Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA)

GENDER MAINSTREAMING GUIDELINE FOR THE MEDIA SECTOR IN TANZANIA

November, 2025

TANZANIA MEDIA WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (TAMWA)

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1.1 Executive Summary

The Gender Mainstreaming Guideline for the Media Sector in Tanzania, developed by the Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA), provides a strategic framework to advance gender equality and inclusive practices within the media industry. Recognizing the media's power to shape public opinion and cultural norms, the guideline positions gender mainstreaming as both a moral obligation and a professional standard essential to ethical and credible journalism.

Despite Tanzania's commitment to global and regional frameworks, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), CEDAW, and the Beijing Platform for Action, gender disparities remain evident across the media sector. Women continue to be underrepresented in leadership and editorial positions, face limited access to career advancement, and are frequently portrayed through stereotypical or marginalized narratives. These patterns diminish women's voices in public discourse and weaken media integrity and diversity.

To address these challenges in the media houses, the guideline outlines four key objectives: (i) ensure adoption of gender-responsive policies and establishment of gender desks; (ii) promote inclusive and stereotype-free media content; (iii) increase women's participation in leadership and decision-making roles; (iv) strengthen monitoring, reporting, and accountability mechanisms for gender mainstreaming. During the stakeholders' meeting, participants reaffirmed these objectives. They emphasized the urgent need for greater leadership commitment, functional gender desks, effective policy enforcement, and the creation of safe, inclusive workplaces free from harassment and discrimination.

The guideline was developed through a participatory, evidence-based process that included policy reviews, expert consultations, and validation workshops with media professionals and gender advocates. It aligns with national frameworks such as the National Gender and Women's

Development Policy (2023) and the Tanzania Development Vision 2050, ensuring relevance to both local and international commitments. The stakeholder reflections also highlighted that collaboration among media houses, regulators, training institutions, and civil society is essential to sustain gender mainstreaming efforts. Media leaders were urged to institutionalize gender practices through budgeting, regular monitoring, and capacity-building initiatives.

However, previous implementations faced persistent barriers, including weak policy enforcement, limited resources, inadequate gender-disaggregated data, cultural resistance, and minimal integration of gender training into journalism education. Participants further identified opportunities to accelerate progress, such as leveraging online and social media platforms to raise gender awareness, collaborating with gender-focused organizations to advocate, and securing funding to support gender-responsive content and projects. The creation of gender desks and balanced representation were recognized as avenues to enhance workplace performance and institutional accountability.

In light of these reflections, the stakeholders collectively called for actionable policies written in friendly and straightforward language, clear implementation plans and M&E frameworks, and inclusive awareness programs for both staff and interns. They emphasized that gender equality must become a lived practice across all media operations, not merely a written commitment.

Ultimately, this guideline serves as a transformative resource for building a media sector that not only reports on gender issues but also embodies and promotes gender equality in practice. Its effective adoption will strengthen democratic values, enhance professional standards, and contribute to a more just, inclusive, and equitable Tanzanian society.

Dr. Rose Reuben
Executive Director - TAMWA

1.2 Acronyms and Abbreviations

BPfA	-	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	-	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSOs	-	Civil Society Organisations
DMG	-	Dodoma Media Group
EPOCA	-	Electronic and Postal Communications Act
GBV	-	Gender-Based Violence
HR	-	Human Resources
JAB	-	Journalists Accreditation Board
MCT	-	Media Council of Tanzania
MDGs	-	Millennium Development Goals
ME&A	-	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organisation
SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	-	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
TAMWA	-	Tanzania Media Women's Association
ToT	-	Training of Trainers
TCRA	-	Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority
ZBC	-	Zanzibar Broadcasting Corporation

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SECTION ONE

1.1 Introduction

Gender mainstreaming in the media sector is essential for advancing gender equality and fostering fair, inclusive societies. Across Eastern Africa, significant progress has been made toward promoting gender equality in the media; however, notable gaps persist.[1]. Initiatives such as gender-focused training, the creation of supportive newsroom environments, and the adoption of clear gender policies have empowered many women journalists. These interventions have also enhanced the quality of gender-sensitive reporting, ensuring that media content reflects a broader range of perspectives and experiences.

Despite these achievements, women remain underrepresented and often misrepresented in media spaces, whether as news subjects, sources, or professionals. Gender disparities persist, with women journalists frequently earning less than their male counterparts for equivalent work.[2]. In South Africa, for instance, although the Constitution guarantees gender equality, women remain underrepresented in senior editorial and decision-making roles within media organizations.[3]. Many

1 Eastern Africa Journalists Association. (2008). Enhancing gender equality in the media in Eastern Africa. Retrieved from https://focusintl.com/GD139-Enhancing%20Gender%20Equality%20in%20the%20Media%20in%20Eastern%20Africa.pdf

2 Duwe, S., & White, L. (2011). Gender equality: lived experiences of women in the media industry in Tanzania. International Journal of Research in Social Sciences, 6(8), 734–738.

3 Graff, L. A. B. (2016). The representation of female journalists and the female voice in the South African newspapers: A case study of the Cape Times. University of Cape Town. Retrieved from https://open.uct.ac.za/items/06435100-90e4-4aa5-852d-cda301127a0c

female journalists also encounter sexism, harassment, and entrenched patriarchal workplace cultures that hinder their professional growth and participation.[4].

Integrating gender considerations into everyday media operations helps organizations become more equitable, diverse, and responsive. When gender equality is prioritized, the media not only produces more balanced reporting but also strengthens institutional accountability and inclusivity.

In Tanzania, gender mainstreaming within the media sector is crucial for promoting equality and inclusion. However, research reveals that many media laws and policies in the country still overlook gender dimensions, thereby limiting women's opportunities and representation[5]. Addressing these gaps through policy reforms, gender-sensitive frameworks, and institutional commitment is vital to building a media landscape where both women and men can contribute and thrive equally.

To guide gender mainstreaming efforts, national frameworks such as the *National Guidelines for Mainstreaming Gender into Environment* can be adapted and applied to the media sector. These guidelines advocate integrating gender considerations into all aspects of policy and decision-making to promote equality and inclusivity.[6] (Vice President's Office, 2010).

4 Govender, G. (2025). Examining women journalists' experiences of patriarchy and gender-based power imbalances in South Africa. MDPI. Retrieved from https://www.mdpi.com/2673-5172/6/1/27

5 Tanzania Media Women's Association. (2022). A gender audit of Tanzania's media laws and policies. Retrieved from https://tamwa.org/a/images/pdf/Gender Audit Report.pdf

6 Vice President's Office. (2010). The National Guidelines for Mainstreaming Gender into Environment. Retrieved from https://www.vpo.go.tz/uploads/publications/sw-1592644210-THE-NATIONAL-GUIDELINES-FOR-MAINSTREAMING-GENDER-INTO-ENVIRONMENT.pdf

1.2 Background and Rationale

The media sector holds immense power to shape how societies see themselves, strengthen or challenge norms, and drive gender equality. For TAMWA, across media houses and through them, there is a significant perspective on the role of media in gender transformation. In Tanzania, however, gender imbalances remain entrenched in both newsroom culture and content production. Women are underrepresented in editorial leadership, face limited career growth, and often lack access to formal protections against harassment. Media narratives frequently perpetuate gender stereotypes and fail to reflect the experiences of rural women and people with disabilities (TAMWA, 2022)7. Female voices, especially in political, economic, and decision-making coverage, are routinely sidelined or reduced to stereotypes.

