FOJO fact checking workshop

Annelie Frank

Exploring The Ethical and Gender-Sensitive Reporting of Gender-Based Violence in the African Media Space

Folaranmi Folayan | Nelly Kalu

LUNCH

2:00pm - 3:15pm Declaration Round tables in Plenary

Declaration Round Table Moderators

3.15pm - 4:00pm BREAK

4.30-5.30pm Declaration Announcement & Closing

Declaration Announcement- Dr Sarah Macharia

Minister of Gender and Family Promotion- Hon. Valentine Uwamariya.

Opening Remarks



Dr. Amina Salihu
Deputy Director, Africa Office
at MacArthur Foundation



Ms. Yolande Makolo
Rwanda Government
Spokesperson



HE. Johanna Teague
Swedish Ambassador
to Rwanda



Annelie Frank
Head of Fojo Media Institute's
programme in Rwanda.



Mr. Arthur Asiiimwe
Director General at Rwanda Broadcasting
Agency (RBA) and President African Union of
Broadcasters (AUB)



Dr. Yemisi Akinbobola
Co-founder and CEO, African
Women in Media

DAY ONE

The Media and Gender Violence conference opened on the first day with remarks from Yolande Makolo, Spokesperson of the Rwanda Government, Dr Amina Salihu, MacArthur Foundation, Johanna Teague, Swedish Ambassador to Rwanda, Dr Yemisi Akinbobola, African Women in Media. Opening remarks were also made by Annelie Frank head of Fojo Media Institute's programme in Rwanda, and Arthur Asiimwe, the Director General at Rwanda Broadcasting Agency (RBA) and President African Union of Broadcasters (AUB).

The conference convened media practitioners, academia, filmmakers, development actors, policy actors and CSOs to share best practices and set actions to address the issues related to gender violence especially as recent statistics show that gender-based violence remains a prevalent global issue, disproportionately affecting women and girls.

Ms. Yolande Makolo

Rwanda Government Spokesperson



Ms Makolo thanked the organisers saying this is an important effort as it is a fact that female journalists are often subjected to violence, harassment and different forms of intimidation in the newsroom and in the field.

She ended her remarks with a quote from President Paul Kagame saying that: ***“The only way to think about violence against women and girls is as a violation of rights, a crime and indeed a threat to progress in Africa and around the world. To call it anything else would add to the assault.”***

Dr. Yemisi Akinbobola

CEO & Co-founder, African Women in Media.



Dr Yemisi Akinbobola kicked off her opening remarks by asking attendees to close their eyes and *“Imagine a world where there was no longer a need for us to talk about gender-based violence, where there was no longer a need to develop policies and Declarations that address sexual harassment, on-line harassment.*

Where there was no longer a need to have to urge the media to include women’s perspectives in their content and in their organizational practices. The way they work, the way they think. This is possible.”

She emphasized the need for everyone in the media sector to invest in female staff and prevent their environment and newsrooms from being susceptible to gender-related violence.

H.E. Johanna Teague
Swedish Ambassador in Rwanda



Ambassador Teague said she was proud that Sweden had contributed to see this conference happen. She reminded the attendees the fact that every year around the world, 245 million women and girls experience physical and sexual violence by the partners, and more than four in five women live in countries without sufficient legislation and legal protection against gender-based violence.

She reiterated the fact that new technologies also make way for new types of violence saying that almost four out of ten women globally have experienced online violence.

Annelie Frank

Head of Fojo Media Institute's programme in Rwanda



Annelie Frank started her remarks by thanking participants for attending the AWiM 2023 conference to discuss the Kigali Declaration on the Elimination of Gender Violence in and through Media in Africa saying that she did not expect this kind of discussion to take place 25 years ago when she started as a sports journalist in a male-dominated newsroom.

She said that the media and journalist can do a lot to stop gender violence giving an example of how 34 media houses in Rwanda the week before signed the Rwanda Media Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy.

She ended her remarks with a dream: what if the Kigali Declaration on the Elimination of Gender Violence in and through Media in Africa can be a shining and inspiring example, role model to the rest of the world to have their own models.