Despite Tanzania's commitments to frameworks such as the SDGs, CEDAW, its Gender and Development Policy, and the country's Vision 2050, most media institutions have yet to embed gender into their core operations. Structural inequalities, patriarchal norms, and the lack of enforceable gender policies continue to hold progress back (Hoyce & Ng'atigwa, 2024).[8]

Gender mainstreaming is no longer optional; it's a strategic necessity. Integrating gender across media leadership, editorial processes, and capacity building not only improves equity but also strengthens journalistic standards and credibility. These guidelines aim to provide clear, context-specific, and actionable steps for Tanzanian media to make gender inclusion a reality across content and culture.

7 TAMWA. (2022). A Gender Audit of Tanzania's Media Laws and Policies. Dar es Salaam: TAMWA

8 Hoyce, T., & Ng'atigwa, X. (2024). *Exploring gender equity in Tanzania: A comprehensive study on the need for inclusive practices in selected major media houses.*

1.3 Purpose and Objectives of the Guideline

This guideline is designed to institutionalise gender mainstreaming across Tanzania's media sector. It addresses disparities in staffing, leadership, and content, and promotes fair representation of all genders in media operations and outputs.

The main objective of this guideline is to provide media houses in Tanzania with a practical framework for integrating gender equality into their operations and content production, while promoting sustainable, transformative, and gender-mainstreaming practices. Therefore, this guideline is intended to achieve the following:

i. Ensure that all media institutions adopt and implement gender-responsive policies and establish gender desks.
ii. Reduce gender-stereotyped content and increase coverage of marginalised groups with a gender lens.
iii. Increase the proportion of women in media leadership and decision-making roles.
iv. Establish clear tools and indicators for monitoring and reporting on gender equity progress.

1.4 The Main Gaps of Gender Mainstreaming in the Media Sector

There are common gaps in gender mainstreaming within the media sector. Among them are: under-representation of women (as subjects and sources), lack of institutional gender policies, continuous gender stereotyping, sexual harassment at workplaces, insufficient resources, etc.

i. Under-representation of Women

One of the most significant gaps in gender mainstreaming in the media is the low presence of women, both in news content (as subjects or sources) and in leadership roles in the media. Globally, women make up only about 25% of those featured

in the news, and in Africa, the number is even lower at around 22%9. In Tanzania, women journalists are often assigned to "soft" beats such as health and education, while men dominate politics, business, and investigative reporting.10 Few women reach senior editorial or managerial positions, limiting their influence and reinforcing a male-dominated newsroom culture that keeps gender inequality alive.

ii. Lack of Institutional Gender Policies

Another critical gap is the absence or weak enforcement of institutional gender policies in media organizations. Many media houses lack clear gender policies or systems to address discrimination, sexual harassment, or GBV in workplaces. This leaves incidents of gender-based abuse unreported and unresolved. Studies in Tanzania and across Africa show that women journalists often fear retaliation or job loss if they speak up, making accountability weak and gender mainstreaming largely ineffective.[11].

iii. Continuous Gender Stereotyping

Media coverage often reinforces traditional gender roles, portraying women as victims, homemakers, or decorative objects, while men are shown as leaders or experts[12].

9 World Association for Christian Communication (WACC). (2021). Global Media Monitoring Project 2020: Who Makes the News? Toronto: WACC Global. Retrieved from https://waccglobal.org/gmmp-2020-highlights-of-the-findings

10 Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA). (2022). Gender Audit Report on Media Laws and Policies in Tanzania. Dar es Salaam: TAMWA. Retrieved from https://tamwa.org/a/images/pdf/Gender/Audit/Report.pdf and UNESCO. (2019). Gender Equality in Media and ICT: Policy and Training Manual. Paris: UNESCO.

11 Please refer to the above report of TAMWA and WAN-IFRA Women in News. (2020). Sexual Harassment in the Media: A Global Study. WAN-IFRA. Retrieved from https://womeninnews.org

12 WACC, 2021

In Tanzania, according to studies by TAMWA (2022) and UNESCO (2019), many media outlets still frame women's stories within traditional gender roles, emphasizing appearance or family status over professional achievements. For example, women in politics or leadership are subjected to sexist scrutiny, and gender-based violence is framed primarily around victimhood rather than empowerment. This biased content limits the media's ability to challenge stereotypes.

iv. Sexual Harassment at Workplaces

Another significant gap is the prevalence of sexual harassment and gender-based exploitation in media workplaces, which remains a substantial obstacle to gender equality. Sexual harassment remains a serious barrier for women journalists. Nearly 48% of women in Tanzania report experiencing harassment or coercion, including demands for sexual favors for career advancement.[13]. Weak reporting mechanisms and fear of retaliation force many victims to remain silent, discouraging women from staying or progressing in the profession.[14] (The Chanzo, 2024).

v. Insufficient Resources

A further gap is the lack of sustained resources, gender training, and enforcement mechanisms to effectively implement gender mainstreaming. Even when policies exist, media houses often lack funding, training, or monitoring to implement them effectively. Gender initiatives are usually short-term or donor-driven, and few organizations allocate budgets or assign staff to oversee gender mainstreaming.

13 Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA). (2020). Study on Sexual Corruption in Media Houses. Dar es Salaam: TAMWA. Retrieved from https://tamwa.org/a/images/pdf/TAMWAStudyonSexualCorruptionDecember2020.pdf; Women in News (2020).

14 You can read an article from The Chanzo. (2024, January 17). Tanzania's Newsrooms Are Increasingly Becoming Dangerous for Women Journalists. Accessed from https://thechanzo.com/2024/01/17/tanzanias-newsrooms-are-increasingly-becoming-dangerous-for-women-journalists

Most media houses lack gender focal persons or budget lines for gender mainstreaming, making implementation inconsistent and unsustainable.[15]. Without resources and enforcement, gender equality commitments are not practically oriented.

1.5 Scope and Applicability

This guideline applies to all stakeholders in Tanzania's media ecosystem. This includes public and private media houses, printing, broadcast, and digital platforms, journalism training institutions, regulatory authorities, and media-focused civil society organisations. It also serves as a reference for development, working to support gender equality and media development in Tanzania.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To make sure everyone using this guideline is on the same page, here are clear explanations of important terms used throughout:

Gender mainstreaming means ensuring that every policy, law, or program considers how it affects both women and men. It's about putting gender equality at the heart of all decisions, across all sectors and levels.

Gender equality and equity are closely related but different. Gender equality means everyone has the same rights and opportunities, regardless of gender. Gender equity, on the other hand, is about fairness, making sure everyone gets the support they need to achieve equal outcomes, even if that means different treatment for different needs.

Gender-sensitive reporting is journalism that gives a fair and accurate voice to both women and men. It avoids stereotypes and makes sure stories reflect real, diverse experiences.

15 UNESCO, 2019; TAMWA, 2022; Gender Links. (2021). Gender in Media Education Audit: Southern Africa. Johannesburg: Gender Links. Retrieved from https://genderlinks.org.za

A gender desk is a specific unit or contact point within an organisation that handles gender-related issues. It promotes gender-friendly practices, supports victims of harassment, and ensures gender is factored into programming and policy.

Sexual corruption (also known as sextortion) happens when someone abuses their power to demand sexual Favors in return for jobs, services, promotions, or other benefits. It usually targets people in vulnerable situations, especially where there's a power imbalance.

Marginalized groups are communities or individuals who face ongoing barriers and discrimination due to things like gender, disability, age, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. These groups often have limited access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making spaces.

Inclusive content refers to media that fairly represent different voices, identities, and experiences. It challenges stereotypes and ensures no one is left out of the story.

Intersectionality is a way of understanding how different parts of a person's identity, such as gender, race, class, or disability, intersect to shape their experiences and the challenges they face. It helps us see the whole picture, not just one piece.

1.7 Policy Development Methodology

This guideline is developed through a participatory, evidence-driven process. It began with a desk review of national policies, TAMWA publications, and global frameworks such as UNESCO's Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media. Key informant interviews were held with media professionals, academics, civil society actors, and gender experts across nine institutions. A purposive sampling approach enabled comparative analysis of TAMWA-supported and non-supported media outlets. The findings will be validated after the stakeholders' workshop with editors, HR managers, higher learning instructors, and gender advocates.

1.8 Guiding principles

The guideline principles that shape the guideline's approach, including the following, but not limited to;

i. Inclusivity and non-discrimination
ii. Accountability and transparency
iii. Participation and representation
iv. Data-driven decision making
v. Do No Harm / Ethics in reporting
vi. Intersectional approach (gender, age, disability, geography)

SECTION TWO

POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 International and Regional Instruments

Global and regional frameworks have progressively increased gender equality as a core principle of sustainable development. The transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) marked a significant shift. While the MDGs targeted poverty reduction, education, and health, the SDGs introduced specific, measurable commitments such as Goal 5 (Gender Equality), Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), and Goal 17 (Partnerships for Sustainable Development)[16].

TAMWA has localised these global priorities by implementing gender-responsive media initiatives. Its work includes research, advocacy, and capacity-building aimed at addressing gender disparities in Tanzanian media institutions. A landmark study, *Sexual Corruption in Media Houses*, revealed that 48% of women journalists in Tanzania had experienced sexual harassment or sextortion, often from senior managers.[17]. The report exposed a culture of silence driven by fear of retaliation and the absence of gender policies or complaint systems. In response, TAMWA recommended workplace gender policies, transparent reporting systems, stronger legal protections, and increased representation of women in leadership.

16 United Nations. (2015). *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda

17 Tanzania Media Women's Association. (2020). *Sexual corruption in media houses: A research report*. TAMWA.

These measures directly advance SDG 5 and SDG 16 by promoting safe, inclusive, and accountable media environments.

From 2020 to 2025, TAMWA supported media outlets, including Zanzibar Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC), Zanzibar Leo, Afya FM, and Dodoma Media Group (DMG), to strengthen gender-responsive practices, including the development and implementation of gender policies, documentation of sexual harassment cases, and establishment of functional gender desks, and train journalists in gender-sensitive reporting.[18] These actions challenge harmful stereotypes, promote equal representation, and embed international gender frameworks at the national level.

TAMWA's approach also reflects the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), adopted at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women. The BPfA outlines 12 strategic objectives, including women and media, violence against women, and decision-making.[19]. TAMWA uses the BPfA to guide its media training, policy engagement, and research, ensuring that its programming aligns with global standards for women's empowerment.

Tanzania is also a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), ratified in 1985[20]. CEDAW obliges states to eliminate discrimination through legislation, policies, and public education. TAMWA integrates CEDAW principles, particularly Articles 5 (elimination of stereotypes) and 7, into its media campaigns, legal reform advocacy, and gender-sensitivity training. In its 2020 Annual Report, TAMWA documented journalist training on gender-sensitive reporting and advocacy meetings with political, religious, and traditional leaders in Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Dodoma, and Zanzibar to promote women's leadership.

18 Tanzania Media Women's Association. (2021). *Annual report*. TAMWA.

19 UN Women. (1995). *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/01/beijing-declaration

20 UN General Assembly. (1979). *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*. https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against

Regionally, Tanzania is a signatory to the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.[21] and the Maputo Protocol[22]. These frameworks set measurable targets for women's participation in politics and media, and demand decisive action against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment and sextortion. TAMWA operationalises these standards by training journalists, raising awareness, and advocating for gender-sensitive reporting to enhance women's visibility in economic and political spheres.

2.2 National Legal and Policy Framework

Nationally, Tanzania's Constitution forms the cornerstone of gender equality. Article 13(1) guarantees equality before the law and protection without discrimination, while Article 9(h) directs the state to uphold human dignity and equality in all spheres of life. These provisions underpin gender-sensitive legislation and policies, including the National Gender Policy of 2000, later updated as the National Gender and Women's Development Policy (2023)[23].

Tanzania has also strengthened its legal framework through the Employment and Labour Relations Act (2004), which prohibits discrimination based on gender and mandates equal opportunities for all qualified candidates. Section 7(4) explicitly forbids direct or indirect discrimination in employment policies or practices on grounds including sex, pregnancy, disability, or HIV/AIDS status.[24].

21 SADC. (2008). SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. Southern African Development Community. https://www.sadc.int/

22 African Union. (2003). Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol). https://au.int/en/treaties/protocol-african-charter-human-and-peoples-rights-rights-women-africa

23 United Republic of Tanzania. (2023). National Gender and Women's Development Policy. Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups.

24 United Republic of Tanzania. (2004). Employment and Labour Relations Act. Government of Tanzania.

This framework supports gender-sensitive recruitment policies in both public and private sectors.

Within the media sector, the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) developed the Gender in Media Policy to promote gender equality in institutions and content production. It emphasises non-discrimination in recruitment, equal representation in editorial decision-making, and the establishment of gender desks to amplify women's voices. By embedding gender-sensitive practices into newsroom culture and editorial policies, the MCT aligns national efforts with global commitments such as SDG 5 and Tanzania's Development Vision 2025.