Mr. Arthur Asiimwe

Director General at Rwanda Broadcasting Agency (RBA) and President African Union of Broadcasters (AUB)



Mr Asiimwe called for the end of the terrible bad habit of gender - based violence but adding that in Rwanda there is strong political will to fight gender-based violence.

“Raising awareness and prioritizing the media sector’s involvement in combating gender-based violence are crucial steps. It’s essential for men to take a proactive role in unification to protect women.” Said Mr. Arthur Asiimwe.

Watch the full coverage of Day One Plenary Sessions [here](#):

Keynote on Media and Gender Violence



After the opening remarks, speakers including Dr Sarah Macharia, Arthur Asiimwe, Misako Ito and Agneta Söderberg Jacobson shared their thoughts in a panel discussion.

This insightful panel discussion started with Dr Yemisi showing the very first AWiM Magazine and acknowledged her team that made it happen.

Dr Yemisi as the moderator asked Misako Ito to share her thoughts given research findings showing that 73% women have experienced some form of violence in the media industry.

They said that there is a need for everyone to be sensitized and know what is happening and take complete action.

The panel discussion focused on the issue of sexual harassment in the media industry, examining various aspects. Shockingly, 23% of women and girls in the media, face challenges of sexual harassment, with 20% experiencing physical violence. Among other forms of violence includes digital harassment on social media platforms to mention but a few. The working conditions were highlighted as a motivation of sexual harassment exacerbated by the prevalent gender inequality. The discussions emphasized on campaign against sexual harassment in the media industry as the journey is still long. It was pointed out further that effects of gender based violence in the media concern mostly women and girls, among other negative impacts includes job losses and lack of access to opportunities.

The panel underscored the urgent need for systemic change and intensive efforts to create a safe and equitable environment for women and girls in the media industry.

Break-out sessions

From Headlines to Action: Accountability and collective action in media coverage of Gender-based violence.

This panel featured Carolyn Thompson, an award-winning data journalist based in East Africa who reports primarily on human rights, refugees, politics and the economy, Latifa Akharbach, President of Morocco's High Authority of Audiovisual Communication, Fiti Alemu, a lecturer and communication expert.

They discussed how reporters often approach GBV coverage. They said that there should be tangible actions even though there are challenges.

The panelists in a nutshell said that collaboration between countries, and organisations is very important in the fight against gender-based violence.

Violence & other barriers against women in media

During this breakout session, all the panelists including Mamaponya Motsai, Uwamahoro Nadine, Eden Sahle and Moderator - Susan Makore addressed the several barriers and types of violence faced by women in the media. With tangible examples of girls with a passion for journalism being forced by their parents not to pursue the career, to women with expertise in the industry facing backlash from society in and out of the newsroom. They did not leave it there though, as everyone agreed that there needs to be change and the panelists gave some ideas like collaboration with like-minded organisations to make sure we are in this fight together.

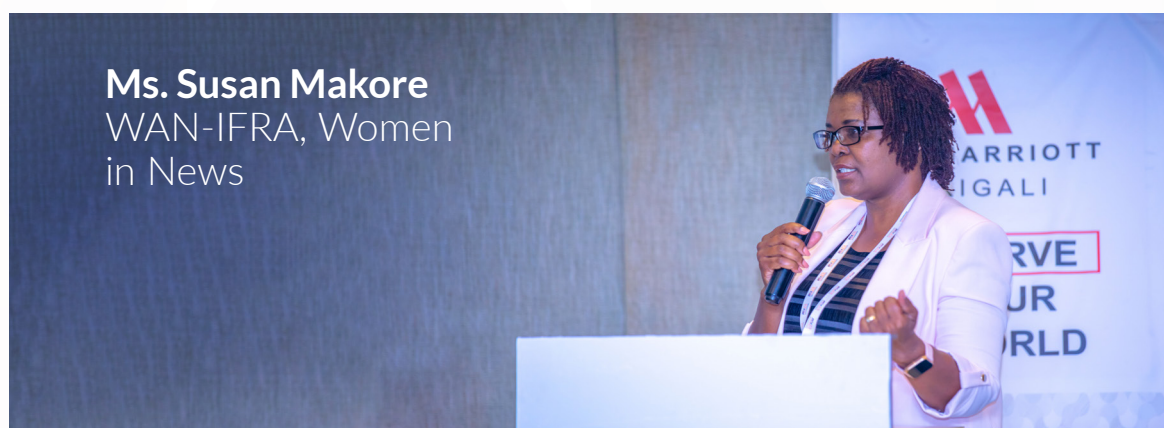
Tools and Resources: Proposal Writing & Reporting, Online & Field Safety

This session was about the Africa-China Reporting Project which is based at Wits Centre of Journalism in Johannesburg and aims at promoting nuanced and balanced news on Africa-China relations through journalism training projects.