TAMWA complements these national policies through its Gender Audit Report, which critically examines the extent to which media laws and policies support gender equality. The audit identifies gaps in legal enforcement, institutional accountability, and women's representation in leadership. It calls for reforms to strengthen gender-sensitive reporting, protect women journalists from harassment, and promote inclusive media governance.

The Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups is the lead government institution on gender policy. Its flagship National Gender and Women's Development Policy (2023) assigns clear roles to ministries, civil society organisations, and media institutions. It directs media to (i) promote gender equality across society; (ii) advocate for sound governance principles that uphold gender equity; (iii) report incidents of gender-based violence; (iv) educate communities on strategies for advancing gender equality; (v) publish and disseminate gender-focused research; and (vi) provide equal opportunities for women and men in employment and leadership.

The Tanzania Development Vision 2025 also prioritises gender equality and women's empowerment as central to inclusive national development.[25]. It emphasises eliminating disparities in education,

25 United Republic of Tanzania. (1999). The Tanzania Development Vision 2025. Government of Tanzania.

healthcare, and economic participation, and integrates women into decision-making as critical agents of change. The Vision promotes participatory democracy, transparency, and equal representation, while dismantling structural barriers that hinder women's access to leadership and economic opportunities, particularly in the informal sector. By advocating gender-responsive policies and inclusive frameworks, the Vision aligns Tanzania with global gender commitments.

Moreover, Tanzania Vision 2050 positions gender equality as a central pillar of national transformation, emphasising that inclusive social and economic development cannot be achieved without reducing gender gaps in education, health, leadership, and access to productive resources[26]. The Vision sets a clear target of reducing the national gender gap by at least 85% by 2050. It embeds gender considerations within its "Human Capability and Social Development" pillar, which addresses women's access to quality education, maternal and reproductive health, social protection, and economic participation. It further stresses that empowering women and girls is essential to building a competitive, innovative, and just society and calls for strengthened data systems, targeted interventions, and gender-responsive policies across sectors.

Broadcasting and communications are governed by the Electronic and Postal Communications Act (EPOCA) 2010, which replaced the Broadcasting Services Act of 1993. EPOCA mandates that broadcasting services operate in the public interest and uphold national values, embedding inclusivity and equality into the regulatory framework. Under this Act, the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) monitors and enforces content standards that promote gender equality and discourage discriminatory portrayals. Through licensing and oversight, TCRA encourages broadcasters to produce gender-sensitive content that reflects balanced representation and

26 Tanzania Development Vision (2050), High-Level Targets, pp. 4–6; Human Capability & Social Development Pillar sections in the main Vision 2050 document.

amplifies the voices of marginalised people, in line with SDG 5 and national policies.[27].

2.3 Institutional Obligations

Media institutions in Tanzania are obligated to mainstream gender across their operations. TAMWA has provided follow-up and technical support to strengthen gender policy implementation in four media houses. For example, Dodoma Media Group translated its sexual harassment policy into Kiswahili, allocated a budget for its gender desk, and conducted staff training. ZBC drafted a gender policy awaiting board approval, while Afya FM and Zanzibar Leo received additional guidance to operationalise existing policies, including the establishment of gender desks and capacity-building sessions[28].

According to TAMWA's 2025 report *Support Media Houses to Implement Gender Mainstreaming Policies*, 13 media houses were engaged, with four receiving direct support **(ZBC, Zanzibar Leo, DMG, and Afya FM)**. Nine assessed for comparison (**Tumbatu FM,** ZCTV1, **A FM, Maisha FM, Assalaam FM, Mjini FM, Sahara Media groups, Jembe FM, and** Inland Radio). Tumbatu FM and ZCTV1 have gender policies and functional desks, but need stronger mechanisms to address harassment. A FM and Maisha FM lack formal policies but have begun integrating gender-sensitive practices such as balanced staffing, mentorship, and inclusion of women in male-dominated programmes. Assalaam FM has embraced inclusivity in its editorial leadership, while Mjini FM demonstrates strong gender-sensitive programming but faces pay disparities and weak policy frameworks.

27 United Republic of Tanzania. (2010). Electronic and Postal Communications Act (EPOCA). Government of Tanzania.

28 Tanzania Media Women's Association. (2025). Support media houses to implement gender mainstreaming policies. TAMWA.

NOTE: The report was shared internally with the consultant

Other outlets, such as Jembe FM and Inland Radio, have adopted partial guidelines and informal practices, but formal policies are still absent. The Sahara Media Group primarily relies on its general HR manual, but management has expressed interest in adopting a gender-specific policy. These examples show gradual progress but highlight persistent challenges, including limited resources, weak reporting systems, inadequate data on harassment, cultural barriers, and leadership transitions. Sustained monitoring, mentorship, and management-level commitment are essential to institutionalising gender equality across all media outlets.

By integrating global, national, and institutional frameworks, Tanzania's media sector can transform its internal structures and public-facing content. International standards, national commitments, and institutional realities will shape the alignment of the framework. TAMWA's work demonstrates how civil society can bridge the gap between policy and practice, advancing gender equality in line with international obligations and national priorities.

2.4 Guideline Linkage to National and Sectoral Priorities

This Gender Mainstreaming Guideline is built to support Tanzania's broader development goals and ongoing reforms. It's designed to align with national priorities, ensuring that gender equality efforts in media and governance aren't just add-ons; they're fully integrated.

Tanzania Development Vision 2050 (future) and Vision 2025

Tanzania Development Vision 2025 and the upcoming Vision 2050 both stress the importance of inclusive, people-first growth. They call for closing gender gaps in education, leadership, and the economy. This guideline answers that call by pushing for fair media representation, more women in editorial leadership, and policies that create equal opportunities within media institutions. Vision 2050 is expected to build on this with a stronger focus on digital transformation, innovation,

and inclusive media.

National Gender and Women Development Policy (2023)

The National Gender and Women Development Policy (2023) lays out clear expectations for the media sector. It tasks media organizations with promoting gender equality, raising awareness about rights, and reflecting balanced representation. This guideline turns those directives into action, offering concrete tools, from editorial standards to internal reforms, that help media institutions meet those expectations.

TCRA and MCT media ethics reforms

At the same time, the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) and the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) are updating their media ethics guidelines to support gender justice. This guideline strengthens those reforms by embedding gender accountability into journalism standards, encouraging fair reporting, and challenging stereotypes. TCRA and TAMWA initiated the Samia Kalamu Awards[29] to promote women's empowerment by recognizing and rewarding journalists who produce outstanding stories that highlight gender equality, women's rights, and social transformation. The award encourages media to amplify women's voices, challenge gender stereotypes, inspire young female journalists, and build an inclusive media ecosystem that empowers women.

President's office initiatives on women's empowerment and digital inclusion

Finally, the President's office initiatives on women's empowerment and digital inclusion, led by the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women, and Special Groups, highlight media as a vital tool for advocacy and access. This guideline helps media houses step up, ensuring gender is embedded in both traditional and digital platforms, and aligning with national efforts for inclusive, forward-looking development.

29 You can read more here: https://samiaawards.tz/

SECTION THREE

INSTITUTIONAL GENDER MAINSTREAMING

The media has the power to shape how societies see gender roles, either by reinforcing stereotypes or by challenging them. Yet, across Africa, women remain underrepresented in media content, leadership, and production. According to the Global Media Monitoring Project (2020), women accounted for just 22% of news subjects and sources in African media, a figure that has barely improved since 2015. Coverage of politics, governance, and economics remains male-dominated, and women are rarely featured as experts or leaders. These gaps reflect structural imbalances in the media workforce and editorial decision-making.

To reverse these trends, media institutions must mainstream gender across their governance, content production, workplace culture, and outreach. Institutional gender mainstreaming ensures that equity is not an afterthought but a built-in principle across all operations.

Significantly, gender mainstreaming in the media sector contributes to positive social change and gender equality, strengthens staff well-being and retention, enhances editorial integrity, and builds public trust in the media. The guideline will also help the media to contribute to the prevention of violence, not perpetuation of it, protect women journalists, and encourage their participation and leadership, to align the media's work with national and global equality goals, but also to deepen and bring about a lasting transformation in the media sector in Tanzania.

3.1 Governance and Leadership Commitment

Leadership sets the tone. Senior managers and boards must actively promote gender equity by embedding it into strategic and operational frameworks. Media institutions should:

i. Establish Gender Desks or appoint Gender Focal Persons to coordinate implementation and advise leadership.

ii. Develop and regularly update internal gender policies aligned with national and international standards.

iii. Integrate gender objectives into organisational strategies, editorial policies, and annual work plans.

iv. Implement gender-responsive budgeting to allocate funding for gender-related initiatives, training, and monitoring.

v. Ensure gender balance in decision-making bodies, including editorial boards and senior management teams.

vi. Conduct regular gender audits and performance reviews to track progress and close gaps.

3.2 Human Resource Management and Workplace Culture

An inclusive workplace begins with gender-sensitive HR practices. To ensure equity in hiring, promotion, and professional growth, media houses should:

i. Adopt affirmative action to achieve gender parity in recruitment and leadership appointments.

ii. Prohibit all forms of discrimination through clear, enforced workplace policies.

iii. Develop confidential reporting mechanisms for harassment and misconduct.

iv. Offer equal parental leave and promote flexible work arrangements to support work-life balance.

v. Introduce mentorship, coaching, and leadership training, especially targeting women and underrepresented groups.

vi. Promote pay equity and equal access to training and promotion.

3.3 Content Production and Editorial Practices

What media produces directly influences public perception. Content creators—from editors to presenters must apply a gender lens in their work. This includes:

i. Ensuring gender balance in sources, guests, and experts featured in stories.

ii. Using inclusive and non-stereotypical language and imagery.

iii. Increasing coverage of gender-focused issues, including gender-based violence, reproductive health, and women's political participation.

iv. Actively seeking out and highlighting female leaders, scientists, entrepreneurs, and change makers.

v. Including gender analysis in reporting on politics, economy, health, and education.

vi. Avoid objectifying visuals; instead, portray men and women in empowering, diverse roles.

3.4 Digital Media and Online Engagement

In today's digital environment, online platforms are key spaces for public discourse but also for gender-based abuse. Media institutions must:

i. Monitor and moderate online platforms to address harassment and hate speech.

ii. Use digital campaigns and hashtags to challenge gender norms and amplify women's voices.

iii. Apply gender analytics tools to track representation, reach, and impact.

iv. Engage audiences through inclusive storytelling across platforms like Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram.

3.5 Training, Capacity Building, and Education

Building a gender-aware workforce is not a one-off activity; it requires continuous investment. Media institutions should:

i. Conduct mandatory gender sensitivity training for all staff, including editorial, production, and administration.

ii. Integrate gender modules into induction programmes and onboarding.

iii. Partner with journalism schools to embed gender in training curricula and accreditation standards.

iv. Facilitate peer learning, regional exchanges, and dialogue with experts to share best practices.

3.6 Institutional Collaboration and Advocacy

Gender mainstreaming requires collective effort. Media institutions, civil society, and government actors must collaborate to drive sustained change.

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and NGOs should:

i. Conduct independent content reviews to assess gender bias and representation gaps.

ii. Train journalists on gender-sensitive reporting, including ethical coverage of gender-based violence.

iii. Work with media houses to develop or refine internal gender policies and editorial guidelines.

iv. Advocate for increased representation of women in leadership and decision-making.

v. Support women journalists with legal aid, mentorship, and safety resources.

Government and Regulatory Bodies should:

i. Ensure national media laws mandate inclusive content and non-discrimination.

ii. Establish Gender Desks or units within regulatory authorities to guide and monitor gender standards.

iii. Review and enforce editorial codes of conduct that support gender equity.

iv. Integrate gender equality targets into national communication strategies and policy frameworks.

HR and Communication Officers play a strategic role by:

i. Crafting internal and public messages that reflect institutional commitments to gender equality.

ii. Ensuring communication materials, internal and external, promote inclusivity.

iii. Coordinating awareness campaigns and events around key gender observances such as the 16 Days of Activism.

3.7 Measuring Progress and Accountability

To ensure gender mainstreaming is not symbolic but substantive, institutions must track outcomes. Suggested metrics include:

i. Percentage of women in leadership and editorial roles.

ii. Ratio of male to female sources quoted in news stories.

iii. Number of gender-related stories published per quarter.

iv. Frequency and quality of gender-sensitive training sessions.

v. Reports or audits on harassment, pay equity, and workplace culture.

vi. Audience engagement with gender-themed content across platforms.

SECTION FOUR

GENDER-RESPONSIVE MEDIA CONTENT AND PRACTICES

This section is the engine room of the Gender Mainstreaming Policy. It focuses on transforming how media tells stories, what we cover, how we cover it, and who gets to speak. The media doesn't just report the world; it shapes how we see it. That makes it essential for media professionals to break away from outdated narratives and commit to more inclusive, accurate, and fair representation of all genders.

Below are proposed key principles and practices every media institution should follow to produce content that challenges inequality and reflects the realities of a diverse society.

4.1. Editorial Standards and Ethical Reporting

Editorial integrity starts with language and framing. Media outlets must:

i. Ban the use of sexist, demeaning, or stereotypical language and visuals in all content.

ii. Prioritise accuracy, fairness, and balance, especially when reporting on gender issues.

iii. Use inclusive and gender-neutral language in editorial and institutional communication.

iv. Train editors and content gatekeepers to identify and remove bias in text, images, and headlines.

v. Include gender balance as a measurable part of editorial performance and internal ethical codes.