The project has helped improve the quality of reporting on Africa-China relations by offering reporting grants, reporting resources.

The facilitator, Bongiwe Tutu, showed the participants how to prepare and write good grant proposals. The session was lively and interactive like many other sessions of day one.

Still on the first day of the conference, participants also attended, in a safe space, a session on sexual harassment in the media. Under the principle of "What happens in this room, stays in this room" women journalists from Rwanda, Ethiopia and Somalia shared experiences on sexual harassment in the media sector.



DAY TWO

Highlights of the Conference



Welcome and Overview

The Media and Gender Violence conference opened on Day Two with remarks from media development experts, journalists and media researchers including the award-winning journalist and News24 Politics Editor, Qaanitah Hunter, Operations Manager at Daily Marverick, Kathy Kotze, Founder and President of Sustainable Journalism Partnership and Senior Advisor at Fojo Media Institute, Lars Tallert and Oluwadara Ajala, Programme Manager at Nigeria Media Innovation Program, Media Development Investment Fund.

The plenary session, titled "Media Business and Financial Models" was held in partnership with MacArthur Foundation. Panelists and participants discussed emerging challenges and opportunities to advance media business models, and how philanthropic organisations can better support this.

Dr. Amina Salihu

Deputy Director, Africa Office, MacArthur Foundation



In her opening remarks, Dr Amina Salihu said that they have had different consultations on this matter on media business and financial models but that this was the first time the convening has majority in the room are media women leaders.

The speakers emphasized the fact that media houses need to develop business strategies that make them sustainable.

Oluwadara Ajala, the Programme Manager at Nigeria Media Innovation Program, Media Development Investment Fund said that media houses need to develop business models to help them continue to remain sustainable.

She explained that there are four generic ways through which media houses can generate revenue and remain sustainable. They include: selling your users, selling to your users, resources and services and ideas.

The media house needs to know their value, she insisted.

Meanwhile Lars Tallert, the Founder and President of the Sustainable Journalism Partnership. He is also a Senior Advisor at Fojo Media Institute, Linneaus University and Sweden's representative to UNESCO/IPDC Intergovernmental Council, said that, as a dedicated feminist, he was glad to be invited to this conference.

On business strategies, he talked about a short-term strategy and a long-term strategy. He also said each country has its own context.

He said that Scandinavian and African media researchers came together to rethink how to do journalism and they came up with what they called Sustainable journalism.

They created an NGO called Sustainable Journalism Partnership and they currently have 400 members in 68 countries.

When we talk about sustainability we tend to focus only on financial sustainability.

To talk about sustainability of media, he said, we need to consider also gender balance and make sure that the production and distribution are environmentally sustainable.

He said that there is a need to rethink journalism.

He added that an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable society requires journalism that addresses these challenges where the continued relevance of journalism depends on its ability to meet these challenges based on solid business strategies. We have to be innovative when developing strategies, he said.

The key questions from panelists: How can journalism better contribute to sustainable society?

How can media itself be more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable?

Kathryn Kotze - Operations Manager at South Africa's Daily Maverick said that media houses don't have to rely on grant funding but also need to tap into commercial and reader revenues.

Meanwhile Qaanitah Hunter, also a South African journalist, said that audience is no longer homogeneous group, once they are not interested in your content, they will go to follow something else.

The panel was interactive and informative.

The participants also had a chance to interact amongst themselves in round-table discussions where each table had two questions to discuss and feedback other participants.

The questions are: What is the biggest challenge of your newsroom? What solutions are required to solve these challenges?

In the round-tables' discussions, the attendees wrote the answers in feedback notes.