4.2. Balanced Representation in Media Content

Media should reflect the diversity of society, not just the dominant voices. To achieve this:

i. Ensure gender balance in sources, guests, commentators, and interview subjects.

ii. Proactively seek out women and marginalised groups in leadership, tech, science, politics, and activism.

iii. Conduct regular audits to monitor gender representation in stories and contributors.

iv. Move beyond "victim" portrayals of women, show strength, agency, and leadership in all roles.

v. Highlight people in roles that challenge stereotypes, such as women in construction or men in caregiving.

4.3. Gender-Sensitive Coverage of Social Issues

Stories on issues like GBV, reproductive rights, and economic justice require thoughtful, rights-based reporting. Journalists should:

i. Cover gender-based violence and SRHR issues with empathy, privacy, and survivor safety in mind.

ii. Avoid clickbait or sensational headlines, especially when stories involve vulnerable groups.

iii. Frame gender issues within structural contexts, highlighting causes, consequences, and possible solutions.

iv. Collaborate with gender experts, advocates, and frontline organisations for context and accuracy.

4.4. Inclusion of Marginalised Voices

Representation isn't complete without inclusion. Media must actively feature:

i. Stories from rural women, people with disabilities, youth, and ethnic minorities.

ii. Reporting that avoids dehumanising, exoticising, or pity-based narratives.

iii. Coverage that extends beyond cities—highlighting the unique gender challenges in rural and remote regions.

iv. Partnerships with grassroots groups to uncover authentic stories and build trust with underserved communities.

4.5. Programming and Airtime Equity

What gets aired and when sends a message. Programming teams should:

i. Ensure gender balance among show hosts, panellists, and commentators.

ii. Reserve premium airtime (not just off-hours) for gender-focused discussions.

iii. Integrate gender themes across all formats: news, talk shows, documentaries, entertainment, and children's programmes.

iv. Use audience feedback to gauge the effectiveness of gender content and adapt programming accordingly.

4.6. Ethical Use of Digital and Social Platforms

Online gender-based violence has increased as more women and girls use digital platforms for work, activism, business, and social interaction. Common forms include cyberbullying, sexual harassment, non-consensual sharing of images, misogynistic hate speech, stalking, impersonation, and coordinated attacks against women journalists, activists, and female political leaders. Women often remain silent due to fear of reputation damage, limited digital-safety knowledge, weak reporting mechanisms, and inadequate enforcement of cyber crime and online safety laws. Online spaces mirror offline inequalities, where patriarchal norms, anonymity, and weak accountability make women more vulnerable. A recent study by Tech & Media Convergency (2024) found that over 70% of women journalists in Tanzania have

experienced some form of online harassment, highlighting the growing severity of OGBV in the country.[30]

What Media Houses in Tanzania Should Do:

Media houses should promote gender-responsive digital safety by

1. developing newsroom policies against online harassment, especially for female journalists;
2. training staff on digital security, safe online engagement, and documentation of threats;
3. strengthening internal reporting and support systems, including psychosocial support for affected women;
4. producing balanced, ethical stories that challenge sexist narratives and expose OGBV:
5. partnering with CSOs, tech platforms, and regulators to improve reporting pathways and advocate for stronger online protection laws; and
6. ensuring that women journalists are not silenced by online abuse by protecting their voices and enabling equal participation in digital journalism.

Online spaces amplify voices but also abuse. Digital teams and platforms must:

i. Proactively monitor and moderate hate speech, trolling, and online harassment based on gender.

ii. Support and share campaigns that promote gender equality and dismantle harmful norms.

iii. Protect the identity and dignity of vulnerable groups when publishing digital content.

iv. Train staff and users on digital safety, consent, and gender-aware engagement.

30TMC, "Uncovering Journalistic Perspectives on Online Gender Based Violence", 2024

SECTION FIVE

IMPLEMENTATION AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The success of this Gender Mainstreaming Policy depends on action, not just intention. For meaningful change to take root across Tanzania's media sector, implementation must be strategic, coordinated, and accountable. This section outlines how various stakeholders will work together to bring the policy to life, build institutional capacity, and ensure the long-term sustainability of gender-responsive media practices.

5.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Effective implementation requires shared ownership and clear accountability. The following institutions and actors have distinct, but complementary, roles:

i. **Ministry of Information, Art, Culture, and Sports**

   Provides strategic direction, ensures alignment with national frameworks, mobilises resources, and oversees sector-wide implementation.

ii. **Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA)**

   Integrates gender indicators into licensing, content evaluation, and compliance monitoring. Ensures broadcasters are accountable to gender-sensitive standards.

iii. **The Journalists Accreditation Board (JAB)**

Promotes gender transformation by enforcing gender sensitive journalism standards, supporting fair representation, and strengthening protections for women journalists

iv. **Media Council of Tanzania (MCT)**

Oversees media ethics enforcement with a gender lens, facilitates training, and manages grievance redress mechanisms related to gender issues.

v. **Media Owners and Governing Boards**

Adopt the policy internally, allocate implementation budgets, and lead reforms that embed gender equity into institutional culture.

vi. **Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)**

Act as partners in awareness-raising, public education, capacity building, monitoring, and reporting.

vii. **Development Partners**

Support implementation through technical expertise, funding, innovation-sharing, and facilitation of cross-border learning.

5.2 Capacity Development Strategy

To ensure the media sector is equipped to implement the policy, a targeted and inclusive capacity development strategy will be rolled out. Key elements include:

i. **Customised training modules**

Develop and deliver training content on gender equality, media ethics, and inclusive reporting for journalists, editors, producers, HR teams, and management.

ii. **National training-of-trainers (ToT) network**

Establish a pool of certified gender trainers across regions to scale skills and knowledge at local and national levels.

iii. **Editorial integration**

Embed gender analysis in content planning processes, newsroom guidelines, and daily editorial routines.

iv. **Curriculum review**

Work with journalism schools and universities to incorporate this policy and gender principles into formal media education and training programmes.

5.3 Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

Sustained collaboration is key to relevance, ownership, and results. The following engagement mechanisms will be established:

i. **Multi-stakeholder consultations**

Hold regular national and local consultations to co-develop tools, refine content strategies, and share accountability approaches.

ii. **Gender and Media Stakeholder Forum**

Create a formal coordination platform bringing together regulators, media practitioners, CSOs, academia, and development partners to track progress and exchange best practices.

iii. **Strategic partnerships**

Strengthen relationships with academic institutions, grassroots media organisations, women's rights groups, and community broadcasters to support policy delivery and deepen local impact.

5.4 Resource Mobilisation

Adequate and sustained funding is essential for translating policy into action. Institutions will:

i. Allocate internal budgets

Dedicate specific funding lines for gender mainstreaming activities within annual financial plans.

ii. Engage external partners

Collaborate with donors, development partners, and philanthropic organisations to support training, research, innovation, and content development.

iii. Explore innovative financing models.

Leverage public-private partnerships and social enterprise approaches to support gender-responsive programming, particularly in community and grassroots media spaces.

SECTION SIX

MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Effective implementation of this Gender Mainstreaming Policy requires robust systems of monitoring, evaluation, and accountability (ME&A). These mechanisms will ensure that gender commitments translate into measurable outcomes, guide continuous improvement, and build trust among stakeholders. This section outlines the tools, indicators, processes, and responsibilities necessary to monitor progress, assess performance, and enforce compliance.

6.1 Key Indicators and Scorecards

The following indicators shall be used to assess implementation:

i. Percentage of female and male staff in decision-making roles in media institutions.

ii. Number of gender-focused stories published or aired per quarter.

iii. Ratio of male-to-female sources cited in news and feature stories.

iv. Presence of an internal gender policy and an allocated gender mainstreaming budget.

v. Staff are trained on gender sensitivity and ethical reporting annually.

vi. Incidents of gender discrimination or harassment are reported and resolved.

vii. Number of programs including perspectives from marginalized gender groups.

6.2 Internal Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms

Media institutions shall establish or enhance systems to:

i. Conduct periodic gender audits and diversity assessments.

ii. Develop and implement gender action plans with measurable targets.

iii. Appoint internal Gender Focal Points to lead on monitoring and institutional compliance.

iv. Submit annual internal reports on gender progress to governing boards or ownership structures.

v. Implement regular staff satisfaction and perception surveys, including questions on inclusion and gender equity.

6.3 External Review and Independent Oversight

Oversight bodies and partners shall:

i. Conduct independent reviews of media institutions' gender practices, in collaboration with regulators such as the Media Council of Tanzania.

ii. Provide technical assistance and capacity-building support where gaps are identified.

iii. Encourage peer review and public scoreboards to foster transparency and competition.

iv. Enable civil society organizations to participate in monitoring and policy dialogue through structured platforms.

6.4 Grievance Redress and Enforcement

To ensure that violations are addressed and prevented, media institutions shall:

i. Establish clear, confidential, and accessible grievance redress mechanisms for gender-related complaints.

ii. Enforce anti-harassment and non-discrimination policies with disciplinary measures for non-compliance.

iii. Protect whistleblowers and ensure non-retaliation for reporting gender violations.

iv. Report serious breaches to oversight authorities for possible legal or administrative actions.

6.5 Communication and Dissemination Strategy

TAMWA and its partners understand that for this guideline to make an impact truly, it needs to be seen, understood, and used. That's why a clear communication and outreach plan is in place to ensure it reaches the right people and drives lasting change. Here's how that will happen:

i. **Public launch and awareness campaigns**
This will introduce the guideline to key players in the media sector and the general public, creating momentum and visibility.

ii. **Media briefings and stakeholder forums**
They will open space for conversation, feedback, and collective advocacy around gender equality in media.

iii. **The guideline will be translated into Kiswahili.**
This will make it accessible to a broader range of users nationwide.

iv. **A simplified version**
This will be created specifically for community media outlets and grassroots groups, making the content practical and easy to apply at the local level.

v. **The complete guideline will be made available online.**
This will be through TAMWA's website and affiliated media platforms, ensuring easy access for digital audiences and long-term availability.

SECTION SEVEN

CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Challenges:

Despite progress in promoting gender equality in Tanzania's media sector, several persistent challenges continue to limit meaningful change. Those challenges are, but not limited to:

- **Persistent Underrepresentation:** Women than their male counterpart are still vastly underrepresented in senior editorial and decision-making roles. This means that the stories that get told, the voices that are amplified, and the policies that guide newsroom culture are often shaped without women's perspectives. The lack of female leaders also reduces opportunities for mentorship and support for younger women journalists, reinforcing a cycle where men dominate decision-making and content framing. As a result, essential gender issues can go underreported, and media narratives may remain narrowly focused, failing to reflect the diversity of society. According to the stakeholders' meeting, this challenge is further compounded by patriarchal systems within media houses and limited consultation of employees, particularly women, during policy formulation, which continues to hinder gender balance in leadership and participation.

- **Weak Policy Implementation:** Many media organizations have gender policies on paper, but turning them into real, everyday practice remains a struggle. Limited resources, insufficient staff training, and low buy-in from management often mean these

policies are not actively enforced. Without clear procedures or accountability, incidents of discrimination, harassment, or bias can go unaddressed. Policies exist, but for many women in the sector, they feel like promises rather than protections. Stakeholders noted that some media houses lack gender policies altogether, while others have weak follow-up mechanisms and limited staff awareness of their existence and importance. In some cases, policies are inaccessible or poorly communicated to employees and interns, while Human Resource officers and management teams are rarely involved in their enforcement.

- **Gender Stereotyping in Content:** Media continues to reinforce harmful stereotypes. Women are often shown in passive or domestic roles, while men are portrayed as leaders, experts, and decision-makers. This narrow portrayal not only misrepresents women's contributions in politics, business, science, and other sectors but also shapes public perception of what men and women can or should do. Over time, this kind of coverage discourages women from pursuing careers in specific fields and keeps society locked in outdated gender norms. According to the stakeholders' meeting, gender issues are not adequately integrated into media content, and emerging online media platforms often overlook gender considerations. Furthermore, female sources are sometimes hesitant to speak to the media due to limited readiness, confidence, and fear of exposure.

- **Workplace Harassment and Sextortion:** sexual harassment and coercion remain a serious concern. Many women journalists have faced situations where their career progression was tied to inappropriate demands, often leaving them fearful of speaking up. Weak reporting systems and the fear of retaliation mean that many incidents remain hidden. These unsafe work environments discourage women from staying in the sector, and they harm not

only individuals but also the overall culture and morale of media organizations. Stakeholders reaffirmed this challenge, emphasizing the absence of gender focal points (GFPs) and designated offices to handle such complaints. They also cited minimal management response and lack of precise follow-up mechanisms, which leave survivors unprotected and discourage reporting.

- **Insufficient Capacity and Resources:** Even when there is a willingness to advance gender equality, many media houses lack the capacity. There are too few trained staff or gender focal points, minimal budgets for gender initiatives, and very little structured training. Without these essential resources, gender policies and strategies often remain theoretical rather than practical. Journalists may lack the tools, guidance, or confidence to report on gender issues effectively, and media institutions struggle to create genuinely inclusive workplaces. During the stakeholders' meeting, participants also raised that media owners are rarely involved in gender training or planning processes, and policies often fail to include marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities (PWDs). The limited institutional readiness and resources hinder sustainable progress.