Break-out sessions: panel presentations



Challenges and opportunities in the media's role, representation and coverage of gender-based violence

The session focused on challenges that lead to gender-based violence and how media houses currently cover gender-based violence across Africa.

But in terms of recommendations, the panelists suggested that community radios and media in general should be adopted.

Ugandan radio journalist Sarah Mawerere insisted that it is important to use multiple languages in radio to fight gender-based violence especially because access is easy.

While Ethiopian Agaredech Jemaneh Gemeda who is Assistant Lecturer said that community media by community, for community in the community has a lot of advantages as it is a voice of the voiceless especially women and girls.

One participant, Ildephonse Sinabubariraga, an experienced broadcaster and the Managing Director of community Radio Ishingiro said that concrete actions should be taken from the conference.

He insisted that at the grassroots young girls should be inspired and empowered so that they build a strong vision for their future.

Policies and strategies against gender-based violence in media organisations

On the panel was Gladness Munuo, a journalist and an award-winning gender activist from Tanzania, with over 20 years of human rights and media experience, Sharon Kimachu, a student at Strathmore University and a journalism enthusiast, Rebecca Ekpe, a Ghanaian media expert, and Jan Ajwang, Projects Manager at Media Focus on Africa, Uganda.

The discussion revolved around strengthening women's voices and choices through media reporting on sexual reproductive health and rights, and the policies being taken by various media leaders to address women's issues in media.

They urged the media practitioners to raise awareness especially by ensuring that the whole ecosystem must work together to change the environment in the newsrooms.

AWiM2023 attendees had a chance to learn about fact checking especially in the era of disinformation when Internet users share information sometimes to earn clicks, shares and likes. It was held by Fojo Media Institute and attendees tested methods to detect disinformation and be able to debunk that lie especially using the existing technology.

Fireside Chat | Exploring the Ethical and Gender-Sensitive Reporting of Gender-Based Violence in the African Media Space

The session was hosted by two Nigerian ladies Fola Foyan, media communications specialist and Nelly Kalu, a multiplatform investigative journalist with experience in fact checking and investigating disinformation. The session was geared towards women in media and the part they play in advocating towards fighting gender-based violence.

The speakers said that journalists have to look at sensitivity in reporting, collaboration, cultural consideration and understand bias that may exist in society or merely in media. Attendees agreed on the fact that media is nowadays being intruded by online existing tech companies, AI and many more known and unknown but existing bottlenecks.

Hon. Valentine Uwamariya

Rwanda's Minister of Gender and Family Promotion



Rwanda's Minister of Gender and Family Promotion **Hon. Valentine Uwamariya** graced the conference on day two.

She urged every participant to continue the discussion in all the different spheres of their influence for a just society.

Day Two ended in a colorful and joyful historic moment as the [Kigali Declaration on the Elimination of Gender Violence in and through Media in Africa](#) was adopted.

Dr Yemisi said she was overjoyed with the outcome of the event and its impact. She was grateful for the active participation of everyone, and for all the congratulatory messages the AWiM team have received.

The 7th AWiM conference ended with a group photo of all participants and later in the evening, attendees enjoyed the conference dinner themed 'African Elegance'. It was a celebratory moment to wrap up a two-day conference.

Gala Dinner













Gallery







ABOUT AWiM23

Media and gender violence refer to the intersection of the way in which media portrays gender and the perpetuation of violence against individuals based on their gender identity.

This is not only limited to physical violence but also includes psychological, sexual and economic forms of violence. Recent statistics show that gender-based violence remains a prevalent issue globally, with women and girls being disproportionately affected.

The conference output was the co-design of the Kigali Declaration on the Elimination of Gender Violence in and through Media in Africa.

<https://africanwomeninmedia.com/declaration/>

ABOUT AFRICAN WOMEN IN MEDIA

African Women in Media (AWiM) is a network for African women working in media industries globally. We aim to positively impact the way media functions in relation to women, and our vision is that one-day African women and women working in media in Africa will have equal representation in media industries.

For more information, visit our website and follow us on social media:

Website: www.africanwomeninmedia.com Facebook: [@africanwomeninmedia](https://www.facebook.com/africanwomeninmedia)

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