- **Limited Monitoring and Accountability:** Finally, tracking progress remains a significant challenge. Data on staff composition, pay equity, harassment cases, and content representation is often incomplete or inconsistent. Without clear monitoring systems, media organizations cannot measure whether their efforts are working or where improvements are needed. This lack of accountability also makes it difficult for regulators, civil society, and the public to support meaningful change, leaving gender equality initiatives at risk of fading into words rather than action. Stakeholders noted that most gender policies lack monitoring and evaluation (M&E) components to assess progress, and that frequent staff transfers

create gaps in institutional knowledge and policy continuity. Without effective M&E and regular review processes, policies remain stagnant and disconnected from newsroom realities.

7.2 Opportunities

Apart from the challenges, stakeholders highlighted several opportunities for media houses and journalists to advance gender mainstreaming in Tanzanian media workplaces. Well-developed gender policies provide a platform for staff to voice concerns regarding equality, workplace safety, and professional conduct, creating more transparent and accountable institutions. The establishment of gender desks not only strengthens institutional capacity but also opens up new employment opportunities for trained professionals dedicated to promoting gender-sensitive practices. Balanced gender representation within media teams can further improve workplace efficiency, decision-making, and overall organizational performance, while fostering mentorship and professional growth for women journalists.

Collaboration with gender-focused organizations, civil society, and government institutions offers additional opportunities to strengthen advocacy and implement effective gender strategies. Media houses can leverage gender-sensitive content to expand audience reach, enhance credibility, and respond to societal needs for inclusive and diverse reporting. The growing presence of online and social media platforms provides avenues for raising public awareness of gender issues while enabling creative approaches to engagement and storytelling. Moreover, media institutions can access funding to produce gender-related programs and projects, and organizations such as TAMWA can extend training initiatives to include digital and social media, further equipping journalists with the skills and knowledge to mainstream gender in contemporary media practice.

7.3 Recommendations

To address these challenges and strengthen gender mainstreaming in Tanzania's media sector, media houses, regulators, and stakeholders must take deliberate, coordinated action. The following recommendations are proposed:

First, leadership commitment must be strengthened. When top managers and boards actively prioritize gender equality, it sets a clear tone for the entire organization. Embedding gender goals into strategic plans, allocating dedicated budgets, and ensuring women have meaningful representation in decision-making roles can transform newsroom culture. Leadership commitment should go beyond symbolism—it must demonstrate to every staff member that gender equity is a serious, everyday practice that shapes both policy and workplace culture.

Moreover, managers should actively influence directors and media owners to adopt gender-sensitive mindsets through constructive engagement and dialogue. Media owners must also be directly engaged in gender mainstreaming efforts to ensure accountability and sustainability of gender initiatives across institutions.

Second, policies must be practical and actionable, not just statements on paper. Media organizations need clear procedures for reporting and addressing harassment, discrimination, and bias. Policies should be actively enforced, widely communicated to all staff, and regularly reviewed to reflect evolving needs and circumstances. They should also support the establishment of functional gender desks or designated focal points (including safeguarding) to provide guidance, support, and oversight for gender initiatives, ensuring that policies translate into absolute protection and accountability.

Also, every gender policy should be attached to each employee's contract to ensure awareness and compliance. Policies should be written in simple, accessible language and should clearly define who is

responsible for implementation and monitoring. Guidelines should be practical and action-oriented, not merely formal statements. Policies should also include role-specific provisions for media owners, editors, journalists, and content creators, ensuring shared responsibility. Moreover, the *Public Service Act* should emphasize the enforcement of gender policy across all media institutions.

Third, media content must become truly gender-sensitive. Stories should challenge stereotypes, highlight women and marginalized groups, and reflect a diversity of voices and experiences. Ongoing training, mentorship, and peer learning opportunities are essential to equip journalists and editors with the skills, confidence, and awareness needed to produce fair, inclusive, and empowering media reporting.

Moreover, editorial policies should include internal review processes to prevent the publication of discriminatory or policy-violating material. Content should reflect the inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWDs) and other marginalized groups. Equal treatment and adherence to gender-sensitive standards should apply uniformly across all media organizations, including digital and community media platforms.

Fourth, creating safe and inclusive workplaces is essential. Media organizations must actively prevent harassment and exploitation while protecting all staff. Confidential reporting mechanisms, protections for whistleblowers, and consistent enforcement of anti-harassment and exploitation measures help ensure that both women and men can work in safe environments where they feel respected, valued, and able to contribute fully.

Gender policy awareness should be part of every staff and intern training program. Media houses should ensure gender policies are easily accessible to employees, interns, and visitors, fostering transparency and a shared sense of responsibility for maintaining a respectful work environment.

Fifth, it is crucial to strengthen capacity building, training, and resource mobilization. Gender mainstreaming initiatives cannot succeed without well-trained staff and adequate funding to support various programs within media organizations. Media houses should invest in building networks of gender trainers, integrating gender principles into journalism curricula, and providing continuous professional development to equip staff with the skills and tools to implement inclusive practices. Training, mentorship programs, and collaborative initiatives should be ongoing, recognizing that new employees join the workforce regularly and require orientation and support to maintain gender-sensitive standards across the organization.

Media houses should allocate internal budgets for gender-related initiatives, including policy development, implementation, and gender-sensitive story production. Gender equality principles should be recognized as a core operational value across all media houses. Stakeholders also emphasized the need for gender awareness and socialization to begin at the family and community levels to promote broader cultural transformation toward gender equality.

Finally, conducting monitoring and evaluation and fostering collaboration are essential steps for advancing gender mainstreaming in Tanzania's media sector. Media organizations should regularly track their progress, collect reliable data, and hold themselves accountable for results. Collaboration with other media houses, civil society organizations, development partners, academic institutions, and regulatory bodies helps share best practices, identify gaps, and achieve collective progress, ensuring that gender equality initiatives are effective, sustainable, and widely impactful.

Monitoring Evaluation should be integrated into all media activities—not limited to gender policies alone. Daily gender oversight and quarterly evaluations should be institutionalized to measure progress. Media houses should also review and update existing gender-related

documents regularly to maintain relevance and effectiveness.

7.4 Conclusion

Gender mainstreaming is not just a moral responsibility; it is a professional necessity for Tanzania's media sector. When women and men are empowered, and gender-sensitive practices are fully integrated into everyday operations, media organizations produce reporting that is more inclusive, balanced, and credible. This guideline offers a practical roadmap for transforming newsroom culture, content production, and audience and stakeholder engagement. By addressing persistent gaps through strong leadership, effective policies, ongoing capacity-building, and robust accountability mechanisms, Tanzania's media can become a powerful driver of gender equality, helping create a society where every voice, regardless of gender, is recognized, valued, and heard.

At the same time, the reflections from the stakeholders' meeting underscore that gender mainstreaming requires both institutional commitment and cultural transformation. While notable progress has been made in developing gender-related policies, genuine change depends on consistent implementation, awareness, and accountability from leadership. Media houses, regulators, and advocacy bodies such as TAMWA share the collective responsibility to move gender equality beyond policy statements and ensure it becomes a lived reality within Tanzania's media landscape.

NOTES

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